

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 9TH JULY 2019** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 8)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) meeting held on 4th June 2019.

**A Green
388008**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda item.

3. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 9 - 10)

A copy of the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**H Peacey
388169**

4. CORPORATE PLAN REFRESH 2019/20 (Pages 11 - 20)

The Corporate Plan Refresh 2019/20 is to be presented to the Panel.

**D Buckridge
388065**

5. SHARED SERVICES' 2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 21 - 50)

The Panel are to receive the Shared Services' 2018/19 Annual Report.

**O Morley
388103**

6. HUNTINGDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION OUTCOME AND PROGRESSION TO REFERENDUM (Pages 51 - 140)

Members are to receive a report on the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and the proposed progression to a referendum.

**C Kerr
388430**

7. A428 BLACK CAT TO CAXTON GIBBET IMPROVEMENTS (Pages 141 - 210)

A report on the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements will be presented to the Panel.

**C Kerr
388430**

8. HOUSING DELIVERY TEST (Pages 211 - 236)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Members are to receive a report on the Housing Delivery Test. | C Kerr
388430 |
| 9. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SPEND (Pages 237 - 254) | |
| Members are to receive a report on the Community Infrastructure Levy Spend. | C Kerr
388430 |
| 10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 255 - 262) | |
| The Panel are to receive the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. | A Green
388008 |

Dated this 1st day of July 2019



Head of Paid Service

Notes

1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- (1) *Members are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and unless you have obtained dispensation, cannot discuss or vote on the matter at the meeting and must also leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on.*
- (2) *A Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest if it -*
 - (a) *relates to you, or*
 - (b) *is an interest of -*
 - (i) *your spouse or civil partner; or*
 - (ii) *a person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or*
 - (iii) *a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners*

and you are aware that the other person has the interest.
- (3) *Disclosable pecuniary interests includes -*
 - (a) *any employment or profession carried out for profit or gain;*
 - (b) *any financial benefit received by the Member in respect of expenses incurred carrying out his or her duties as a Member (except from the Council);*
 - (c) *any current contracts with the Council;*
 - (d) *any beneficial interest in land/property within the Council's area;*
 - (e) *any licence for a month or longer to occupy land in the Council's area;*
 - (f) *any tenancy where the Council is landlord and the Member (or person in (2)(b) above) has a beneficial interest; or*
 - (g) *a beneficial interest (above the specified level) in the shares of any body which has a place of business or land in the Council's area.*

Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests

- (4) *If a Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest then you are required to declare that interest, but may remain to discuss and vote providing you do not breach the overall Nolan principles.*
- (5) *A Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest where -*

- (a) a decision in relation to the business being considered might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or
- (b) it relates to or is likely to affect a disclosable pecuniary interest, but in respect of a member of your family (other than specified in (2)(b) above) or a person with whom you have a close association, or
- (c) it relates to or is likely to affect any body –
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature; or
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a Member or in a position of control or management.

and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

2. Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings

The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and available via the following link [filming, photography and recording at council meetings.pdf](#) or on request from the Democratic Services Team. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this preference by ensuring that any such request not to be recorded is respected.

Please contact Mr Adam Green, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny), Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Adam.Green@huntingdonshire.gov.uk 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 Committee/Panel.

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

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 4th June 2019.

PRESENT: Councillor D B Dew – Chairman.

Councillors B S Chapman, J C Cooper-Marsh, S J Corney, J W Davies, Mrs A Dickinson, Dr P L R Gaskin, M S Grice, S Wakeford and J E White.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J P Morris and D J Wells.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 2nd April 2019 and 15th May 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

6. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st June 2019 to 30th September 2019.

7. INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018/19, QUARTER 4

With the aid of a report by the Business Intelligence and Performance Manager and the Finance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Integrated Performance for 2018/19, Quarter 4 was presented to the Panel.

In presenting the performance aspect of the report the Business Intelligence and Performance Manager informed Members that progress has been good. Key points made included: One Leisure performance has improved over the year but targets were not met by the end of quarter four; sickness has improved and the Council had its best performance since 2014; all the red-rated performance indicators are better than 2017/18 performance but still remain below target and the two projects rated red are shared service projects, however the HDC element has not been rated red for either.

In regards to the red rated shared service projects, a Member expressed concern at the fact they were rated red. They were informed that the governance arrangement requires the project to be scrutinised by the Council's project management board. A general

point was made that project managers have been over optimistic in stating the completion date of the project which has resulted in the project receiving a red rating when deadlines are missed.

The Finance Manager addressed the Panel and outlined the key points of the financial aspect of the report including a £0.2m underspend on the revenue budget and a £2.9m underspend on the capital budget.

It was noted that there were some areas which overspent and in response to a question, it was confirmed that in some cases corrective action was taken during the 2019/20 budget process.

Discussion on the Commercial Investment Strategy ensued and a Member expressed concern that there was no indication within the paperwork that capital appreciation or depreciation had been considered. In response, the Member was informed that the Estates team have a robust process for capital investment which is regularly scrutinised.

When questioned on the underspend in Development due to staff vacancies, the Panel was informed that the required level of staffing for Development includes the vacancies and that during 2018/19 the service have been unable to recruit to those vacancies.

A Member asked about the repurposing of the apprentice budget. It was confirmed that the budget will be repurposed for staff training opportunities and that this was agreed during the 2018/19 budget process.

(At 7.06pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor P L R Gaskin entered the meeting.)

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

With the aid of a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Council's treasury management activity for 2018/19 was presented to the Panel.

A question was asked in regards to the loan made to Luminus. It was explained that the loan has been transferred to the parent company, Places to People, and that they are paying the loan off with no issues. In addition, Brook House (Luminus' Offices) acts as security for the loan.

In response to a query on the loans the Council has provided, the Panel was informed that the Council do not push loans but where there are established links and projects which would benefit the Council and help it achieve its corporate priorities and objectives then a loan would be considered.

Referencing the Commercial Investment Strategy part of the report, a Member stated that there was no information of the capital appreciation or depreciation. In response, the Panel was informed that the information could be added to future reports as the properties are valued annually.

**9. USE OF SPECIAL URGENCY PROVISIONS VERBAL UPDATE -
COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY ASSET**

The Panel was informed that the Chairman of the Panel approved that an urgent item, regarding a Commercial Investment Strategy, could be considered at Cabinet without prior Overview and Scrutiny.

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

Councillor S J Corney updated Members on the Delivery of Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group. He stated that the Group had met with Housing Associations and that a final report has been drafted, which will be considered by the Group before being presented to the Panel. Fellow Group Member, Councillor S Wakeford added that the Group have been investigating the Rural Exception Site mechanism as a way of fulfilling the Council's affordable housing targets.

Chairman

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NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS INCLUDING THOSE TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Prepared by Councillor G J Bull, Executive Leader of the Council
Date of Publication: 19 June 2019
For Period: 1 July 2019 to 31 October 2019

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor Mrs M L Beuttell	Executive Councillor for Operations and Regulation	Councillor J A Gray	Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources
Councillor G J Bull	Executive Leader of the Council	Councillor J M Palmer	Executive Councillor for Partnerships and Well-Being
Councillor R Fuller	Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development	Councillor D M Tysoe	Executive Councillor for Digital and Customers

Notice is hereby given of:

- Key decisions that will be taken by the Cabinet (or other decision maker)
- Confidential or exempt executive decisions that will be taken in a meeting from which the public will be excluded (for whole or part).

A notice/agenda together with reports and supporting documents for each meeting will be published at least five working days before the date of the meeting. In order to enquire about the availability of documents and subject to any restrictions on their disclosure, copies may be requested by contacting the Democratic Services Team on 01480 388169 or E-mail Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

Agendas may be accessed electronically at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk.

Formal notice is hereby given under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 that, where indicated part of the meetings listed in this notice will be held in private because the agenda and reports for the meeting will contain confidential or exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. See the relevant paragraphs below.

Any person who wishes to make representations to the decision maker about a decision which is to be made or wishes to object to an item being considered in private may do so by emailing Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk or by contacting the Democratic Services Team. If representations are received at least eight working days before the date of the meeting, they will be published with the agenda together with a statement of the District Council's response. Any representations received after this time will be verbally reported and considered at the meeting.

Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) (Reason for the report to be considered in private)

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the Financial and Business Affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations that are arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of or office holders under the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the Authority proposes:-
 - (a) To give under any announcement a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or

(b) To make an Order or Direction under any enactment

7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

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

Notes:- (i) Additions changes from the previous Forward Plan are annotated ***
(ii) Part II confidential items which will be considered in private are annotated ## and shown in italic.

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Reasons for the report to be considered in private (paragraph no.)	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Corporate Plan - Refresh	Cabinet	18 Jul 2019		Dan Buckridge, Business Intelligence and Performance Manager Tel No 01480 388065 or email Dan.Buckridge@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		G Bull	Performance and Growth
Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan Examination Outcome and Progression to Referendum	Cabinet	18 Jul 2019		Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or email Clara.Kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		R Fuller	Performance and Growth
Godmanchester Nursery##	Cabinet	18 Jul 2019		Neil Sloper, Head of Operations Tel No 01480 388635 or email Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk	3	J Palmer	Customers and Partnerships
Community Infrastructure Levy Spend***	Cabinet	18 Jul 2019		Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or email Clara.Kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		R Fuller	Performance and Growth
Housing Delivery Test***	Cabinet	18 Jul 2019		Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or email Clara.Kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		R Fuller	Customers and Partnerships
Community Chest Grant Aid Awards 2019/20	Grants Panel	23 Jul 2019		Chris Stopford, Head of Community Tel No 01480 388280 or email Chris.Stopford@huntingdonshire.gov.uk		J Gray J Palmer	Customers & Partnerships

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Plan Refresh 2019/20

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) –
9th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Graham Bull, Executive Leader

Report by: Business Intelligence and Performance Manager and
Finance Manager

Wards affected: All

Recommendation

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel is invited to consider and comment on the refresh of the Corporate Plan for 2019/20, as detailed in the report to Cabinet attached.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Plan Refresh 2019/20
Meeting/Date: Cabinet, 18th July 2019
Council, 24th July 2019
Executive Portfolio: Councillor Graham Bull, Executive Leader
Report by: Business Intelligence and Performance Manager
Wards affected: All Wards

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the refresh of the Corporate Plan for 2019/20.

The Council's Corporate Plan was adopted in 2018, comprising of a four year plan outlining the Vision, Strategic Priorities and Objectives for Huntingdonshire District Council. The Plan sets out what the Council aims to achieve in addition to core statutory services.

A 'light touch' review of the Plan has taken place which has allowed us to identify whether the 2018/19 key actions and performance indicators are still fit for purpose (i.e. which have been achieved and can be removed) and to include new or alternative actions and indicators that better reflect the Council's current direction.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

to endorse the proposed list of key actions and performance indicators at Appendix A for inclusion in the Corporate Plan for 2019/20.

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

to approve the revised key actions and performance indicators for inclusion in the Corporate Plan for 2019/20.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks endorsement of the proposed key actions and performance indicators (PIs) for the Corporate Plan for 2019/20.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council needs a clear vision with strategic priorities, setting out its objectives and how these will be achieved. The Council's Corporate Plan was reviewed in 2018 and comprises of a four year plan outlining the Vision, Strategic Priorities and Objectives for Huntingdonshire District Council.

- 2.2 The purpose of the refresh is not about creating a new Corporate Plan but providing an opportunity to reflect on any changes needed to the key actions and performance indicators for 2019/20. This review provided an opportunity to consider whether any actions or measures have been achieved and should therefore be removed and whether any new actions or measures should be included. It was also an opportunity to consider whether the actions and measures continue to be the right ones. The review took account of whether any changes due to new challenges or ambitions were necessary.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Quarterly performance reporting throughout the year has highlighted areas where actions and PIs could be improved. We have taken into account feedback throughout the year from Heads of Service, Officers who provide data and both Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet Members.

- 3.2 All actions and PIs supporting the three Strategic Priorities (People, Place and Providing Value for Money Services) were examined; proposed changes considered included removal of, or amendments to, actions or PIs as well as the addition of some new actions or PIs. The list of proposed key actions and PIs for 2019/20 is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.3 This review has followed the development of Service Plans which allows us to more closely align the actions or performance indicators proposed for inclusion in the Corporate Plan with those in Service Plans for 2019/20. Where the same actions and PIs have been used, services will be clearly focussed on delivering the same outcomes and measuring these in the same way. The Corporate Plan provides the highest level in the "golden thread" running from the Plan through Service Plans to individual objectives set in Staff Appraisals.

- 3.4 Services will continue to monitor progress on their Service Plan aims and Members will continue to receive reports on progress made against key activities and PIs in the Corporate Plan on a quarterly basis.

- 3.5 The proposed list of key actions and PIs at Appendix A will be submitted for approval by Council at their meeting on 24 July 2019.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be included in this section prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS

5.1 The key impact is that everyone in the Council will be clear about the actions and PIs to be used to measure progress made in delivering the Council's Vision and Strategic Priorities.

- Officers will be clear about what is important and their role as identified through individual objectives
- Financial Planning will be more clearly linked to corporate planning
- Service Plans will be more clearly linked to corporate planning
- Members will know what information they will get and when
- Portfolio Holders will be able to hold Officers to account
- Overview and Scrutiny will have the information they need to hold Portfolio Holders to account

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Following Cabinet, the proposed key actions and PIs will be submitted for approval by Council. Once approved, an updated version of the Corporate Plan will be made available to all employees through the Intranet and published on the Council's website. Progress in delivering our key actions and results for PIs in the Corporate Plan will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet every quarter as part of an integrated report, incorporating financial performance and progress in delivering corporate projects.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

7.1 No changes are proposed to the Corporate Plan Vision or Strategic Priorities. The actions and PIs proposed will be used to measure progress in 2019/20.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The Council's Senior Leadership Team and their teams have been involved in the refresh of the Corporate Plan, in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders. The views of Overview and Scrutiny Members are to be included in section 4.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable for this report.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Council's 2019/20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023/24 was approved by Council in February 2019. The proposed 2019/20 Corporate Plan actions and indicators have been informed by the approved service budgets and savings and growth proposals. It is therefore anticipated that there will be no additional resource implications as a result of adopting these actions and indicators or as a result of efforts made to achieve key milestones and to deliver expected levels of performance.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

11.1 No equality implications have been identified as a result of the refresh of the Corporate Plan.

12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 12.1 The Corporate Plan provides a clear direction for what we are doing, why we are doing it and what impact it is having. The refreshed Corporate Plan will continue to guide the work of services responsible for delivery of the Council's ambitions, with actions and PIs to be used to monitor progress in 2019/20.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Proposed key actions and performance indicators for inclusion in the Corporate Plan for 2019/20

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CONTACT OFFICER

Daniel Buckridge, Business Intelligence and Performance Manager
☎ (01480) 388065

Corporate Plan 2019/20 - proposed key actions and performance indicators by Strategic Priority

The refresh of the Corporate Plan has allowed us to identify whether the 2018/19 key actions and performance indicators are still fit for purpose (i.e. which have been achieved and can be removed) and to include new or alternative actions and indicators that will better reflect the Council's current direction. Details of previous actions and indicators can be found in our 2018/19 Corporate Plan here: www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1390/corporate-plan.pdf

People – we want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, to improve health and well-being and support people to be the best they can be

Key Actions:

- Ensure that the principles of earlier interventions aimed at preventing homelessness are embedded within public sector organisations and other stakeholder partners
- Provide financial assistance to people on low incomes to pay their rent and Council Tax
- Support community planning including working with parishes to complete Neighbourhood and Parish Plans
- Manage the Community Chest funding pot and voluntary sector funding to encourage and support projects to build and support community development
- Support and encourage community action on litter and waste
- Adopt a new Homelessness Strategy and a new Lettings Policy
- Identify and implement solutions to eradicate the need to place homeless families in B&Bs
- Work in partnership to provide greater leisure and health opportunities to enable more people to be more active, more often

Performance Indicators:

- Number of days of volunteering to support HDC service delivery
- Average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support
- Average number of days to process changes of circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support
- Number of homelessness preventions achieved
- More people taking part in sport and physical activity: Number of individual Leisure and Health service users over the last 12 months
- Providing more opportunities for people to be more active: Number of sessions delivered at and by One Leisure Facilities
- Providing more opportunities for people to be more active: Number of sessions delivered by One Leisure Active Lifestyles
- People participating more often: Number of One Leisure Facilities admissions – swimming, Impressions, fitness classes, sports hall, pitches, bowling and Burgess Hall (excluding school admissions)
- People participating more often: People participating more often: One Leisure Active Lifestyles throughput

Place – we want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to work and invest and we want to deliver new and appropriate housing

Key Actions

- Maintain our existing green open spaces to high standards, ensuring community involvement and encouraging greater active use, and maintain Green Flag statuses
- Build upon and use sector analysis and industrial clusters research to help inform priorities across Services
- Engage and communicate with local businesses through the Better Business For All initiative
- Implement measures to grow Business Rates
- Deliver the actions resulting from the Council's Off Street Car Parking Strategy
- Continue to work with partners and influence the Combined Authority (CA) and secure support and resources to facilitate delivery of new housing, drive economic growth and provide any critical infrastructure
- Prepare 'Prospectuses for Growth' for St Ives, Huntingdon and Ramsey and continue to support the delivery of the St Neots Masterplan
- Continue to provide active input into the delivery stage of the A14 and the design stage of the A428, and lobby for a northern route for East-West Rail and the local road network to deliver the specific requirements of the Council
- Facilitate delivery of new housing and appropriate infrastructure
- Maintain a five year housing land supply (5YHLS) and ensure that the Housing Delivery Test in the National Planning Policy Framework is met (*note: for November 2019, this means delivery of at least 55% of housing required over the previous 3 years*)
- Adopt and implement Housing Strategy annual Action Plan
- Review air pollution activities to reflect new national Clean Air Strategy
- Prepare options reports for the redevelopment of the Bus Station Quarters in St Ives and Huntingdon
- Set out timetable for preparation of an updated Section 106 Supplementary Planning Document and Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule and implement
- Reduce incidences of littering through targeting of enforcement work
- Deliver capital/community projects to provide more leisure and health facilities in the district

Performance Indicators:

- Percentage of sampled areas which are clean or predominantly clean of litter, detritus, graffiti, flyposting, or weed accumulations
- Percentage of street cleansing service requests resolved in five working days
- Percentage of grounds maintenance service requests resolved in five working days
- Percentage of successful environmental crime enforcements
- Percentage of household waste recycled/reused/composted
- Percentage of food premises scoring 3 or above on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- Number of complaints about food premises
- Percentage of grounds maintenance works inspected which pass the Council's agreed service specification
- Number of missed bins per 1,000 households
- Net growth in number of commercial properties liable for Business Rates
- The percentage of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected when due

- Percentage of planning applications processed on target – major (within 13 weeks or agreed extended period)
- Percentage of planning applications processed on target – minor (within 8 weeks or agreed extended period)
- Percentage of planning applications processed on target – household extensions (within 8 weeks or agreed extended period)
- Number of new affordable homes delivered in 2019/2020
- Net growth in number of homes with a Council Tax banding
- Total number of appeals allowed as a percentage of total number of applications refused
- Number of costs awards against the Council where the application was refused at Development Management Committee contrary to the officer recommendation

Providing Value for Money services – we want to become a more Efficient and Effective Council and become a more Customer Focussed Organisation

Key Actions

- Actively manage Council owned non-operational assets and, where possible, ensure such assets are generating a market return for the Council
- Develop our Customer Portal to offer improved online and out of hours access to our services and work with partners to deliver better multi-agency customer services
- Develop the Council's Business Change function and create a culture of change management throughout the organisation
- Develop the Council's approach to performance management and business intelligence
- Deliver the Council Anywhere project to introduce new digital technology and ways of working remotely to improve productivity and flexibility for our staff
- Introduce a new electronic pre-application planning advice service

Performance Indicators

- Total amount of energy used in Council buildings
- Percentage of Business Rates collected in year
- Percentage of Council Tax collected in year
- Percentage of invoices from suppliers paid within 30 days
- Staff sickness days lost per full time employee (FTE)
- Number of Staff Council (employee group) representatives – to be reported at Q1 only
- Percentage response rate to the Staff Survey – to be reported at Q2 only
- Percentage of Staff Survey results improved – to be reported at Q3 only
- Percentage of Staff Survey Action Plan on track – to be reported at Q4 only
- Call Centre telephone satisfaction rate
- Customer Service Centre satisfaction rate
- Percentage of Stage 1 complaints resolved within time
- Percentage of Stage 2 complaints resolved within time
- Percentage of calls to Call Centre answered
- Percentage reduction in avoidable contacts
- Percentage of households with customer accounts generated
- Net expenditure against approved budget
- Income generated from Commercial Estate Rental & Property Fund Income

Confidential
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Shared Services' 2018/19 Annual Report

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) –
9th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Digital & Customers, Councillor
Darren Tysoe

Report by: Corporate Director – Services, Oliver Morley

Wards affected: All

RECOMMENDATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel is invited to comment on the Shared Services' 2018/19 Annual Report appended to the Cabinet report attached at Appendix A.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Shared Services' 2018/19 Annual Report

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 18th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Digital & Customers, Councillor Darren Tysoe

Report by: Corporate Director – Services, Oliver Morley

Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

The attached Annual Report refers to the progress that has been made over the last year by the 3C ICT, Legal and Building Control shared services against the 2017/18 Business Plans in terms of their financial and service performance. It also covers customer satisfaction and work to deliver on development projects.

Shared Services are overseen by a Management Board (containing the lead directors from each authority). The governance structure also features a Chief Executives' Board and an overarching group comprising the Leaders of each of the Councils.

The 2018/19 Annual Report requires the approval of all three partners. It is therefore recommended that the Cabinet delegate authority to the Shared Service Management Board to agree final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all partner committees.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended:

- 1) To endorse the Shared Service Annual Report for 2018/19 attached at Appendix 1
- 2) To delegate authority to the Shared Service Management Board to agree any final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all three individual partner Councils

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To endorse the 2018/19 Annual Report for the Shared Services.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and Huntingdonshire District Council commenced sharing Legal, Building Control and ICT Services in October 2015 (known as 3C Shared Services). The shared services are based upon a “lead authority model” where an agreed lead Council is responsible for the operational delivery of the service. The formal partnership agreement between the authorities, signed in June 2016, contains a requirement that an Annual Report is prepared on the services’ activities and performance. The 3C Shared Services Annual Report, at **Appendix 1**, sets out the context for the operation of each of the shared services with a summary of performance against the approved business plan.

2.2. The partner councils have agreed that the achievement of the following outcomes is the primary objective of sharing services:

- Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each Council
- Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service
- Savings through reduced managements costs and economies of scale
- Increased resilience and retention of staff
- Minimise the bureaucracy involved in operating the shared service
- Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate
- Procurement and purchasing efficiencies, and sharing of specialist roles which individually, are not viable in the long-term

2.3 A key objective for each of the services is the development of a set of forward-looking business plans that set out the key priorities, objectives, activities and measures of success for each service. The plans for 2019/20 were presented and formally approved by the three councils in spring 2019, and their reception recognised the progress that had been made over the previous 12 months.

2.4 The Annual Report has been consulted on with lead Members at each of the Councils. Their role is to provide advice and oversight, to challenge and recommend for endorsement the shared service business plan and budgets.

2.5 Annual Reports have to be endorsed by the partners’ individual Executives. It is therefore recommended that the Shared Service Management Board is authorised to agree any final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all partners.

2.6 The Shared Services Partnership Agreement requires the parties to “engage in discussions” to agree whether to extend the term of the Agreement beyond the expiry date of 30 September 2020 – and provides that this engagement should commence by “no later than the fourth anniversary of the commencement date” [on 1 October 2015], thus by no later than 30 September 2019. The parties may, by written agreement, extend the term for a further period of twelve months or such other period as may be agreed in writing. There is no limit on the number of times that the parties may by written agreement extend the term. Further reports will be submitted to Members as required.

3. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 3.1 The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) will be included in this section prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

4. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Head of each shared service is ultimately responsible for the overall operation of that service. Any feedback on the Annual Report will be fed into them to inform the delivery of the service and how it operates.
- 4.2 The recommendation set out is to delegate authority to the Shared Service Management Board to agree final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all three individual partner Councils.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 The recommendations relate to the corporate objective 'to become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services'.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Significant consultation with staff, Unions and Staff Council took place during the establishment of the Shared Services.

7. IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no significant implications.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Shared Service 2018/19 Annual Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were relied upon in writing this report.

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2018/19 Annual Report

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3C Shared Services is a strategic partnership between Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council

VERSION 1.0

Author: 3C Shared Services Management Board

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Executive Summary

During 2018/19 the shared services have built on the operational state that was reported on in the previous Annual Report with further consolidation of their functions particularly through the development of digital systems of working. This accords with the partners authorities' strategic direction for IT and Digital services.

The financial benefits of operating shared services were confirmed last year when 15% savings were reported against the original business cases. This trend has continued in 2018/19. All three services are reporting savings against their budgets for the year.

Recruitment and retention of staff has been an important area for all the shared services. All of them have Senior Managers though, as would be expected, there has been some turnover. Recruitment is a particular challenge for local authorities, so the success of the Building Control service in finding innovative ways of meeting this challenge, are particularly noteworthy. This will be an area that will need to be carefully watched in 2019/20.

The approval of Business Plans for 2019/20 by all the partner authorities means 3C Shared Services are in a sound position to take further steps towards delivering on the original objectives, most notably delivering the policy objectives of each Council, increasing resilience while delivering savings.

Much of the work on Shared Services has been dedicated to getting them to a position where they run on a "business as usual" basis. There are, however, some outstanding governance matters still to be addressed. The current Shared Services Agreement expires in 2020 and the partners are required to commence discussion in late 2019 on future collaborative arrangements. This provides an opportunity to complete those items that are still outstanding, review detailed operating arrangements and check that the broad principles are the most appropriate to take the shared services forward.

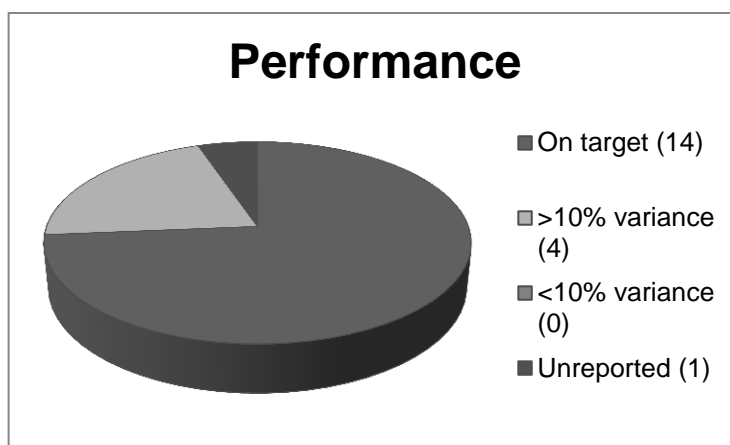
Challenges have been experienced during the year. The resilience of IT systems has been tested by two major incidents. Business recovery and continuity plans were implemented and remedial work to systems rectified the problems. Under the Server Room Consolidation Project failover testing has been successfully carried out. The project will be completed by the end of 2019 thereby enhancing the resilience of the service.

SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council commenced sharing Legal, Building Control and ICT services in October 2015. The formal Agreement between the authorities contains a requirement that an Annual Report is prepared on the services' activities and performance. This is the second such Report.
- 1.2 As also required by the Shared Services Agreement, the performance of the shared service performance is overseen by a governance structure, comprising a Shared Services Management Board (containing the lead directors from each authority), a Chief Executives' Board and 3C Joint Shared Services Group (comprising of the leaders of each of the Councils).
- 1.3 The 2018/19 service business plans for the Shared ICT, Legal and Internal Audit services were approved by the Cambridge City Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council committees in March 2018. The business plans provide information on the priorities, key performance indicators, budget profiles and development projects.
- 1.4 All the services now have Senior Managers who are embedded in the services and this has resulted in a number of strategies being produced and approved by all three partners, ensuring that services have appropriate plans in place and these are suitably aligned with organisational priorities to deliver against the priorities of the three partner authorities.

SECTION 2 - OPERATING AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

- 2.1 The following sections contain service specific details on the operation and performance of the shared services. All services are monitored against a range of performance measures, on their financial performance and customer satisfaction and on the achievement of development projects.
- 2.2 Overall performance against the measures agreed by the partner authorities in March 2018 is positive. Of a total of 19 performance measures, 14 have been completed as planned. The remaining four are reported as being within 10% of the target. No performance has been reported as being more than 10% adrift of the target, while one measure is not reported to the Board. Further analysis appears in the next section.



- 2.3 Financial performance is a key aspect of sharing. All of the services have achieved savings against their budgets for 2018/19. Importantly, the year's budget targets represent savings against the original 2015/16 baseline positions.
- 2.4 Building Control and 3C Legal had identified 19 development projects between them. Eleven are on track, six have experienced minor slippage and two were subject to significant slippage. It is necessary to distinguish the position of 3C ICT's projects from those of other services. Its role is to provide support to all the partner councils' service areas in the achievement of their projects. 3C ICT has been involved in 17 major projects in a supporting role. Further details appear below.
- 2.5 With regard to customer satisfaction, all services have recorded satisfaction rates in excess of the 85% standard.

SECTION 3 - 3C LEGAL SHARED SERVICE

General Information

- 3.1 3C Legal Service, known as 'The Practice', has the following objectives:
- Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each Council.
 - Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service.
 - Savings through reduced management costs and economies of scale.
 - Increased resilience and retention of staff.
 - Minimise the bureaucracy involved in delivering the service.
 - Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate.
 - Procurement and purchasing efficiencies.
 - Sharing of specialist roles.
- 3.2 Prior to establishment, each council was facing challenges with recruitment and retention of legal staff and was increasingly reliant upon external providers to meet its needs, especially on major projects. A shared service would create a critical mass of capability, target efficiencies, and actively seek to take advantage of income generating opportunities. At that time the combined budget of the legal services for the three partner authorities was £1,444,000 and a savings target of £179,000 was targeted for 16/17; the equivalent of a reduction of 15% of the net revenue budget after income has been applied.
- 3.3 Significant changes were made to the way The Practice operated in 2017/18, including:
- ✓ Introduction of time recording software.
 - ✓ The use of a consumption based model to assist with transparency.
 - ✓ Revising the accommodation and operating arrangements.
 - ✓ Decreased reliance on locum and agency staff.

This has enabled The Practice to move on to a sound footing, which has realised results in 2018/19.

Financial Performance

Further information is provided in the performance report at Appendix 1

- 3.4 The Outturn for 2018/19 is as follows:

£	Budget	Actual	Variance/Outturn
Legal	1,191,220	991,194	200,066 (surplus)

- 3.5 In regard to the three Authorities' combined budget of £1,444,000, the headline is a 17% saving on the pre-shared service position. The outturn for 2018/19 of £991,154 represents a 17% saving on the £1,193,360 baseline budget in 2015/16, and this is despite £116,860 of salary inflation, which has been absorbed. This has been delivered through driving greater efficiency, removing contractors and putting in place a stable structure. Fee earning time is up for the year.
- 3.6 Performance against the income target of £200,840 for 2018/19 has seen income of £269,915 delivered, which has contributed to the surplus of £200,840.

Service Performance

- 3.7 The last 12 months have in overall terms been extremely positive for The Practice with improved performance and delivery. The last 12 months has generally seen staff integrate into the shared structure with far greater staff movement between offices at Cambridge, Cambourne and Huntingdon. This is to the benefit of the Practice and clients in enabling greater resilience and client interface. Several welcome additions have been made to the staffing structure and the flexible working arrangements offered by the Practice have proved an important selling point in attracting staff.
- 3.8 This year has seen a marked improvement in the level of hours recorded by fee earners. The target hours for the Practice have been exceeded by 13.5% or 1,964 hours in simple terms. The final quarter performance has shown a marked improvement. This can be explained both by the improved efforts of the fee earners but also because the Practice Manager is now able to capture time spent attending hearings and committees for fee earners, which previously was not as accurately captured as would have been liked. This has been one of the benefits of the enhanced IKEN practice management system rolled out in the second half of the year. In overall terms the improved performance benefits all by unlocking additional fee earner time across the Practice. Moving forward the benefits represented by Council Anywhere will certainly assist in building on this positive progression.
- 3.9 Attention is drawn to the 90% success rate in litigation. This is explained by the work undertaken by the Practice in relation to debt recovery and parking prosecutions on the relatively high number of cases comparatively for HDC. In terms of complexity such matters are more straightforward. Work is underway with the client to seek to enable them to process more routine paperwork/activity on these matters as a more effective mechanism for interfacing with court/public. The figures remain extremely encouraging and work currently underway with the client (developing the intelligent client role) will seek to build on this.
- 3.10 One set back in year was the refusal by the Law Society to approve 3C Legal for Lexcel accreditation to allow the Practice to trade commercially, ironically on the grounds that the shared service is made up of three separate

organisations, rather than being a separate entity in its own right. Nonetheless the preparations for Lexcel have been extremely beneficial in driving improved efficiencies and best practice and in overall terms have acted as powerful stimulant to drive improved performance.

Customer Feedback

- 3.11 Last year's Annual Report identified that further work was required on measuring customer satisfaction in a meaningful manner during 2018/19. The outcome of this work shows a very positive picture. Following a customer survey completed during the year all of the four Teams have exceeded 90% satisfaction rates, with a Practice average of 96.5%.
- 3.12 The client satisfaction levels are very encouraging albeit fee earners will continue to work with clients to improve the number of surveys returned. Working with clients through regular liaison meetings encourages feedback and interaction and the roll out of such meetings across the last 12 months has been delivered at every level of the Practice. By listening to clients' concerns and feeding back any areas where they can assist (through improved instructions for example) the work of the Practice has become much more client focused.

Looking Forward

- 3.13 In terms of the year ahead the Practice is looking to address some of the IT issues the service has experienced by upgrading all of the hardware, which will support cross site working, something that is key to this team. The legal service are also looking to work with the three councils to review legal spend outside 3C Legal and to quantify the cost benefit/risk benefit position of the cost of the advice versus the risk associated with non-commissioning of advice, to identify opportunities where a more commercial approach can be taken.

SECTION 4 - 3C ICT SHARED SERVICE

General Information

- 4.1 The following objectives have been collectively agreed for 3C ICT:
- Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each Council.
 - Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service.
 - Savings through reduced managements costs and economies of scale.
 - Increased resilience and retention of staff.
 - Minimise the bureaucracy involved in operating the shared service.
 - Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate.
 - Procurement and purchasing efficiencies.
 - Sharing of specialist roles which individually, are not viable in the long-term.
- 4.2 In essence, the drivers for the 3C ICT Shared Service are:
- Savings to the 3 councils: a single shared service increases efficiency and reduces the unit cost of service delivery.
 - Service resilience: fewer single points of failure, and increased scale enables increased investment in more robust infrastructure, thus reducing probability and impact of service outages.
 - Collaborative innovation: increased scale enables investment in roles such as technical architect / IT Analyst, which will be the catalyst for accelerating the design and delivery of next generation council services, with Digital First at their heart. In this way, the 3C ICT Shared Service will contribute to the evolution of council services, a position and level of investment which none of the 3 partner councils could afford on their own.
- 4.3 2018/19 has been a year of progress, transition and challenge for 3C ICT. In terms of progress, financial targets for the year have been achieved. In addition progress on the digital portal has helped to demonstrate the progress that can be made when there is clear alignment and close working between services and ICT, and ably showed the benefits of more agile delivery.
- 4.4 Transition - Further development, and deepening, of the ways of working with and between the three councils, and the benefits of standardisation of technology and harmonisation of ways of working are beginning to deliver significant benefits. The number of applications in use across the councils has reduced to 222, from a starting point of 284 reducing both duplication and overheads. The three councils have also agreed formal priorities to ensure there is clarity on all sides on how the finite 3C ICT resource is being tasked.

- 4.5 The Council Anywhere project, driving not only technology changes but also organisational change and streamlined ways of working, is being rolled out across the three councils starting this year. Alongside the technology changes, the consistent use of Business Analysts, and the further development of Transformation functions, working collaboratively across the 3 councils, has made consistent system requirements much clearer. This significantly increases the probability of projects delivering the changed ways of working to which councils aspire. The Art of the Possible workshops undertaken as part of the project has informed this and this approach has been enhanced by the appointment of Council Anywhere Champions who work with their services to identify business needs that the new technology can address.

Financial Performance

Further information is provided in Appendix 2

- 4.6 The provisional outturn position for 2018/19 is recorded in the table below:

£	Budget	Actual	Variance/Outturn £
3C ICT	6,508,725	6,378,983	129,742 (surplus)

- 4.7 The overall provisional financial outturn demonstrates a saving over the budget set at the start of the year. This budget (£6,508,725) represents a saving of £811,406 over the pre-shared service costs of ICT in the 3 authorities. The financial reporting is based on re-profiled business case approved in February 2018. Partners are paying less for their ICT service under 3C ICT and it is currently projected there will also be an underspend. This is despite a number of challenges throughout the year, particularly in relation to staffing.

Service Performance

- 4.8 In terms of KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) – of the 8 official 3C ICT KPIs, 5 are performing above target, with the remaining 3 operating within 10% of the target.
- 4.9 Challenge - Has come in the form of the turnover in the leadership of the service which has removed capacity and leadership at a key time; two significant service disruptions; and the pressure of maintaining business as usual arrangements across three legacy IT arrangements, whilst simultaneously migrating these arrangements to more stable and modern solutions.
- 4.10 Transition between technology and ways of working is always an organisation's point of greatest risk, and creates vulnerability to external factors, as has been demonstrated by the events of the past year. Lessons have been learned, and whilst the agreed delivery programme offers mitigation against similar events in the future, until these projects are

delivered in full, residual risk will remain. 3C ICT remain committed to working closely with the authorities both individually and collectively to identify risk, and to support the authorities' overall risk appetite by providing options around effective management of risk and realigning risk from more physical ways of working. This is particularly relevant given that all three councils are pursuing a technology forward strategy, which will continue to increase their reliance on technology. The first 100 day review by the new Head of ICT will address this point as a matter of priority.

- 4.11 In terms of clarity on leadership of the service, all three councils have now, formally approved the recruitment of Sam Smith and the supplementing of her part time role as the new Head of 3C ICT, with a full time Deputy Head of IT (Operations) post (interim arrangements already in place). This will provide additional capacity and focus on business as usual and alignment of project activity, and help resolve the root causes of a number of issues experienced in the past 12 months. Sam Smith in her Head of ICT role is currently producing a first 100 day report that will act as a state of the service report, reflect on incidents affecting it and present all three councils with clear choices to address any issues identified.

Service Resilience

- 4.12 All three authorities rely on all the services and systems being operational virtually 24/7. In the past twelve months service availability has fallen below what the ICT service aspires to achieve. The completion of the server room consolidation will significantly improve the situation; however, there are several lessons that have been learnt. Some of these service outages have been down to external factors whilst others have been down to changes made by the internal Team. The Team is working hard to increase the accountability of external providers, plan and deliver internal changes more effectively and improve the clarity of the communication that is provided to our customers and its planning.
- 4.13 There are two main measures of incident performance (response and resolution), and these have varied significantly throughout the year, reflecting operational pressures (November outages) and the need to balance Business as Usual (BAU) service with project delivery. Processes have been implemented during the year to manage major service affecting incidents and the system used to manage all calls to the IT service desk has also been reviewed to ensure it is effective. The reality is that until the two key convergence projects (Council Anywhere and Server Room Consolidation) are complete the IT Service will be required to manage the legacy environments of all three councils and the problems inherent in those environments. Delays in those projects has meant that the anticipated drop in call volumes and streamlining of support processes have not yet come to fruition.
- 4.14 In summary the service has:
- Delivered a 13% saving over the pre-shared service position.
 - Delivered resilient data centres, with disaster recovery capability.

- Implemented a common, shared digital portal, which already has over five thousand registered users, and demonstrated customer-to-frontline staff system integration.
- Made significant progress on the implementation of the new shared waste system,

Customer Feedback

- 4.15 KPI 1 Customer Satisfaction with 3C ICT as measured by receipt of both unsolicited (compliments, complaints and comments) and solicited feedback (feedback requests for all resolved calls and quarterly surveys), has remained about target throughout the year, averaging over 90% satisfaction despite some service outages.

Looking Forward

Key Projects

- 4.16 **Council Anywhere** -This project has been marked by significant delays throughout the year, with a series of technical and supplier issues compounded by changes in senior management, a higher than expected level of BAU work throughout the year and other ongoing project work. The result has been that delivery has slipped into Q4 for some elements and beyond for others. As at Q4 Local Champion overview and training sessions are complete, governance settings have been agreed and a rollout plan has been submitted by the Councils'. Key elements of Office 365 have been delivered for testing purposes to the Local Champions and other key users with Product Assurance officers signing off the testing ready for roll out from April 2019. The Global Protect VPN has been delivered and application packaging and testing has been ongoing. A related project **Aruba ClearPass – Council Anywhere (CCC/SCDC/HDC) (Sponsor – Oliver Morley)** has seen the technology to support truly flexible working across all three councils successfully rolled out at Mandela House and Pathfinder House, plus 2 floors of the Guildhall. Plans are in place for the roll out at Waterbeach, South Cambs Hall, Eastfield House and the remaining floors of the Guildhall.
- 4.17 **Consolidated Server Room** - During the year progress on this project has been variable with initial good progress made, with Q1 seeing the migration of HDC largely complete along with 40% of SCDC servers and active plans to commence the migration of City servers. Progress then stalled for several reasons. Q3 saw two major issues related to this project and in turn impacting progress. On 31st October a fibre cable was accidentally severed causing Cambridge City to lose connectivity with the Shire Hall datacentre. The outage resulted in two errors on the server room setup that required fixing. Prior to the remediation work being fully completed a further incident occurred on 15th November, where the air conditioning at Pathfinder House shut down and caused overheating in the server room. All the systems were recovered and were fully operational by Monday 19th November. No data was lost. Following these 2 outages suppliers have implemented the required remediation work in December. Failover testing was conducted in Q4 (February) and was successful. Work to decommission the legacy equipment also started in that

quarter with many of the old servers having been powered off and unracked at SCDC.

- 4.18 **Public Services NetworkSN** - Work continued on this throughout the year with the result that HDC submitted and were accredited as compliant in Q4. SCDC submitted their information to Cabinet Office during Q4 and are waiting to hear the result. City have a further 14 actions to complete before submission (due May 2019).
- 4.19 **Environmental Health System Procurement** - HDC and CCC have had capital funding approved to undertake this project alongside SCDC. All 3 partners have developed an agreed specification, which has gone out to tender, and will finish in early April.
- 4.20 **Waste Services Implementation (SOSP) (SCDC/CCC/HDC)** - Phase 1 of this project was closed down within Q4. **Phase 2 (CCC/SCDC/HDC) (Sponsor – Joel Carre)** was at Amber in that quarter due to risks to the project, the newness of IEG4 portal and Yotta Alloy and likelihood that the development might take longer than expected. The Digital Team have delivered 3 integrated forms for City, 1 for SCDC and 1 proof of concept for HDC.

SECTION 5 - 3C BUILDING CONTROL

General Information

- 5.1 3C Building Control was set up in October 2015 with the following objectives:
- Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each Council.
 - Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service.
 - Savings through reduced managements costs and economies of scale.
 - Increased resilience and retention of staff.
 - Minimise the bureaucracy involved in operating the shared service.
 - Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate.
- 5.2 When creating the shared service, the priorities were to improve capacity by expanding the skilled team with management arrangements that enabled resources to be deployed effectively and efficiently, the adoption of best practices and processes and to improve recruitment and retention in local authority building control services.
- 5.3 This Annual Report reflects progress against the Business Plan for 2018/19. The Plan contained detailed service information and was approved at partner committees in March 2018. Given the commercial nature of the service, only limited information has been included in this public report.

General Progress

- 5.4 The Strategic Lead has been successfully recruited into a secondment into the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service for a six month period on a part time basis, commencing in April 2019. To facilitate this secondment, a Principal has been appointed to act up as Strategic Lead on a part time basis and a Senior has been appointed to act up as Principal. Recruitment has taken place of a replacement Surveyor, who is due to commence early in 2019/20.
- 5.5 There has been some slippage in the budget, which means the service review planned for 2018/19 is likely to take place in the new Financial Year, subject to finances. The service also will be in a position to review the proportions set for fee earning and non fee earning for the financial year 2019/20.
- 5.6 The team continues to improve its processes. The majority of applications are now made electronically and the aim is to achieve fully electronic processes by July 2019. This is being rolled out across hubs.
- 5.7 With regard to its marketing activities, the service has nominated 14 schemes for the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) National Building Excellence Awards 2019, and 11 of these are finalists. Out of the total number of finalists for the LABC East Anglia region, 3C Building Control has almost a quarter of

the nominations. This is testament to the excellent schemes within the area of operation.

- 5.8 In terms of the recognition received by staff during the year, the team were nominated in the South Cambridgeshire staff awards; one member of the team was nominated in the South Cambridgeshire staff awards, above and beyond, and one member of the team was highly commended in the national LABC Rising Star Awards 2019. The team were also Finalists in the Association for Public Service Excellence Awards 2018/19 for the Best Construction Team.

Financial Performance

- 5.9 The outturn position for 2018/19 is recorded in the table below:

£	Budget	Actual	Variance/Outturn
3CBuilding Control	1,801,160	1,533,956	267,204 (surplus)

- 5.10 It is a requirement that each Council contributes to the non fee earning account for all statutory works for which the service is unable to charge.
- 5.11 The service is currently forecasting an increase in the deferred income. This is a more positive position than the last two years.

Service Performance

- 5.12 Building Control had eight Key Performance Indicators for 2018/19 ranging from acknowledging and determining applications to customer satisfaction levels. These KPIs form part of the quality management system adopted by the service.

Customer Feedback

- 5.13 This is the first time customer satisfaction feedback has been obtained for a number of years. For 2018/19 the Building Control Partnership has been collating data on the percentage of customers who overall have rated the service as good and above. A KPI target has been reported on throughout the year. The service distributes customer satisfaction surveys to all customers, including those who submit regularisations. This is captured via an online questionnaire. Returns are generally positive. An interim target of 75% has been exceeded with an actual rate of 86% satisfaction. Some areas have been identified for improvement, which the service reviews and actions if appropriate.
- 5.14 The service will be working to a Quality Management Service Target of 95% in 2019/20.

Key Projects

- 5.15 Building Control identified six development projects in its 2018/19 Business Plan. Four of these projects are on track, while two have encountered some (but not significant) slippage.
- 5.16 The service is undertaking a full review of the IT infrastructure to maximise effectiveness of the teams and enable agile working. This is ongoing and interlinked with other projects. The Council Anywhere project and new equipment should benefit the service; however, there has been some slippage with the roll out of new laptops and screens. Related to this, the service is working to transform paper based filing systems into a fully digitised records and management system.
- 5.17 Staff recruitment, retention and development is a key objective for Building Control. A recruitment drive has been successful and team development days have been held and working groups set up. Team members are undertaking training to enhance their skills. Further recruitment exercises have been undertaken in July and September 2018 and March 2019 to ensure succession planning is effective. There remain issues with recruitment of experienced professionals.
- 5.18 A project was identified to unlock the commercial potential of the team. To date the Strategic Lead has been undertaking some consultancy work.
- 5.19 Green ratings have been reported for implementing the ISO 9001: 2015 quality management system across the partnership and for developing a marketing and communication strategy for the service. These projects are now business as usual and not included in 2019/2020 Business Plan.

SECTION 6 - GOVERNANCE

- 6.1 Shared Services' governance arrangements are prescribed in the Shared Services Agreement. The main provisions require there to be in place a Management Board, a Chief Executives' Board and a Joint Shared Services Group. In addition, Business Plans for each shared service and an Annual Report are submitted through the three councils' formal decision-making forums for approval.
- 6.2 The governance arrangements ensure that all partners have joint responsibility for the shared services and that decisions are made at the most appropriate level. The Council Leaders and Chief Executives can focus on the strategic relationship between the three councils and on agreeing new services to consider sharing, whereas the Corporate Directors through the Management Board can provide consistent leadership and drive forward the shared services.
- 6.3 It is confirmed that the Management Board has met throughout the year as have the Chief Executives' Board and the Joint Shared Services Group. The Management Board has fulfilled its monitoring role by receiving quarterly performance reports. Its views appear in the next section. The role of the other two aspects of the governance arrangements are evidenced by the fact that Business Plans and the Annual Report have fed into the formal arenas on the required timescales.
- 6.4 Shared services are subject to audit and an Audit Protocol has been adopted for this purpose.
- 6.5 The governance of shared services is constantly under review. Any conclusions reached that result in changes will be incorporated into the new Agreement, which will come into force from October 2020. To give an indication of the kind of changes that are being contemplated, one of the Cambridge City Scrutiny Committees has requested that the feasibility and potential benefits of establishing a joint scrutiny function are investigated.

Management Board



Bob Palmer (SCDC), Oliver Morley (HDC), Fiona Bryant (CCC)

- 6.6 The Management Board is an important feature of the governance of shared services. It is formally established as it is a requirement of Shared Services Agreement signed by the partner authorities. The Management Board meets on a quarterly basis and is made up of the Corporate Directors from each council who have a lead role in shared services overall. Each of the shared service leads attends the Board to provide updates and share learning. This is the forum to agree joint priorities and the direction for service delivery, ensuring that the needs of all partners are reflected, managed and delivered through the business plans and that any issues or risks are addressed as early as possible.
- 6.7 The Management Board also holds each of the shared service leads to account in terms of the implementation of their business plans and the delivery of the benefits identified. The Management Board in turn reports to the Chief Executives' Board and, on a quarterly basis, to the Shared Services Joint Group which comprises the three Council Leaders. The Leaders are then well-placed to provide any updates to their individual councils.
- 6.8 The Management Board is of the view that the shared services have made good progress in 2018/19. The Board places particular emphasis on the financial performance of all the services. Compared with the baseline budget, all services have achieved savings on top of the 15% savings reported last year.
- 6.9 The Management Board also is pleased to report on the performance of the shared services. Overall performance against targets is running at 74% on track and 21% within 10% variance of the target. Equally, customer feedback shows satisfaction rates above the 85% target for all three services.
- 6.10 Directors have not shied away from meeting the challenges that have been encountered. They have been closely involved in tackling interruptions to the ICT services, and are satisfied that, in the unique and severe circumstances that arose, the response of 3C ICT was in accordance with business continuity and recovery plans. Additional resources have been allocated to ensure the service can be sustained. Importantly, lessons have been learned, and Directors are confident the ICT service will be more robust going forward. The establishment of an ICT steering mechanism will aid ongoing service

development. Attention is drawn to the integral role 3C ICT has in driving forward the three councils' transformation programmes and establishing cultural change.

- 6.11 The Management Board is confident the shared services are in good shape as they enter into 2019/20 and subsequent years. Important developments will take place in 2019/20 to enhance the transparency of shared services by reviewing the basis on which services are recharged to the three partner authorities and by ensuring services have formal agreements in place to make explicit what the services will do.

3C LEGAL SHARED SERVICE

Council Budget Contribution and Hours Consumed

Council	% budget contribution	Hours Consumed
CCC	54.22%	8052.25 (49.21%)
HDC	18.54%	3664.04 (22.39%)
SCDC	27.24%	4646.53 (28.40%)

Staff Productivity(Target 90%)

Target (hours)	Actual (hours)	% of Target Achieved
14398.43	16362.82	113.64%*

* Target exceeded

Customer Satisfaction (Target 90%)

Team	% of Target Achieved
Planning Team (sent 89, returned 23)	99%
Property Team (sent 195, returned 75)	100%
Contracts Team (sent 88, returned 39)	97%
Litigation Team (sent 103, returned 38)	90%
Practice Average	96.5%

Litigation Outcomes

Cases Closed on the System	Cases marked as Successful	Cases marked as Unsuccessful
CCC = 214	CCC = 185	CCC = 1

HDC = 446 SCDC = 30	HDC = 410 SCDC = 24	HDC = 3 SCDC = 2
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3C ICT SHARED SERVICE

Council Budget Contribution

COUNCIL	Budget £	Actual (Provisional) £	Variance/ Outturn£
Cambridge City Council	3,080,494	3,035,040	45,454 (surplus)
Huntingdonshire District Council	2,097,672	2,000,251	97,421 (surplus)
South Cambridgeshire District Council	1,330,559	1,343,692	13,133 (overspend)

Service Performance Against Indicators

KPI customer satisfaction (based on time taken to resolve) – Target is >80%

Customer satisfaction –

Q1 = 95%	Q2 – 93%	Q3 – 93%	Q4 – 93%		↔
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KPI Service availability

Q1 – Amber	Q2 - Amber	Q3 - Red	Q4 - Amber		↔
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KPI Incident Performance – Target is >83.75%

Q1– 90%	Q2 63%	Q3 67%	Q4 84%		↓
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KPI Service request Performance – Target is >92.5%

Q1 - 74%	Q2 - 81.5%	Q3 - 80.75	Q4 – 93.5%		↑
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KPI Service/Work order request performance – Target is >85%

Starter – Mover – Leaver process

Q1 – 86%	Q2 – 86%%	Q3 – 93%	Q4 – 91%		↑
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KPI Project Delivery Performance (based on time to receive and respond to project requests)

Q1 – 70%	Q2 – 53%	Q3 - 35%	Q4 – 61%		↔
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KPI8 – Services Budget savings

Q1 - £160k by FY end	Q2 - £27.5k by FY end	Q3 - £27.5k by FY end	Q3 – £155k by FY end		↔
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Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Huntingdon Town Council Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) – 9th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Growth

Report by: Planning Service Manager (Growth)

Wards affected: Huntingdon

Recommendation:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) makes comments to the Cabinet on the report and recommendation.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Huntingdon Town Council Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum
Meeting/Date:	Cabinet – 18th July 2019
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Growth
Report by:	Planning Service Manager (Growth)
Wards affected:	Huntingdon

Executive Summary:

Following the examination of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, this report proposes acting upon the Examiner's report to accept the modifications proposed and progress to referendum.

Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

1. Agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report and recommended modifications, and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan. It also sets out a timetable for this process.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the examination of a neighbourhood plan the Examiner sends their report to the local planning authority and the town/parish council preparing the neighbourhood plan. The examiner is required to set out one of three options:

- a) That the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum as submitted
- b) That the neighbourhood plan is modified by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and the modified version proceeds to referendum; or
- c) That the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions and/ or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

- 2.2 The local planning authority has limited options in how to respond to the examiner's recommendations:

1. Act upon the Examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum, whether or not the Examiner recommends modifications are necessary to meet the basic conditions;
2. Propose to take a decision substantially different from the Examiner's recommendation which is wholly or partly as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact; or
3. Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report - this is only permissible where c) above is the case.

- 2.3 Huntingdon Town Council produced a Submission Version of their Neighbourhood Plan which was available for comment between 11 February 2019 and 25 March 2019. The Examiner's Report on the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan was received on 9 May 2019. The Examiner recommended that with appropriate modifications the neighbourhood plan would meet the basic conditions against which it is required to be tested and so should progress to referendum.

- 2.4 The Examiner proposed a number of modifications to the submitted neighbourhood plan. These have been discussed and agreed with representatives of Huntingdon Town Council.

- 2.5 The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Examiner's report and draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions are all included as Appendices to this report.

- 2.6 Having regard to the options set out in paragraph 2.2:

- It is considered that the modifications will enable the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions required; and

- There is no new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact to indicate that option 2 in paragraph 2.2 should be followed.

3. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 Following approval by Cabinet, preparations will be made for a referendum to be held on the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Regulations.
- 3.2 In addition to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions the Examiner is required to recommend on the area to be covered by the referendum. In this instance he recommended that the referendum area be the same as the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan area, approved by the District Council.
- 3.3 There is a statutory requirement through The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) for 28 working days' notice to be given before the referendum is held. There is also a requirement that the referendum is held within 56 working days of the decision that the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum, unless there is an existing planned polling opportunity that the referendum could be combined with which the qualifying body (Huntingdon Town Council) have agreed. A potential date for the referendum has been discussed with Democratic Services. Holding the referendum on Thursday 19 September 2019 is proposed, which would meet both time requirements. This provisional date has been discussed with representatives of Huntingdon Town Council, and they have indicated that they support this date.
- 3.4 At the referendum residents will be able to vote on the question: 'Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Huntingdon to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'
- 3.5 If a majority of votes cast by residents are 'yes', Full Council will be asked to 'make' the neighbourhood plan at its next available meeting, which, assuming that the referendum is held on 19 September 2019, would be on Wednesday 9 October 2019. The plan will then become part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will follow.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Progressing the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan through to referendum links to the strategic objective 'To support community planning including working with parishes to complete Neighbourhood and Parish Plans.'

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Examiner's report has confirmed that Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, as proposed to be modified, meets all the basic conditions. Officers are satisfied

that there are no conflicts with the basic conditions and legislative requirements.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As in previous years we anticipate that an Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 8.1 The recommended decision is necessary to enable the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- 1) The modified version of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan
- 2) The Examiner's report
- 3) The draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

Localism Act 2011
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2012/9780111525050/contents>

National Planning Practice Guidance (Neighbourhood Planning)
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

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Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026



**Referendum Version
June 2019**

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026

June 2019

Referendum version of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with
Regulation 16 of Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012

Produced by the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee on behalf of Huntingdon Town Council:

2017/18

Councillor Tom Sanderson (Chairman)
Councillor Ann Blackwell
Councillor Jay Dyne
Councillor Tanya Forster
Councillor Leedo George
Councillor Stuart Hassell
Councillor Patrick Kadewere
Councillor Ben Manning

2018/19

Councillor Tom Sanderson (Chairman)
Councillor Ann Blackwell
Councillor Peter Brown
Councillor Veronica Hufford
Councillor Patrick Kadewere
Councillor Phil Pearce
Councillor Alice Sedgwick

Co-opted Members:

Celia Barden
James Fell
Richard Groome
Angela Owen-Smith
Jill Watkin-Tavener
Robert Winter

The Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee has been supported by Hayley Burns from Huntingdon Town Council.

The Town Council received professional planning support from NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK and marketing support from



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Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets	Page 36
Travel and Transport	Page 37
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Foreword

The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan provides a vision and objectives for the future of Huntingdon, and sets out planning policies to achieve this vision over the period 2018 to 2026.

Huntingdon is a vibrant market town with a rich history, which the Neighbourhood Plan aims to protect and promote. The plan seeks to enhance the natural environment, support and encourage high quality housing, local employment opportunities and improved retail and leisure facilities in a healthy, green and attractive town.

The plan has been drawn up by the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee, made up of Town Councillors and Huntingdon residents. Huntingdon Town Council is the designated body for the plan area and has provided the funding for the plan. The content of the plan has been based on all of the feedback received during the community engagement campaign, where residents told us what they'd like to see in the town.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets down a series of planning policies which will ultimately form part of Huntingdonshire's wider statutory development plan. This means that all planning applications submitted within the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area must comply with the Neighbourhood Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Following the public consultation, the plan must go to an independent examination and will finally be subjected to a local town referendum requiring a majority "yes" vote for it to be accepted.

It is intended that the policies will be reviewed periodically to monitor the cumulative effects of the policies and, if necessary, make changes to keep them up to date and relevant.

Huntingdon Town Council would like to thank everyone who has been a part of the Neighbourhood Plan project, through completing a questionnaire, coming along to a community engagement event or commenting on the draft plans. In undergoing this process, we have seen first-hand the passion that our community has for our town and how it develops over the coming years.

Councillor Tom Sanderson
Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee



Section 1

The Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

1. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is a way for communities to play a greater role in determining the future of their area. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan once made. This means that Huntingdonshire District Council will have to determine planning applications within Huntingdon in accordance with this Neighbourhood Plan alongside other Development Plan Documents, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.



2. This Neighbourhood Plan is a true Community Led Plan. It has been prepared by the Town Council through a Sub-Committee made up of Town Councillors and residents. It has been informed by public consultation with the local community. The plan has been shaped by the results of the previous public consultation to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan accurately reflects the aspirations of the community.

Sustainability Appraisal

3. Every Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider whether or not the Plan needs to be supported by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA where undertaken is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts.
4. The Neighbourhood Plan Sub Committee considers that there will be no significant environmental effects arising from the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan and has produced a SEA and HRA Screening Assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan which has demonstrated that a SEA is not required. Consequently, no SA incorporating an SEA has been undertaken for the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5. Throughout this Neighbourhood Plan reference is made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and provides a framework for housing and development. The NPPF published in February 2019 replaces versions issued in March 2012 and July 2018.

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 16) June 2019

6. The NPPF provides a framework to produce locally distinctive Neighbourhood Plans which reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. The NPPF is clear that the planning system remains plan led. As set out in paragraph 2 of the NPPF, “Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.” The development plan must take the NPPF into account.

Planning Practice Guidance

7. The Planning Practice Guidance sets out the government’s advice on how to undertake neighbourhood planning within England. This is set out in detail within the [Neighbourhood Planning Section](#).

Structure of Neighbourhood Plan



8. The Neighbourhood Plan includes six themed sections: Employment & Investment; Huntingdon Town Centre; Tourism, Leisure, Sports & Community Facilities; Natural, Built & Historic Environment; Travel & Transport; and Infrastructure.
9. These are all issues that are important to the community and within each section policies are included to guide the development and use of land. Each Policy contains an introduction and explanatory text followed by the Policy itself in coloured text.
10. Following the themed sections, the Neighbourhood Plan contains an implementation and delivery section. It is important that Neighbourhood Plans are deliverable, and this section includes the key projects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan and details of how they will be delivered.

The Development Plan

11. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan prepared by the local planning authority (Huntingdonshire District Council). Huntingdonshire District Council defines which policies are considered to be 'strategic' with regard to the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.
12. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate sites for development as sites are already allocated in the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.
13. The Neighbourhood Plan must also be in conformity with the Cambridgeshire County Council's Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Specific Proposals Plan.

Designation of Huntingdon Town as a Neighbourhood Planning Area

14. A formal [application](#) was made by Huntingdon Town Council in March 2015 as a 'relevant body' under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area in order to develop a neighbourhood plan. The area of the Neighbourhood Plan is the parish boundary for the town, which was seen as appropriate as this area is recognised as the distinct community of Huntingdon. The request was that the Town Council be recognised as a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of producing a Neighbourhood Plan, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
15. Huntingdonshire District Council publicised this application to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the required 6-week period. Huntingdonshire District Council designated the Town of Huntingdon as a Neighbourhood Area on 23 April 2015.

Consultation with the Local Community

16. Since the designation of Huntingdon Town as a Neighbourhood Area, various elements of consultation have been undertaken regarding the future planning of the town. Details of the consultation undertaken to date are set out in the Statement of Consultation Document.

Associated Documents

17. The Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted with the following associated supporting documents:
 - Consultation Statement
 - Basic Conditions Statement
 - SEA & HRA Screening Assessment
 - Evidence Base Document

Background on Huntingdon

Population and Historic Development

18. The town was chartered by King John in 1205 and is the county town of Huntingdonshire. Having prospered successfully as a bridging point of the River Great Ouse, Huntingdon grew into a market town and, in the 18th and 19th centuries, as a coaching town. The well-preserved medieval bridge was once the main route of Ermine Street over the river and is still in use today.
19. The Town area covers a total of 1,119 Hectares. The 2011 census found 23,732 inhabitants in 9,658 dwellings. The Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group Mid 2015 population estimates puts the most recent population figure at 24,910.
20. Huntingdon is known as the birthplace of Oliver Cromwell, who was born in 1599 and was the Member of Parliament (MP) for the town in the 17th century. Much of the historic core based on Market Hill and the High Street remains largely intact.

21. Huntingdon is the administrative centre of Huntingdonshire District Council and is located on the north bank of the River Great Ouse, opposite Godmanchester and close to the market town of St Ives in the east and the village of Brampton in the west. Huntingdon incorporates the village of Hartford to the east, and the developing areas of Oxmoor, Stukeley Meadows and Hinchingsbrooke to the north and west. Major expansion to the town occurred to the north and east in the 1960s and 1970s bringing substantial housing and industrial areas and leading to the coalescence of the village of Hartford with Huntingdon.



22. Huntingdon is well connected with the strategic road network and the east coast mainline railway. It has a relatively strong retail sector and functions as the primary shopping centre for the District. Brampton and Godmanchester to the south west and south east respectively have a close relationship with the services in Huntingdon. The town benefits from a larger supporting population than just the town itself and the residents of Brampton and Godmanchester benefit from the wide range of services and facilities available in Huntingdon.
23. Huntingdon is accessible from the A14, which passes around the south west of the town. The A14 is a major road running 127 miles from the Port of Felixstowe in Suffolk to the Catthorpe Interchange at the junction of the M1 and M6 motorways near Rugby in Warwickshire.
24. Work on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon upgrade began in March 2017. These works include the introduction of a new Southern Bypass in Huntingdon, demolishing the A14 rail viaduct and widening both the A14 and A1. The upgrade is scheduled to be finished in 2020.

Role in Huntingdonshire

25. Huntingdon is one of the five principal towns in the District of Huntingdonshire, the others being St Ives, St Neots, Ramsey and Godmanchester.

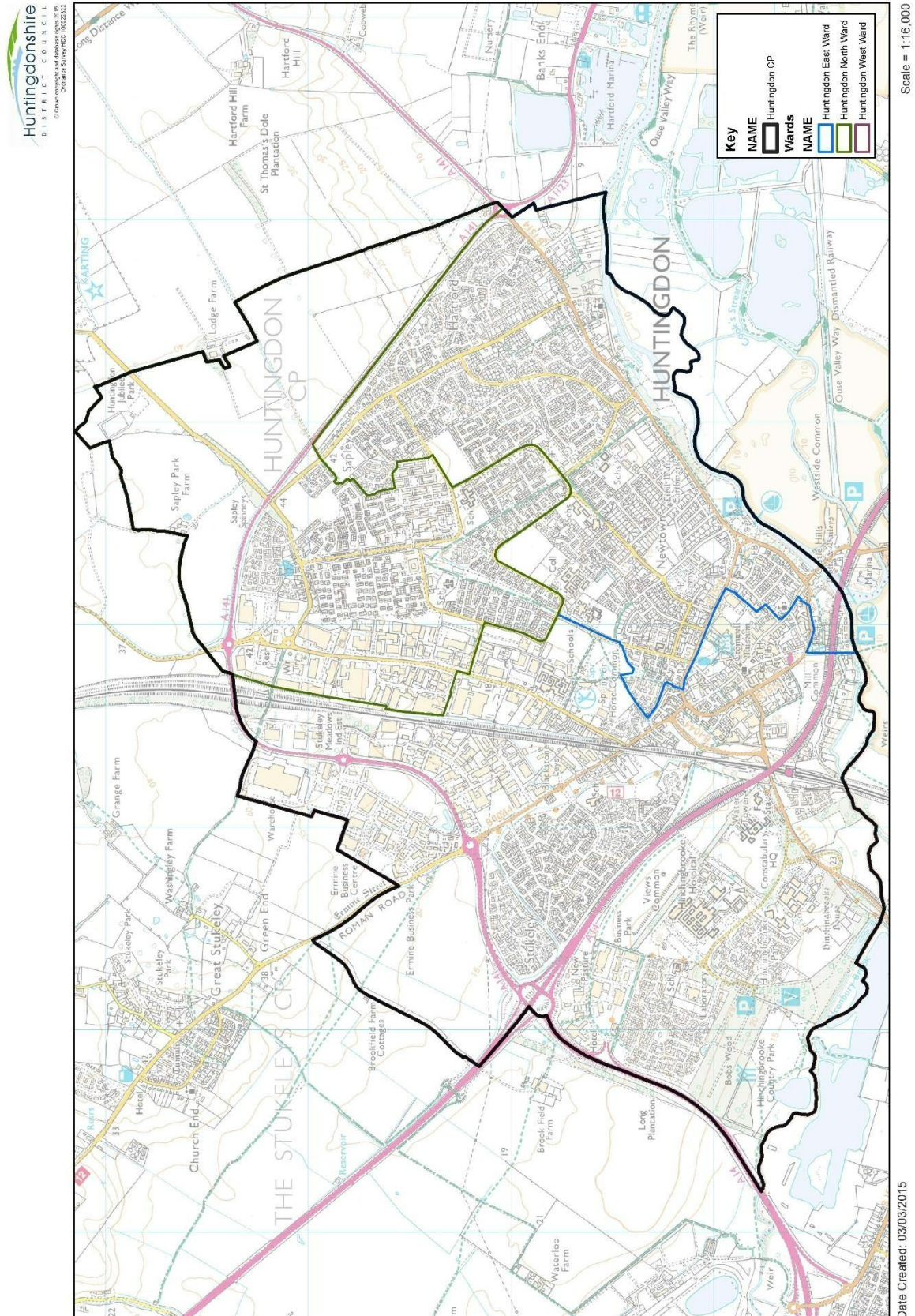
26. Huntingdonshire is still predominantly rural in character with an area of approximately 350 square miles. The most recent population estimate for Huntingdonshire (30 June 2016) is 176,100, with approximately half living in the four market towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey and most of the remainder in almost 100 villages. The northern part of the District is influenced by the relationship with Peterborough which has experienced significant growth over recent years and continues to do so.



27. The District has experienced considerable pressures for growth, originating with Town Development Schemes for Huntingdon and St Neots in the 1960s and continuing in the 1980s and 1990s. As a result of close proximity to Cambridge, pressures for development will continue to be felt within St Neots and Huntingdon as well as St Ives. Strategic expansion growth in Huntingdonshire will take place in two designated locations at Alconbury Weald and St Neots East.

The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan Area

The [plan](#) below identifies the designated Neighbourhood Area:



Surrounding Neighbourhood Plans

28. The Houghton & Wyton Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' by Huntingdonshire District Council in March 2018
29. The Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' by Huntingdonshire District Council in December 2017.
30. Both Brampton and The Stukeleys have been designated as Neighbourhood Planning Areas although no draft plans have yet been produced.

Community Engagement

31. Since the designation of Huntingdon as a Neighbourhood Area, various elements of continuous consultation have been undertaken. Initial consultation on early issues was undertaken in mid-2015, with further consultation on issues then undertaken in early 2016. Further consultation on issues took place through a series of community roadshows in early 2017 (as set out in the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement).
32. Many residents felt that there were not enough job opportunities within Huntingdon. Only 11% of questionnaire respondents felt there were sufficient job opportunities in the town. Huntingdon is a suitable place for businesses to invest, given the excellent transport links Huntingdon can offer and its prime location, a huge selling point for potential investors.
33. The shops within Huntingdon are well used by residents, with many residents citing shopping as a common activity. However, it was also an area commonly mentioned as being in need of improvement, with 45% of people describing the variety of retail outlets in the town centre as poor. Residents were more positive about Huntingdon's out of town retail outlets, with 78% rating the out of town variety as satisfactory, good or excellent.
34. The HDC Huntingdonshire Retail Study (2013) notes that while Huntingdon is the largest retail centre in Huntingdonshire, it fails to attract a high number of shoppers from surrounding towns. The study highlights that Huntingdon has a reasonable provision of convenience goods, from supermarkets as well as specialist food retailers, but has a shortage of fashion and footwear retailers. This shortage has since been addressed by the completion of the new retail units at Chequers Court.
35. Residents have told us that they would like to see more on offer for tourists in Huntingdon. Naturally, tourist attractions will also appeal to residents, so any development in Huntingdon will provide an all-round benefit. Furthermore, a town that is appealing to visitors will also be attractive to potential investors.
36. Families were felt to be well served by leisure and community facilities, but the young and older residents were not. The Neighbourhood Plan in itself can help to increase the sense of a community spirit, but there needs to be a more sustainable outcome. Future planning considerations need to take into account the needs of all of Huntingdon residents, not just those with families. Satisfying the needs of all residents will help to raise community spirit levels.
37. When we asked 'what is the best thing about Huntingdon' the riverside area and the green spaces were amongst the most popular responses, with three quarters of people rating these areas as good or excellent.

38. Huntingdon is a town with great transport connections, but they can also be a source of frustration for the community. 60% of residents who responded to the neighbourhood plan questionnaire said they use the car as their main form of transport, but almost two thirds also travel either on foot, by bus or by bike. This split highlights the importance of ensuring that the whole transport network is fit for purpose. Car users want uncongested roads that are in good condition, and easily available parking. While others want a reliable bus service, more cycle paths or safe pedestrian routes.

Vision

39. The following vision has been developed for the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan:

Huntingdon is a vibrant market town in Cambridgeshire with a great community feel.

Huntingdon's great historic significance will be preserved and promoted - including the Cromwell Museum, the Market Square, the Falcon, Hinchingsbrooke House and the Town Hall. Tourism will have increased in the town, supported by the 5-year Heritage Programme running from the Town Hall.

Traffic management around Huntingdon will be improved, and future developments will have considered the impact of traffic in the town. The footpath network around the town will also have improved to encourage more people to walk and help minimise traffic.

The Town Centre will have flourished, with the Chequers Court development revitalising the area, increasing footfall to the town centre. An increase in both big name and independent retailers taking on empty shops in the High Street will keep the High Street thriving alongside Chequers Court.

The town's night-time economy will be boosted, with more bars and restaurants and entertainment venues to keep the town centre lively into the evenings.

The Neighbourhood Plan has guided developments to preserve local green spaces, and encourage new developments that benefit the town, through providing services and employment opportunities. New developments will be mainly concentrated in the areas surrounding the town, and any within the centre of Huntingdon will be in keeping with existing developments. The correct infrastructure will be in place to support any new developments.

The town will benefit from new facilities including a crematorium and sports hub to the north of the town. The sport hub will bring together the leading sports teams in the area, including football, rugby, hockey, archery and netball.



Objectives

40. The following objectives have been set out for the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan:

(A) Promote Huntingdon as a place of great potential for investment and opportunity

- Promote Huntingdon as a place of great potential for business investment thus providing increased employment opportunities to residents
- Promote tourism within Huntingdon. A town that is appealing to visitors will also be attractive to potential investors.
- Ensure the residents are well served by high quality retail and community facilities within Huntingdon centre

(B) Ensure that the whole community is well provided for, younger and older, and increase a positive sense of community

- Future planning considerations should take into account the needs of, and provide facilities for, all Huntingdon residents.

(C) Ensure that the local distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environments of Huntingdon are conserved and, where possible, enhanced.

- Protect and enhance our valuable and well-loved green spaces. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to safeguard the future of the town's green spaces and look at how these assets can be further enhanced.
- Ensure that future housing developments are built with careful consideration to the existing infrastructure, and are sympathetic to Huntingdon's unique character and rich history.

(D) Ensure that the community can travel in and around Huntingdon using a transport infrastructure that is fit for purpose

- The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure planning applications that will impact upon the transport infrastructure will need to demonstrate that the development does not negatively impact existing transport systems, and will ideally help to ease current infrastructure problems.

Policy Delivery of Objectives

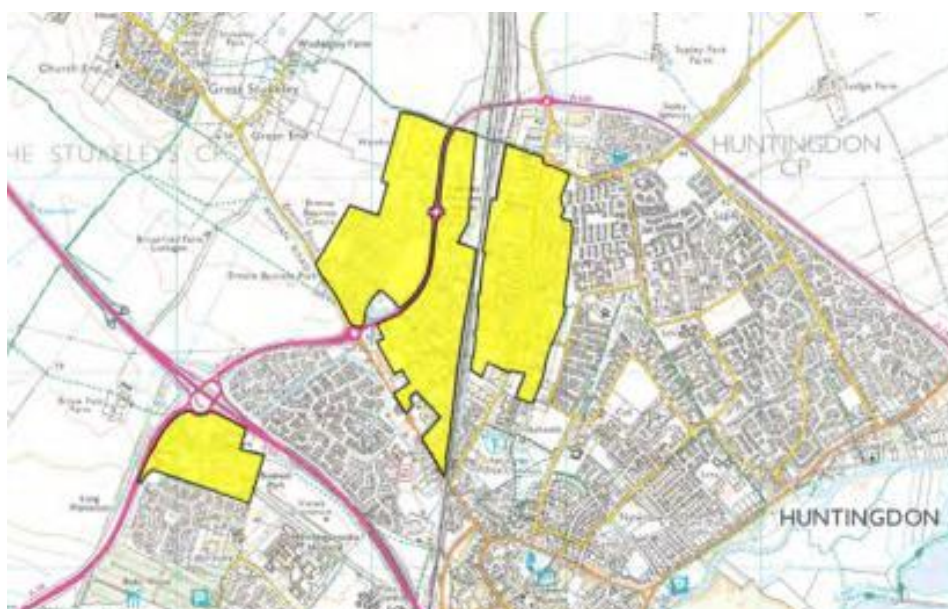
41. The following table demonstrates how the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan meet the objectives contained within the previous chapter. The policies that have been developed seek to address at least one of the objectives.

	Objective A	Objective B	Objective C	Objective D
Employment and Investment				
Policy E1 - Opportunities for Employment	✓	✓		
Policy E2 - Business Investment	✓	✓		
Huntingdon Town Centre				
Policy TC1 - Retail Development	✓	✓		✓
Policy TC2 - Public Realm	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy TC3 - St Benedict's Court	✓	✓		
Policy TC4 - Town Centre Car Parking	✓	✓		✓
Policy TC5 - Local Neighbourhood Shopping	✓	✓		✓
Tourism, Leisure, Sports and Community Facilities				
Policy TL1 - Tourism Development	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy TL2 - Leisure and Community Facilities	✓	✓	✓	
Policy TL3 - Provision of Sports Facilities	✓	✓		✓
Policy TL4 - Protection of Community Assets	✓	✓	✓	
The Natural, Built and Historic Environment				
Policy NE1 - Local Green Space	✓	✓	✓	
Policy NE2 - Open Space and Green Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	
Policy NE3 - Setting of Huntingdon	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy BE1 - Design and Landscaping	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy BE2 - Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets	✓	✓	✓	✓
Travel and Transport				
Policy TT1 - Sustainable Transport	✓	✓	✓	✓

Employment and Investment

Background

42. There are four main 'Established Employment Areas' within Huntingdon: Ermine Business Park, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, St Peter's Road Industrial Area and Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate. These have a key role in supporting the economy and contribute to the balance between residential, employment and other uses which is essential in the promotion of a sustainable town. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote future sustainable economic growth and ensure that employment areas that provide land and premises for businesses are retained.



Established Employment Areas - Ermine Business Park, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, St Peter's Road Industrial Area and Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate, Huntingdon
Extract from the Emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan © Huntingdonshire District Council

43. Alconbury Enterprise Campus was designated as an enterprise zone in August 2011; it covers 150 hectares of land and provides significant opportunities for new investment in the economy. It is envisaged that the Alconbury Enterprise Campus will accommodate some 8,000 new jobs over 25 years to 2036. Although the Alconbury Enterprise Campus is outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area, it has the potential to significantly change both the numbers and diversity of job opportunities available to local residents of Huntingdon and beyond. Its presence and the opportunities and threats it poses must be taken into account in this Neighbourhood Plan.
44. The emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan estimates that based on the anticipated population growth, provision for approximately 14,400 additional jobs in Huntingdonshire will be made between 2011-2036.



Opportunities for Employment

45. Employment land relates to business use within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. This involves:



Offices (B1a); Research and Development (B1b); and Light Industry (B1c)



General Industry which includes manufacturing (B2)



Storage or Distribution Centres (B8)

46. The Huntingdonshire Employment Land Study (ELS) (2014) provides an overall assessment of the employment and economic situation within Huntingdonshire, as well as an analysis of employment land and premises demand, supply and need across the district to 2036.
47. The ELS has identified that overall the demand for industrial floorspace is increasingly moving away from heavy manufacturing units towards smaller, higher quality units. However, there is also demand for large warehousing and distribution units. At the time of study in 2014, there was an oversupply of office floorspace in Huntingdonshire. The typical and emerging requirements for office space are for fairly small, high quality office space with a reasonable density and good quality access to either road or rail links.
48. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan aims to promote Huntingdon as a place of great potential for business investment in order to boost opportunities for employment in the town. This will be achieved through policies that support employers looking to use previously developed land for employment sites.

Policy E1 - Opportunities for Employment

Proposals for economic development throughout Huntingdon will be favourably considered subject to compliance with other relevant planning policies. The regeneration and intensification of previously developed land will be particularly supported.

Change of use of existing employment sites or premises to alternative employment uses where permission is required will be supported where the applicant has demonstrated that no unacceptable adverse amenity or transport impacts will arise.

Applications which facilitate working from home will be supported, provided that they are small scale and do not undermine neighbouring amenity.

Business Investment

49. Given the likely scale of structural change within Huntingdon, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote strategic high-quality investment and in particular support the provision

of high-quality employment within the town. This will help to address the numbers of residents leaving the town daily to travel to high quality employment in Cambridge.

50. The Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan (2013) asserts that a strong, growing economy is needed to achieve the Council's corporate vision, supported by strong business sectors, vibrant service sectors and readily available strategic development sites.
51. The Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan aspires for the district to become a destination of choice for people to live, work and invest. Three key objectives for 2023 are:
 - Huntingdonshire will build a flexible and resilient workforce, by attracting skilled, working people into Huntingdonshire to meet the needs of business and by supporting all existing Huntingdonshire communities so that they can benefit from economic growth.
 - Huntingdonshire will be a location of choice. By fostering the right environment for investment, by people and business, Huntingdonshire will take its place in the top 10 best places to live, work and invest in England by 2023.
 - Huntingdonshire will foster a culture of enterprise, by supporting the existing business base, encouraging investment from businesses in high value sectors into the district and by encouraging entrepreneurship at an early age.
52. In purely quantitative terms the 150ha at the Alconbury Enterprise Campus would be more than sufficient land to accommodate the level of jobs growth anticipated by 2036 for the whole of Huntingdonshire if it were developed for office uses with a relatively high jobs density. However, as the emerging Local Plan identifies, in order to achieve a thriving economy for the whole of Huntingdonshire it is important to have a good range of employment land and buildings available across the district. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to see the town remain balanced between housing, jobs and infrastructure and not be disadvantaged by the focus on investment at Alconbury.

Policy E2 - Business Investment

Proposals for development schemes which involve business investment which will result in the provision or opportunity for high skilled employment will be strongly supported subject to compliance with other relevant planning policies.

Huntingdon Town Centre

Background

53. The Huntingdon town centre area is effectively defined by the one-way ring road around the town centre, this was cut through the town in the 1960s. The A14 built in the 1970s currently runs through the town on a generally elevated route including a viaduct over the railway. The ring road creates a physical constraint to the expansion of the town centre and it forms a movement barrier to the rest of the town.
54. Huntingdon town centre offers a day-to-day range of food and comparison goods shopping for residents of the town and surrounding villages. The redevelopment of the retail shops in Chequers Court and St Germain Walk in the town centre has seen the area transformed with the introduction of new anchor stores and a selection of large and small shop units. Chequers Court has been extended in partnership with Huntingdon District Council to create a 700-space car park incorporating a multi-storey car park.
55. Huntingdon has a number of retail areas outside of the town centre, including Towerfields Retail and Leisure Park, a Tesco supermarket, St Peters Retail Park and Stukeley Road Retail Park. In addition, an Aldi supermarket has been developed on Edison Bell Way and a Lidl supermarket has been built on Stukeley Road.
56. Below this in the retail hierarchy is local neighbourhood shopping, which provide limited shopping opportunities to very local catchments. In Huntingdon there are neighbourhood centres at Oak Drive where the Oak Tree Centre health facility is also located, at Mayfield Road and at Cromwell Drive in Hinchingsbrooke. Huntingdon also has a market which adds to the overall diversity and retail offer.

Retail Development

57. The NPPF states that planning policy should “define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations.” The emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan will define the town centre boundary, the Primary Shopping Area and Primary Retail Frontages. The Local Plan definition of the town centre should be used in the application of these policies.
58. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to see the retail offer in the town centre increase and diversify. Through consultation, local residents have identified that development of the retail offer of the town centre is the most important issue. Many residents have requested a greater variety of shops in the town, including more national retailers. The recent development of further out of town supermarkets has the potential to further threaten the role of the town centre. Therefore, the main focus should be to attract residents to shop within the town centre rather than going elsewhere.

Policy TC1 - Retail Development

Additional retail provision, including the sub-division of existing shop units or the creation of larger shop units involving two or more existing units will be favourably considered at ground floor level in the primary shopping area (as defined in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan), provided that development, without clear and convincing justification, avoids harm to, or loss of, the significance of the Huntingdon Conservation Area and any nearby listed buildings.

Public Realm and Movement Around the Town Centre

59. The term ‘public realm’ refers to the public spaces between buildings. It’s the pavements, squares, seating, signage, materials and planting. Public Realm plays a key role in defining a town’s wider image and has an impact on how residents perceive the quality of the town. Investment in the public realm reaps both environmental and economic returns. Improving street design can make a major difference to market values. Investment in public realm can also lead to social benefits by promoting social cohesion and reducing levels of crime.
60. In Huntingdon, the High Street is pedestrianised from the junction with Hartford Road at the southern end to the junction and George Street to the north. St Benedict’s Court, All Saints Passage, Chequers Court and St Germain Walk are also pedestrianised. The materials used are not consistent indicating that they have been pedestrianised at different times. The public realm in the retail heart of the town centre is of higher quality than that of the wider town centre.
61. St Germain Street is an area of poor quality public realm, it performs a mixed role of car parking, delivery and servicing for retail stores and access to Parkside residential properties. It does not provide an effective welcoming gateway to the town centre and has the appearance of being somewhat unplanned. The need to improve pedestrian linkages between St Germain Street and the High Street is also important in order to improve this area as a gateway to the town centre.
62. The town centre also lacks seating which is problematic for elderly residents and tourists/visitors.
63. An enhanced public realm benefits everyone, including retailers, business, residents and visitors. Enhancing the public realm of the town centre will enhance its vitality and viability and help to create a town centre that local residents are proud of.

Policy TC2 - Public Realm

Development proposals which have the potential to impact on the public realm will be expected to demonstrate how they will contribute to high quality streets, pavements and other publicly accessible areas (the public realm) within the town centre, subject to complying with all other planning policies.

Development proposals which have the potential to impact on St Germain Street will be expected to demonstrate how they will make a positive contribution to the existing public realm.

Development proposals which have the potential to impact on St Benedict’s Court will be expected to demonstrate how they will make a positive contribution to the existing public realm.

Where appropriate, improvements to the existing public realm, to ensure safe and high-quality access for all users, should be delivered alongside proposals. Residential and commercial schemes should make provision for new public squares, parks or spaces of a scale and type appropriate to the development and its context.

64. St Benedict’s Court is another problem area highlighted during public consultation. The lack of clear public realm linkages between the bus station and the town centre was identified as an issue by local residents. This lack of connectivity does not help the bus station to be an effective welcoming gateway to the town centre for both residents and visitors to the town.

65. There are currently a large number of vacant retail spaces in the St Benedict's Court area. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to promote development and alternative uses of these spaces to bring life back to the area.

Policy TC3 - St Benedict's Court

Proposals that contribute to the regeneration of St Benedict's Court as a retail area will be strongly encouraged. A mixed-use redevelopment with a wide range of town centre uses (including retail, hotel, food and drink, cultural and leisure, office and residential) would be welcomed.

The use of Class A retail and service premises in the St Benedict's Court area for temporary uses, including 'pop up' shops and cultural and leisure uses, will be supported where:

- it does not result in the loss of existing retail spaces.
- It can be demonstrated that there will be no detrimental impact on neighbouring retail spaces

Town Centre Car Parking

66. The community consultation identified that the provision of car parking within the town centre is an important issue. The redevelopment of the Chequers Court and St Germain Walk area has included the provision of a new multi-storey car park to serve Sainsburys, Chequers Court and St Germain Walk and the wider town centre. Car parking provision within the town centre is in both public and private ownership.
67. To improve the vitality and viability of the town centre as a retail and service destination, the number of car parking spaces in the town centre should be safeguarded. The two-stage approach of improving sustainable travel linkages to the town centre and safeguarding existing car parks will help to support the role and function of the town centre.
68. During the public consultation, residents indicated that they would like to see a reduction in vehicular use of the pedestrianised areas, including inappropriate deliveries and parking in these areas. Residents also identified on-street parking being a barrier to effective pedestrian linkages, particularly from the bus station.
69. National and local planning policy seeks to promote sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. It seeks to move away from the use of private car to help tackle climate change, pollution and congestion. However, many local residents, visitors and tourists will continue to need to rely upon use of the private car to get around. The ambition to grow Huntingdon town centre as a retail, service and visitor destination is therefore reliant upon adequate, accessible, convenient, safe and secure car parking provision.

Policy TC4 - Town Centre Car Parking and Access

The loss of public car and motorcycle parking spaces serving Huntingdon town centre will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the loss of any such spaces would not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the town centre as a retail, service and visitor destination. Development proposals will be supported where they maximise the potential for cycling and walking linkages to and within the town centre.

Support will be given to the development of additional car parking provision which is intended to serve the town centre provided that it is of an appropriate scale, layout and design and has appropriate regard to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the Conservation Area and other heritage assets.

Support will be given to improving the quality of public and on-street parking in the town centre so that it is convenient, safe, secure and available for short-stay use in order to protect the vitality and viability of the town centre as a retail, service and visitor destination.

The loss of any privately owned or controlled parking provision within the town centre will be resisted where it will result in additional on-street parking or reliance on public car parking provision.

Local Neighbourhood Shopping

70. There are a number of existing local neighbourhood centres in Huntingdon, including Oak Drive, Cromwell Drive and Mayfield Road. There are also local neighbourhood retail facilities co-located in other local facilities such as petrol filling stations. These provide an important role in providing local neighbourhood shopping to local communities. Top-up shopping is developing rapidly as a convenient and regular form of food shopping and local convenience stores have seen a resurgence.
71. Many of the newer housing developments in the Neighbourhood Plan area have been built with no provision for retail or community facilities. The plan needs to ensure this is no longer acceptable, as the residents have indicated that it is important to maintain the local retail offerings which do exist to ensure those without transport (public or private) are able to shop within walking distance of their homes. In addition, we need to provide local shopping facilities for more of our community, given the lack of facilities provided in recent developments, for small top-up shopping and pharmacies nearer to where people live.

Policy TC5 - Local Neighbourhood Shopping

Proposals which result in the loss of existing local neighbourhood shops will only be supported where the applicant has demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site or premises being used for ongoing retail or community uses. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the existing use is no longer viable and that the site has been marketed for a continuous period of at least 12 months for a permitted retail or community use.

Proposals which provide local shops of a relative scale to serve existing and new communities within Huntingdon will be supported. Proposals which provide local neighbourhood retailing of a relative scale at existing petrol station sites will be supported; as will local shopping facilities for more of our community for small top-up shopping and pharmacies nearer to where people live.

Tourism, Leisure, Sports and Community Facilities

Background

72. Huntingdon is ideally situated on the main hub of the A14 and A1. It is just 55 minutes by train from London and 25 minutes by car from Cambridge. The town is well served by public transport, including the ‘Busway’ guided bus to Cambridge. The nearest airport is Stansted, approximately one hour’s drive away. Huntingdon is well placed for a wide choice of things to do for visitors and tourists.
73. As well as the shops, cafes and restaurants, there are a number of places to visit which cater for the full range of visitors including families. These include: The Cromwell Museum opened in 1962 in the old grammar school where Cromwell and Samuel Pepys were once pupils; the Tudor Hinchingsbrooke country house built around an early 13th century nunnery and given by Henry VIII to Richard Cromwell in 1538 at the time of the Dissolution; and Huntingdon Racecourse.
74. There are a number of leisure and entertainment facilities within Huntingdon including the Commemoration Hall in the town centre; Performing Arts Centre at Hinchingsbrooke; local drama clubs operating at various venues; and a cinema at Towerfields Leisure Park.
75. The ‘One Leisure’ publicly owned leisure centre is located at the KGV (King George V) St Peter’s Road sports hub which includes a tennis club, cricket club and two bowls clubs leased by the Town Council. In addition, the Town Council leases the Gymnastics Club at Mayfield Road which trains several world class athletes. Privately owned facilities include Marriott Leisure; and Sports Direct Fitness.
76. There are a number of health facilities in Huntingdon, including multiple doctors’ surgeries, dentists and pharmacies spread throughout the town.
77. Community facilities are defined as village halls, church halls, community centres and multi-use facilities. These facilities typically provide community uses such as adult learning courses, events and activities. Community facilities can also provide space for arts or cultural activities and serve wider purposes such as providing affordable space for events or small businesses to hire.
78. The town includes a wide range of community facilities and public buildings including: a number of places of worship; Library; Alconbury Weald Information Exchange; Army & Sea Cadets; Citizens Advice Bureau; Cornerstone Pregnancy Crisis; Fire Station; Huntingdon Volunteer Centre; Huntingdonshire District Council; Huntingdon Town Council; Inclusion; Job Centre Plus; Law Courts; Police Station; Registration & Coroners Service; Saxongate Learning Centre; and Shopmobility. Other community facilities include the Huntingdon Community Day Centre; The Town Hall; St Marys Parish Hall; Hartford Village Hall and the Medway Centre.
79. Education provision in the town includes the following:
- Further Education/Sixth Form - St Peter’s School; Hinchingsbrooke School; and Huntingdon Regional College
 - Secondary - St Peter’s School; and Hinchingsbrooke School
 - Primary - Huntingdon Primary; Stukeley Meadows Primary; St Johns CofE Primary; Hartford Junior; Hartford Infants; Thongsley Fields Primary; and Cromwell Academy
 - Other - Huntingdon Nursey; Spring Common Academy; and Thongsley Fields Nursery

Tourism Development

80. Tourism in Huntingdon has many advantages, including increased employment opportunities and economic growth. Huntingdon's rich historic heritage makes it an ideal destination for tourists. Historical sites such as the Cromwell museum, located in the former Grammar School building, Hinchingsbrooke House, once home of the Earl of Sandwich, and Huntingdon Town Hall are a huge draw for tourists. The town's leisure parks, retail areas (in particular the new Chequers Court Shopping Centre), and green spaces also provide facilities for tourists.
81. Tourism in Huntingdon will also be supported by the 5-year heritage programme running from the Town Hall. The project aims to increase visitor numbers to the town, specifically the Town Hall and Cromwell Museum, and to increase awareness of local history.
82. The programme will include a number of events and displays in the Town Hall and Cromwell Museum across the 5-year period, as well as providing additional 'back of house' accommodation and learning space for the Cromwell Museum, allowing the museum to increase the services it can offer.
83. Huntingdon currently has some facilities for holiday accommodation, including but not limited to, The Old Bridge Hotel, The George Hotel and Sandford House Hotel. As tourism grows in the town, the need for additional holiday accommodation will increase.

Policy TL1 - Tourism Development

Proposals for new tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities) within the existing built up area of the town will be supported where:

- No adverse impact to the amenity or character and appearance of the surrounding area will arise
- No adverse impact on the highway network will occur.

Proposals for new tourism development outside of the existing built up area of the town will be supported where:

- The location is well-related to the existing built up area
- Safe pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access can be achieved to the existing built up area
- The proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the immediate surroundings, nor of the wider area.

Proposals for overnight accommodation will not be supported outside of the built up area of the town.

Leisure and Community Infrastructure

84. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to encourage further provision of leisure and community facilities across Huntingdon. This was identified as an important issue for local residents through consultation. Leisure and community facilities are provided by both the public and private sectors. Huntingdon does not currently have a spread of leisure and community facilities across the town, like many settlements they have tended to be provided in concentrated areas and many of the housing areas have to travel some distance to access leisure and community facilities.
85. Feedback from the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire highlights a range of leisure and community facilities that residents would like to see more of in Huntingdon.

Suggestions include performing arts facilities, a bowling alley, public houses, community centres and facilities for evening entertainment. A large percentage of residents noted the need for a boost to the night-time economy in the town.

86. The questionnaire feedback also emphasises the need for additional leisure and community facilities young people in Huntingdon. The ACRE Children and Young People Policy Position Paper 2014 notes that without sufficient facilities for young people, they are likely to move away to access the services they need, therefore skewing the population towards an older demographic. Facilities for young people could include education, training, sports and recreation.
87. This policy applies to the full range of leisure and community facilities, including leisure; recreation; entertainment; cultural; health; education; learning; public services; halls; and churches. Huntingdon has a number of local and national cafes and restaurants both in the town centre and on Towerfields Leisure Park. This policy is not intended to cover cafes, restaurants or take-aways which fall within the 'Retail' class of the Use Classes Order. The policy does however include public houses which are commonly considered to be a community facility.

Policy TL2 - Leisure and Community Facilities

Proposals for leisure and community facilities that positively contribute to the night-time economy in the town centre will be supported where it can be demonstrated that no adverse impact to the amenity or character and appearance of the surrounding area will arise; and no adverse impact on the highway network will occur.

Proposals for development that provides leisure and community facilities for young people will be supported where it can be demonstrated that no adverse impact to the amenity or character and appearance of the surrounding area will arise; and no adverse impact on the highway network will occur.

Provision of Sports Facilities

88. Huntingdon has a variety of sports facilities within the town, including cricket, indoor & out door bowls and indoor & outdoor tennis at the KGV St Peter's Road site. Football and archery are located at Jubilee Park and the Olympic Gym at Mayfield Road provides facilities to train up to and including Olympic medal standard. Additional football facilities are provided at Sapley Park and Riverside Park.
89. Huntingdon Rugby Club, Huntingdon Hockey Club and Huntingdon Netball Club are all 'homeless' clubs with no permanent home. The rugby club are decamped at Huntingdon Racecourse using the summer car park/camp site to play on. The Hockey club having been moved from Hinchingsbrooke School to Kimbolton School, now find themselves having to play their home games in Bedford and the netball club are playing in St Ives.
90. These three sports are facing increasing difficulties in recruiting/retaining local players to enable them to develop their clubs/sport as local residents find it difficult to join and participate in these sports.
91. Huntingdon Town Council is embarking on an ambitious plan for the provision of a sports village adjacent to the north of the town, to enhance the existing sports facilities and to provide a home for the three displaced sports clubs. As this project includes land outside of the designated Neighbourhood Plan area, the site has not been allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

92. The aim of Sports Village would be to provide: six football pitches, six rugby pitches, 3G pitch, 2G sand fill hockey pitch, archery range, along with an internal archery range and two indoor netball courts. The Sports Village would be complemented with an appropriate club house to cover all sporting and changing facilities, along with the administration, catering and social aspect requirements and substantial car parking facilities.
93. The Sports Village, although owned by the Town Council would be run by a sports manager to provide, develop and implement a proactive sports development plan, in partnership with the existing Huntingdon Sports Clubs.
94. The Town Council, since taking ownership in 2014, have been upgrading Coneygear Park, and have been granted planning permission to provide a new Community Building, with changing room facilities provided. This will enable the existing sports groups (including boxing, judo and Zumba) at the Medway Centre to expand at the new venue. The existing half basketball court has been replaced with a full sized and fenced MUGA, and the existing football pitch will be enhanced, with access to changing room facilities. This will allow organised activities to take place, as well as encouraging local users to use the new facilities and take part in sporting activities.

Policy TL3 - Provision of Sports Facilities

Proposals for the provision of sports facilities outside of the existing built up area of the town will be supported where:

- The location is well-related to the existing built up area
- Safe pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access can be achieved to and from the existing built up area
- The proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the immediate surroundings, nor of the wider area
- The proposed scale and mix of uses is justified through robust evidence of local need which takes into account existing public and private sector provision within the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area.

Protection of Community Assets

95. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that local residents are not disadvantaged by the loss of important community assets within Huntingdon. Whilst it is recognised that community assets can sometimes suffer from little use or become financially difficult to sustain, the NPPF places importance on the prevention of their unnecessary loss.
96. The loss of local services or community facilities can have a serious impact upon people's quality of life and the overall vitality of communities. With an increasing proportion of older people in the population access to locally based services may become more important, the retention of services and facilities locally helps to reduce the need to travel.
97. Feedback received during the community engagement campaign highlighted the strength of the arts in Huntingdon. The town boasts a huge range of arts and cultural organisations, including drama and theatre groups, dance groups and musical groups, many of whom put on performances that bring in large numbers of visitors from outside of the town. The following policy seeks to ensure that community facilities which allow these groups to flourish are protected.

98. Residents also highlighted a number of important community leisure facilities, including the local library, cinema and sports clubs, which this policy also seeks to protect.

Policy TL4 - Protection of Community Assets

The following community assets will be protected:

- Huntingdon Town Hall
- Commemoration Hall
- Hartford Village Hall
- St Mary's Parish Hall
- The Maple Centre
- Huntingdon Community Centre
- Saxongate Community Learning Centre
- Huntingdon Library
- One Leisure Huntingdon
- Cineworld Huntingdon
- Cromwell Museum
- Hinchbrooke Performing Arts Centre
- Huntingdon Gymnastics Club

Development proposals that would result in the loss of community assets will be resisted unless it can be shown that they are poorly used and lack community support; that they are not financially viable; or an equivalent service or community facility will be provided in a location with an equal or better level of accessibility for the community it is intended to serve.

Development proposals to enhance or expand community assets will be supported where no adverse impact to the amenity or character and appearance of the surrounding area will arise.

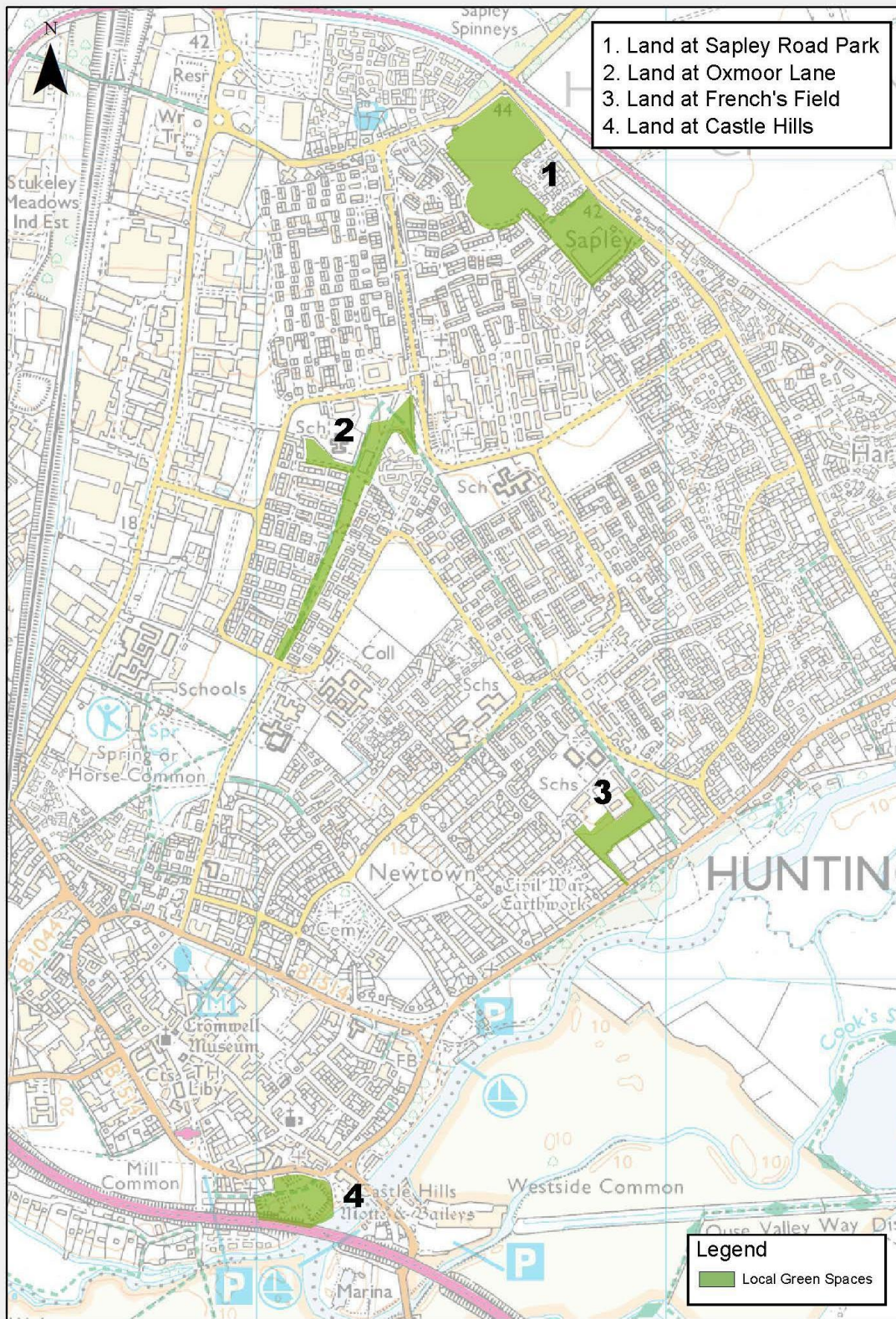
Natural, Built and Historic Environment

Background

99. The built environment of Huntingdon includes the character, design, layout and scale of the buildings and the streets. The town contains 5 Scheduled Monuments and 123 Listed Buildings (4 Grade I; 10 Grade II*; and 109 Grade II), it also contains a Conservation Area which was designated in 1972 and last amended in 1991 to include the town centre and Hinchingsbrooke. These designated heritage assets form an important part of the overall character and appearance of the town.
100. The natural environment in Huntingdon includes a number of significant open areas and the river corridors of Alconbury Brook and the River Great Ouse. The town boundary also includes some areas of open countryside. Important open areas include Mill Common; Views Common; Spring Common; Castle Hills; and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. The very southern edge of the NDP area contains part of Portholme Meadow a 106Ha biological Site of Special Scientific Interest between Huntingdon and Godmanchester. Portholme Meadow is also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The northern end of the NDP area contains part of the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI.

Local Green Space

101. In 2012, the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the NPPF allowing local communities to put forward green areas of particular importance to them for protection. Once designated, planning permission will only be granted for the development of the sites in very special circumstances.
102. Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:
- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
 - where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
103. The sites listed in the policy have been assessed as according with the criteria for Local Green Space as set out in the NPPF and are therefore considered to be in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve; local in character and not an extensive tract of land; and demonstrably special to the local community and holding a particular local significance. Summaries and larger scale maps of each of the designated Local Green Spaces are set out in the Appendices.
104. Huntingdon contains three commons which have a historical significance to the town and its overall setting: Mill Common, Views Common and Spring Common. Common land is protected and therefore does not need to be designated as a Local Green Space.



1. Land at Sapley Road Park
2. Land at Oxmoor Lane
3. Land at French's Field
4. Land at Castle Hills

Legend
 Local Green Spaces

Scale 1:12,500

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 Ordnance Survey HDC 100022322

Policy NE1 - Local Green Space

The following sites are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- Land at Sapley Road Park
- Land at Oxmoor Lane
- Land at French's Field
- Land at Castle Hills

Development proposals on these sites will only be supported where they:

- Enhance the amenity or character and appearance of the site
- Provide appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of the land or a change of use) for outdoor sport or outdoor recreation in the circumstances set out in Paragraph 145 b) of the NPPF February 2019.
- Have no adverse impact on the landscape, habitats and biodiversity of the site (and provide net gains where practical), or where it is unavoidable, it is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Proposals adjacent to these sites will need to demonstrate that they will not harm the setting of the Local Green Space and where possible enhance access to the Local Green Space for people and wildlife.

Open Space and Green Infrastructure

105. There is a good and varied provision of public open space within Huntingdon. The Government is committed to halt the overall decline in biodiversity including by establishing coherent ecological networks. The NPPF requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting valued landscapes and minimise impacts on biodiversity and, where possible, planning decisions should seek to provide a net gain in biodiversity. The provision of Green Infrastructure contributes to this overall objective. Providing new play space as part of future development is likely to be encouraged, this needs to complement and supplement existing provision within the town.

106. There are currently four allotment sites which are run and managed by Huntingdon Town Council. The four sites are:

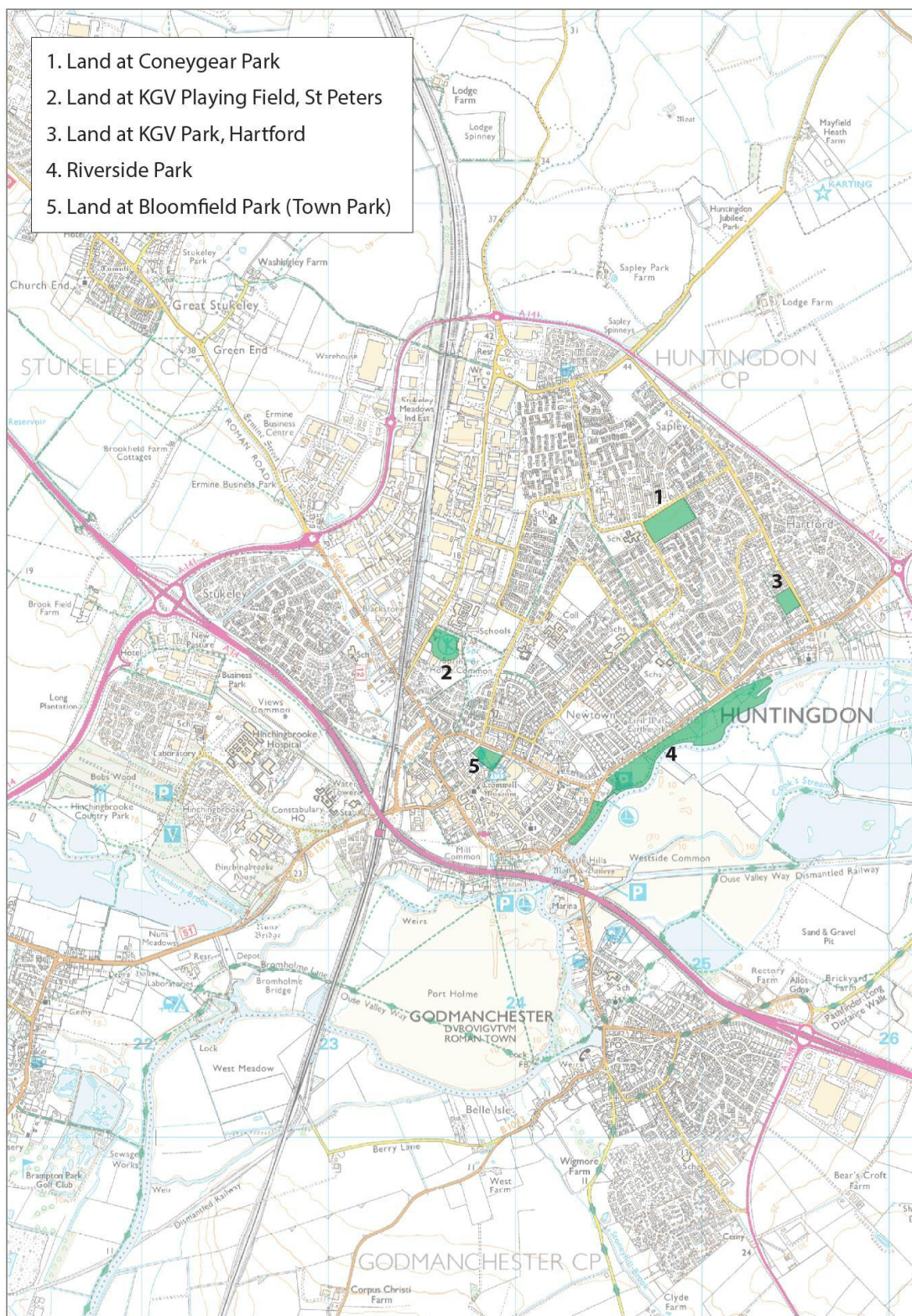
- Hartford Road
- North Street
- Primrose Lane
- Sallowbush Road

107. Huntingdon also contains three cemeteries, Priory Road; Primrose Lane; and North Street. Priory Road Cemetery was first established in the 1850s and was originally laid out by Robert Hutchinson, a well-known Architect at the time. It is dominated by a Victorian Chapel, which is still available for use in connection with local internments. Primrose Lane Cemetery was established in November 1982. North Street Cemetery was opened in January 1997.

108. The following sites are designated as Areas of Important Green Infrastructure:

- Land at Coneygear Park
- Land at King George V Playing Field St Peters
- Land at King George V Park Hartford
- Land at Riverside
- Land at Bloomfield Park (Huntingdon Town Park)
- Land at Stukeley Meadows Local Nature Reserve

109. Descriptions and larger scale maps of the Areas of Important Green Infrastructure and the potential developments that could be appropriate on these sites can be found in Appendix 2



Policy NE2 - Open Space and Green Infrastructure

The following sites are designated as Areas of Important Green Infrastructure:

- Land at Coneygear Park
- Land at King George V Playing Field St Peters
- Land at King George V Park Hartford
- Land at Riverside
- Land at Bloomfield Park (Huntingdon Town Park)
- Land at Stukeley Meadows Local Nature Reserve

Proposals for built development within these sites will be permitted where it relates to supporting their ongoing community use as green infrastructure including the provision of additional facilities for leisure and recreation.

Open spaces within Huntingdon that provide an amenity area or make a positive contribution to the streetscene or form part of the overall form and character of the settlement will be protected from encroachment.

A proposal involving the loss of open space that provides an amenity or recreation function will only be supported where:

- Alternative open space of equal or higher quality is provided in close proximity; or
- The alternative use would address locally identified issues and the loss of open space would be compensated for by qualitative improvements to open space in close proximity.

Where possible, new areas of useable open space delivered as part of new development should be provided within central locations within the development site to ensure good accessibility, unless it can be demonstrated that the open space would be better suited to an alternative location on the development. Elsewhere new areas of open space should be located at sites which are accessible to the community it intends to serve.

Setting of Huntingdon

110. The natural environment in Huntingdon includes a number of significant open areas and the river corridors of Alconbury Brook and the River Great Ouse. The town boundary also includes some areas of open countryside. These features contribute to the overall setting of the town. More locally the setting of individual parts of the town are characterised by the built form and by landscaping and planting.
111. New development must be sufficiently screened by new tree & hedgerow planting to maintain (and enhance) current landscape views and rural character. Existing landscape setting and views into and out of the town should be protected. The green networks within the town are important to the setting of Huntingdon. They also make a positive contribution to health & well-being and species diversity/habit protection.
112. The river corridors of Alconbury Brook and the River Great Ouse also provides an important element of the green infrastructure for the town and the overall setting of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Policy NE3 - Setting of Huntingdon

Development within and on the edge of Huntingdon will only be permitted where it responds positively to the area's character and identity.

New development will be supported provided that it does not adversely affect or devalue the structure, diversity or views of the streetscene and landscape. New development, where supported by other planning policies, must be integrated into the streetscene and landscape through design and the incorporation of suitable green buffers and planting including trees.

New development must be sufficiently screened by new tree & hedgerow planting to maintain and where possible enhance current landscape views and rural character, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not appropriate for the location.

Development affecting Alconbury Brook, the River Great Ouse or Portholme Meadow will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance, setting, recreational purpose and biodiversity value of the river corridor.

Development affecting Hinchingsbrooke Country Park will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance, setting, recreational purpose and biodiversity value of the park.

Development affecting the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance and biodiversity value of the SSSI.

Design and Landscaping

113. Design goes beyond architecture and deals with the interaction of people with places. It includes ensuring that development:
- is safe, accessible and legible for all users including those with mobility issues;
 - reflects the existing character, local distinctiveness and heritage of places;
 - facilitates interaction between different groups;
 - offers opportunities for people to improve wellbeing;
 - provides a good standard of amenity; and
 - promotes efficient use of natural resources.
114. Section 12 of the NPPF and the design section of the NPPG provide guidance on the design of development. Good design not only involves individual buildings; equally important in creating attractive places is the role of public and private spaces. A well planned structure of routes, buildings and spaces is key to developing successful places and to integrating new development into the surrounding area. The design and layout of buildings, open spaces, roads, parking provision and footpaths can reduce the real and perceived risk of crime by reducing opportunities to commit crime, improving public safety and adding visual interest which can contribute to a sense of security.
115. The NPPF places great importance on ensuring that development is well designed. Ensuring that development functions well and is safe and inclusive for all users is a central part of sustainable development.
116. New developments should include green public open space, including tree planting. Further information can be found in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017).

Policy BE1 - Design and Landscaping

Proposals will be supported where they provide landscaping and green public open space to help it integrate into the built form and the surrounding landscape as appropriate to the scale and form of development proposed. The following design principles must be taken into account:

- a) promote a sense of place to include streets, squares and other public spaces with a defined sense of enclosure through high quality hard and soft landscaping with attractive green spaces and corridors for recreation and biodiversity;
- b) deliver attractive, usable and durable buildings and spaces that function well and promote accessibility and permeability by creating safe and welcoming places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport;
- c) reflect the density of development in the local area, including reducing density where appropriate on parts of sites adjacent to the countryside edge of the town; and
- d) accesses should be attractive and must ensure that good vision is achieved for drivers.

All soft landscaping should contribute to supporting native fauna where possible.

Where applicable, proposals must be supported by a plan clearly showing the extent of the landscaping and form this will take. Proposals will also need to make it clear how the landscaping will be managed in the future. In addition proposals should demonstrate how they have been designed to:

- Encourage access for all users;
- Reduce the risk of fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour; and
- Be maintained in the long term.

New major developments should include green public open space, including both mature and newly planted indigenous trees. This is important for the well-being of the occupants, for wildlife and to help ease the threat of flooding by providing areas to soak water away

Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics

117. The distinctive character design aims of the Neighbourhood Plan are that building design should respond to local character and the history and identity of local surroundings, including use of local materials, plan depth, plot width, layout materials and details of roof orientation. Further guidance in relation to functional design requirements are provided within the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017) Section 3.5 Parking & Servicing.

Policy BE2 - Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics

All development must be designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness, including in relation to materials, built form and settlement patterns.

Design should be guided by the:

1. Overall scale & density;
2. Massing & height;
3. Landscape and
4. Access to the site and its surroundings including considerations of flood risk management.

Buildings in major developments should have variations in height, style and position. They should reflect the local heritage design and characteristics with a variety of traditional and modern building materials.

Careful consideration should be given to the servicing requirements of buildings to ensure that essential items such as car parking and space for the storage of waste and recycling bins are successfully integrated into the design, including access for service and emergency vehicles.

Historic Environment

118. Heritage assets (as defined in the Glossary) are buildings, monuments, sites, landscapes and townscapes which have historic or architectural significance; collectively they help make the historic environment.

119. Areas of special architectural or historic interest are designated as Conservation Areas to help preserve and enhance them for future generations. Once designated, there are restrictions on the nature of works within Conservation Areas that can be carried out to properties and trees without permission from the local planning authority. Section 72 of the 1990 Act also requires that “*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*”. The effect of

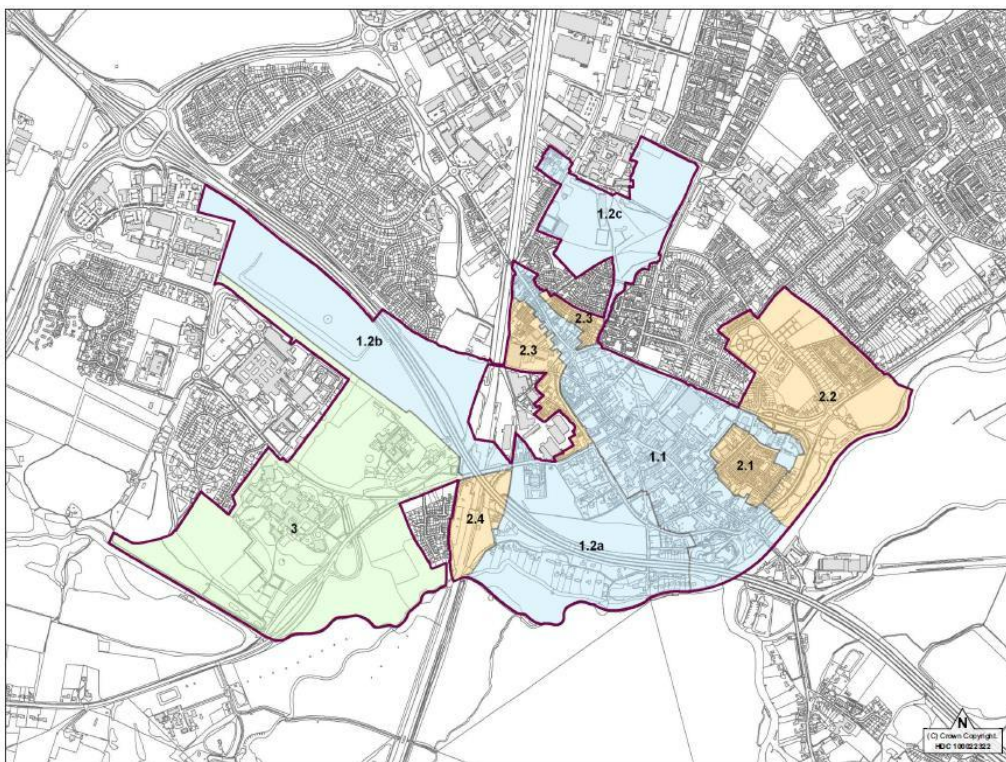
Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 16) June 2019

development proposals on the special character and significance of Conservation Areas should be given considerable weight when determining planning applications.

120. The Huntingdon Conservation Area Appraisal highlights qualities of the area that are seen worthy of protection and enhancement. In addition to the Huntingdon Conservation Area, the town also contains the Hartford Conservation Area.



The Hartford Conservation Area Boundary
© Huntingdonshire District Council



The Huntingdon Conservation Area Boundary and the Character Sub Areas
© Huntingdonshire District Council

121. The Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act (1990) requires the Government to compile a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. This ensures that the planning system is able to give weight to their conservation in making planning decisions.

122. Listed Building Consent is required for all works of demolition, alteration and extension to a Listed Building that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. The town contains 5 Scheduled Monuments and 123 Listed Buildings.
123. During the public consultation phase, residents raised concerns regarding HCV and bus traffic travelling through residential areas within the Huntingdon Conservation Area. While the Neighbourhood Plan cannot provide additional protection that is not already offered by the Conservation Area, the Neighbourhood Plan emphasises the importance of protecting the Conservation Area.

Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets

Proposals for the change of use of listed buildings and development affecting or within the setting of listed buildings requiring planning permission will be required to demonstrate that the proposal avoids harm to the significance of any heritage assets potentially affected. Where harm is considered to be unavoidable, the proposals should demonstrate how that harm has been appropriately mitigated. Any harm remaining will require a clear and convincing justification.

Development proposals should take account of the distinctive character and setting of the Huntingdon Conservation Area and Hartford Conservation Area, including residential areas, open spaces and natural features and reflect this in their layout, design, form, scale, mass, use of materials and detailing.

Development proposals should take account of their effect on heritage assets and their settings with the potential for archaeological interest. Proposals that are likely to affect known important sites, sites of significant archaeological potential, or those that become known through the development process, will be required to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. This will then be used to inform a range of archaeological mitigation measures, if required, for preservation by record and more occasionally preservation in situ.

All development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, including new operational development and alterations to existing buildings, where they form or affect heritage assets should utilise appropriate siting, design, detailing, materials and methods of construction. Particular attention should be paid to reflecting locally distinctive styles of development and these should respect traditional methods and natural materials wherever possible.

Where development proposals requiring planning permission involve demolition, the resulting impact on heritage assets will be assessed under this policy.

Travel and Transport

Background

124. Public consultation has highlighted Huntingdon to be a town with great transport connections, but they can also be a source of frustration for the community. 60% of residents who responded to the neighbourhood plan questionnaire said they use the car as their main form of transport, but almost two thirds also travel either on foot, by bus or by bike. This split highlights the importance of ensuring that the whole transport network is fit for purpose.
125. Transport corridors can be a barrier to movement by non-vehicle modes of travel, for example the Ring Road is a potential barrier to local residents accessing the town centre by foot or cycle. The plan supports the aims and objectives of the Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy in addressing these problems.
126. The built up area of Huntingdon is bisected by the East Coast Mainline and by the A14 strategic highway route. Across the whole of the plan area there are only five crossings of the railway line, three road crossings and two pedestrian only crossings. The rail corridor does however bring the benefit of a green corridor into the town. Across the whole of the plan area there are only four crossings of the A14, three road crossings and one pedestrian only crossing.
127. The existing A14 trunk road between Cambridge and Huntingdon is well known for congestion and delays. Almost 85,000 vehicles use this stretch of the A14 every day; a lot more than we originally designed for. Around a quarter of these vehicles are heavy goods vehicles, well above national average for this type of road.
128. The government has made a provision for £1.5 billion of capital investment for an improvement scheme for the A14, details of which can be found at the [Highways England website](#). The proposals will be funded through a combination of contributions from Central Government, local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships. Once work is complete the existing A14 will be 'de-trunked' between Huntingdon and Swavesey and between Alconbury and Spittals interchange. This means the road will gain county road status and Highways England will pass responsibility for the road to Cambridgeshire Council.
129. The A14 improvement scheme will see construction of a new Huntingdon Southern Bypass, approximately 12½ miles in length, this will remove a large proportion of traffic from the existing A14 through Huntingdon. This will include the demolition of the A14 rail viaduct over the East Coast Mainline railway and Brampton Road in Huntingdon. A through route will be maintained broadly along the line of the existing A14 through Huntingdon, and a new link road will be constructed from Brampton Road to connect with the A14 to the west.
130. On the opening of the new route expected sometime in 2019/2020, the existing A14 Huntingdon viaduct will be closed and demolished with the new road network for Huntingdon created. This work is planned to take a further 18 months to be completed.
131. The A14 improvement scheme will bring significant changes to the transport network in Huntingdon. It is planned that the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan will guide development in the town until 2026, but is likely the plan will require amendments before 2026 to take into account the changes brought about by the completed A14 improvements.

Sustainable Transport

132. Travel needs to be convenient to people but at the same time cause as little damage to the environment as possible. This is the underlying principle of sustainable travel. All new development planned should reflect how this will happen and the following policy seeks to achieve this.
133. It is recognised that there is currently an imbalance between housing and employment leading to many residents needing to travel long distances to work, where for many the car is the only alternative. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to promote sustainable travel by encouraging improvements to infrastructure, including public transport networks, cycling infrastructure and safe pedestrian routes.

Policy TT1 - Sustainable Transport

Development proposals will be supported where they demonstrate how opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport are maximised. New development should connect to existing networks of sustainable transport to encourage travellers to use the sustainable travel opportunities within the development and the surrounding areas.

Proposals will be supported, appropriate to the scale of development, where they maximise the potential for cycling and walking throughout the site and appropriate links including to bus routes to the town centre, to employment areas, to services and facilities elsewhere in Huntingdon, as well as to the rights of way network.

Huntingdon Ring Road

134. The Ring Road was a factor raised as an issue multiple times during public consultation, including congestion, traffic light timings and general road maintenance. The Ring Road also creates a barrier for expansion of the town centre. The production of an in-depth strategy for improvements to the ring road is needed, across various bodies such as Highways England, Cambridgeshire County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and Huntingdon Town Council.

Highway Impact

135. Access to and from any development would be governed by the standards set by Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highway Authority. New development will increase travel movements in the area. The impact of these extra movements needs to be minimized by careful planning both during construction and occupation.

Infrastructure

Background

136. Infrastructure, such as education, health & social facilities and transport, will need to accompany future housing and employment growth. A significant amount of funding will be required to provide this infrastructure. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy that local authorities can charge on new developments in their area. Funding raised through CIL is used to support development by enabling the creation of the associated infrastructure that the Council, local community and neighbourhoods require. Huntingdonshire has been a CIL charging authority since 2012.

Community Infrastructure Levy Local Priorities

137. Town and Parish Councils receive 15% of the CIL collected in their areas, this rises to 25% where a Neighbourhood Plan has been finalised and 'made'. The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the local priorities upon which to spend the 25% local element of CIL which Huntingdon Town Council will obtain. A list of community priorities to be provided through CIL funding from new developments can be found below.

138. Community priorities in terms of additional local facilities to be provided as a result of new development are as follows:

- Highway improvements
- Public open space
- Improvements to cycleways, footpaths and the rights of way network
- Community facilities
- Public realm improvements
- Children's play areas
- Art and cultural facilities
- Street lighting
- Facilities for the proposed new Crematorium and Sports Hub
- Provision of equipment for grounds maintenance

Implementation and Delivery

139. The implementation and delivery section sets out what actions are required to turn this Neighbourhood Plan into reality on the ground.

140. The Town Council needs the help of public and private partners to create a sustainable community and deliver the policies set out in this Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council will work with a number of partners, including the following, to implement the Plan:

Local Partners

Huntingdon Town Council (HTC)
 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)
 Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)
 Highways England (HE)
 Private Developers (PD)
 Local Schools (LS)
 Local Bus Operators (LBO)
 Community Groups (CG)
 Local Residents (LR)
 Health Providers (HP)

141. New development creates a need to provide new infrastructure, facilities and services to successfully incorporate new development into the surrounding area to benefit existing, new and future residents. Financial contributions will be sought from developers to combine with public funding to deliver the necessary facilities in infrastructure. The table below sets out the relevant implementation partners for the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

142. The Neighbourhood Plan provides a positive framework to ensure that development in Huntingdon will bring positive benefits to the town.

Policy	Delivery Partners	Implementation Method
Employment and Investment		
Policy E1 - Opportunities for Employment	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy E2 - Business Investment	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC	Determination of Planning Applications
Huntingdon Town Centre		
Policy TC1 - Retail Development	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy TC2 - Public Realm	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy
Policy TC3 - St Benedict's Court	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy TC4 - Town Centre Car Parking	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy TC5 - Local Neighbourhood Shopping	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC	Determination of Planning Applications

Policy	Delivery Partners	Implementation Method
Tourism, Leisure, Sports and Community Facilities		
Policy TL1 - Tourism Development	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy TL2 - Leisure and Community Facilities	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR, HP	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy TL3 - Provision of Sports Facilities	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy TL4 - Protection of Community Assets	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR, HP	Determination of Planning Applications or Community Initiatives
The Natural, Built and Historic Environment		
Policy NE1 - Local Green Space	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy NE2 - Open Space and Green Infrastructure	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR, HP	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy NE3 - Setting of Huntingdon	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy BE1 - Design and Landscaping	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy BE2 - Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC, CG, LR	Determination of Planning Applications
Travel and Transport		
Policy TT1 - Sustainable Transport	HTC, HDC, PD, CCC	Determination of Planning Applications

143. Huntingdon Town Council is committed to Localism and bringing greater locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through being consulted and proactively through promoting the policies and proposals of this Plan), and by delivering projects and infrastructure for the local community. However, the Council recognises the need to involve a range of other organisations if the potential of this plan is to be realised.

144. In England, communities that draw up a Neighbourhood Plan and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, which is then legally “Made”, benefit from 25% of CIL revenues arising from development that takes place in their area. However this only applies to development permitted after the making of the NP and is not applied retrospectively. Up until that time the provision of eligibility for 15% of the CIL generated in the area applies.

145. Contributions will be sought from developers through CIL and section 106 agreements securing actual provision and/or financial contributions at a level that adequately mitigates any impact on existing infrastructure and contributes towards new local facilities, where additional demand will be generated. The Neighbourhood Proportion

of the CIL and any financial contributions not allocated to site-specific projects will be focused on assisting the delivery of community projects in Huntingdon.

146. In addition, the Town Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by the District and County Councils on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport, through respective plans and strategies.
147. The Town Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids aimed at achieving Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives. This might include the Lottery, UK Government programmes, EU Funds and LEP programmes.

Monitoring and Review

148. Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the planning system. It is important to check that the plan is being implemented correctly, ensure that outcomes match objectives and to change the plan if they are not. This Neighbourhood Plan will be carefully monitored and reviewed if it becomes apparent that the aim and objectives of the Plan are not being met.
149. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to guide development up to 2026. This is in line with the adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy - one of the documents which provides the strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan. The emerging Local Plan to 2036 will replace the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy. But, it is unlikely that the Neighbourhood Plan will remain current and entirely relevant for the entire plan period and may, in whole or in part, require some amendments before 2026.
150. There are a number of circumstances under which a partial review of the plan may be necessary, in accordance with best practice, the Town Council and its partners will consider undertaking a partial review of the Neighbourhood Plan every 5 years or so following finalisation.



Glossary

(Glossary definitions are taken from the NPPF 2019 to ensure consistency)

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is essential local workers); and which complies with one of more of the following definitions:

- a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provision should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value). And rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Conservation (heritage): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Development Plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Green Infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Heritage Asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic Environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Local Planning Authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.

Local Plan: A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Neighbourhood Plan: A plan prepared by a Town or Parish Council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Older People: People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support of care needs.

Open Space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Planning Condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning Obligation: A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Previously Developed Land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Significance (heritage): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Appendix 1 - Descriptions of Designated Local Green Spaces (Policy NE1)

151. Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:
- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
 - where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Land at Sapley Road Park



Scale 1:3,000

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Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓		✓			✓

This park in two main parts includes a playing field set out for 5 football pitches with associated changing pavilion and car parking. There is also a children’s play area and the site is used for informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities.

Land at Oxmoor Lane



Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓		✓			✓

Oxmoor Lane is a north-south footway/cycleway which runs through an important green corridor. The green space makes a positive contribution to the overall design of the area and it contains two dedicated children’s play area. In addition, the site is used for informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities.

Land at French's Field



Scale 1:1,250

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Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓			✓			✓

This area includes a playing field set out with a football pitch, there is also the Olympic Gymnastics Club, the St John Ambulance Centre and an MS Therapy Centre adjacent to the Local Green Space. The site is also used for informal dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities.

Land at Castle Hills



Scale 1:1,250

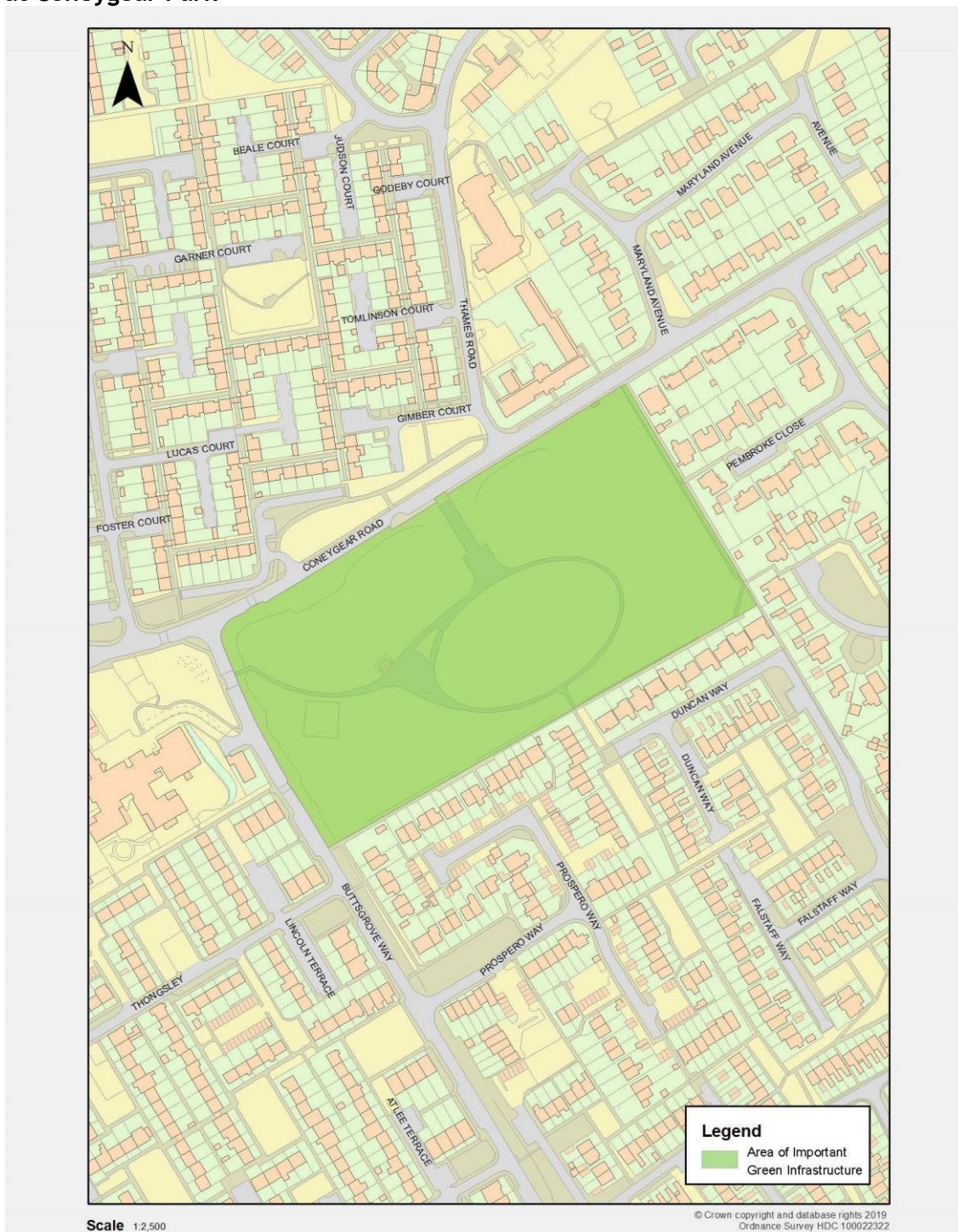
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Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special Significance					Local in Character
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

This park is an area of green space which provides the opportunity for quiet reflection and tranquillity, together with informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities. The area includes the Huntingdon Castle Motte and Bailey which is a Scheduled Monument. The castle consists of a large defensive mound or motte and a roughly rectangular bailey with rounded corners, measuring 180m north east to south west by 140m across, which extends to the west and north-west of it.

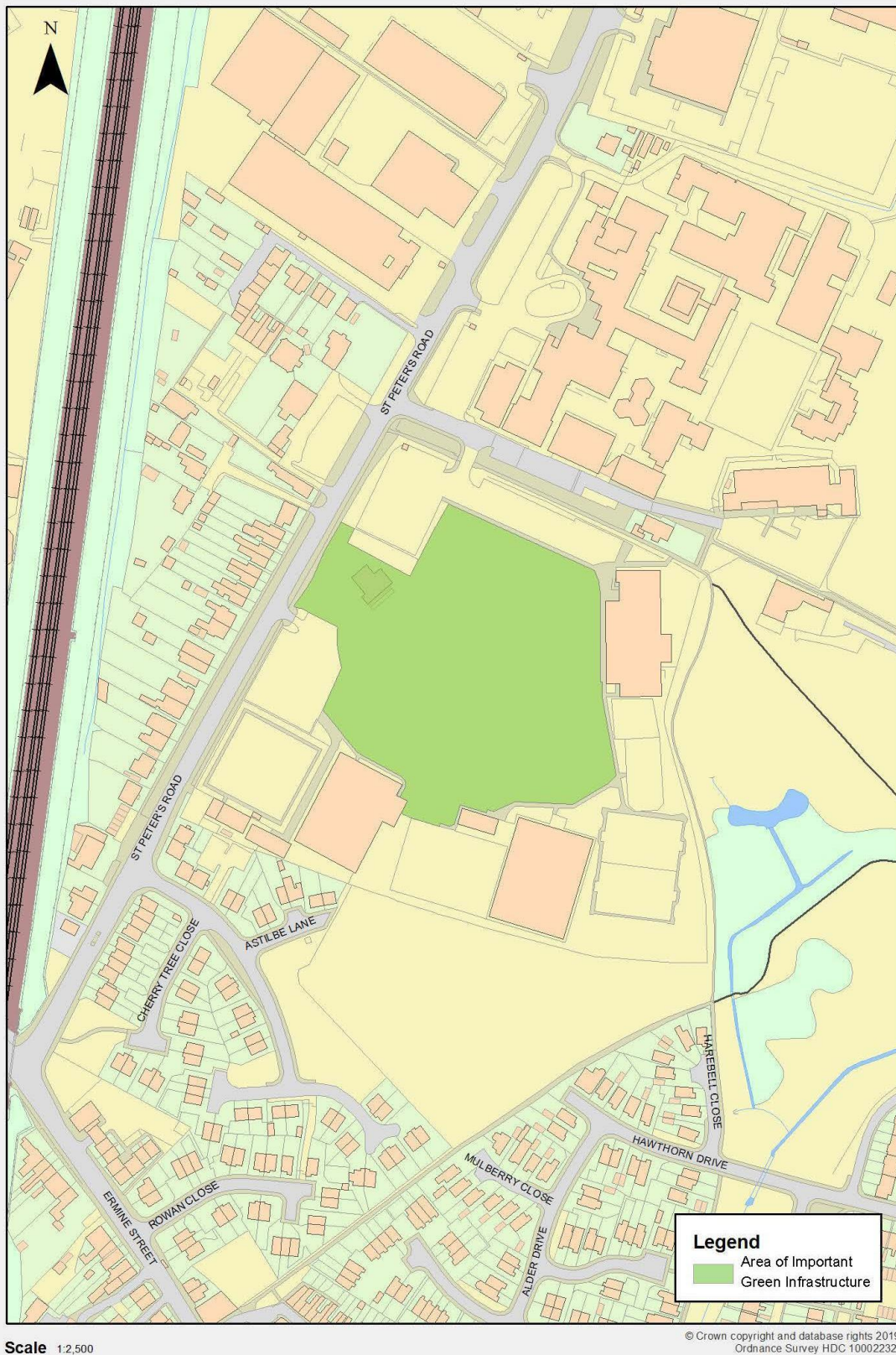
Appendix 2 - Descriptions of Areas of Important Green Infrastructure (Policy NE2)

Land at Coneygear Park



This park includes a central playing field set out with a football pitch, there is also a children’s play area and facilities for young adults. The site is also used for informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities. It also includes significant areas of vegetation and provides the opportunity for quiet reflection and tranquillity. It offers the potential to accommodate further facilities to enhance its use for recreational activities.

Land at King George V Playing Field St Peters



This playing field has two main parts, an area of formal facilities and an informal area of open common. The formal facilities include the cricket club; outdoor bowls club; indoor bowls club; outdoor tennis courts; indoor tennis courts; and artificial pitches. The common area is used for informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities. This area offers the potential to be developed further to enhance the role it plays in the local area.

Land at King George V Park Hartford



Scale 1:1,250

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This area of green space includes a children’s play area and the site is used for informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities. Its undeveloped nature also provides the opportunity for quiet reflection and tranquillity. This area offers the potential to be developed further to enhance the role it plays in the local area.

Land at Riverside



Scale 1:7,000

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This area of green space includes a central area of formal facilities set within informal open space to the north-east and south-west. The undeveloped areas provide the opportunity for quiet reflection and tranquillity, together with informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities. The central area includes car parking; a football pitch; and a boat club. This area offers the potential to be developed further to enhance the role it plays in the local area.

Bloomfield Park (Huntingdon Town Park)

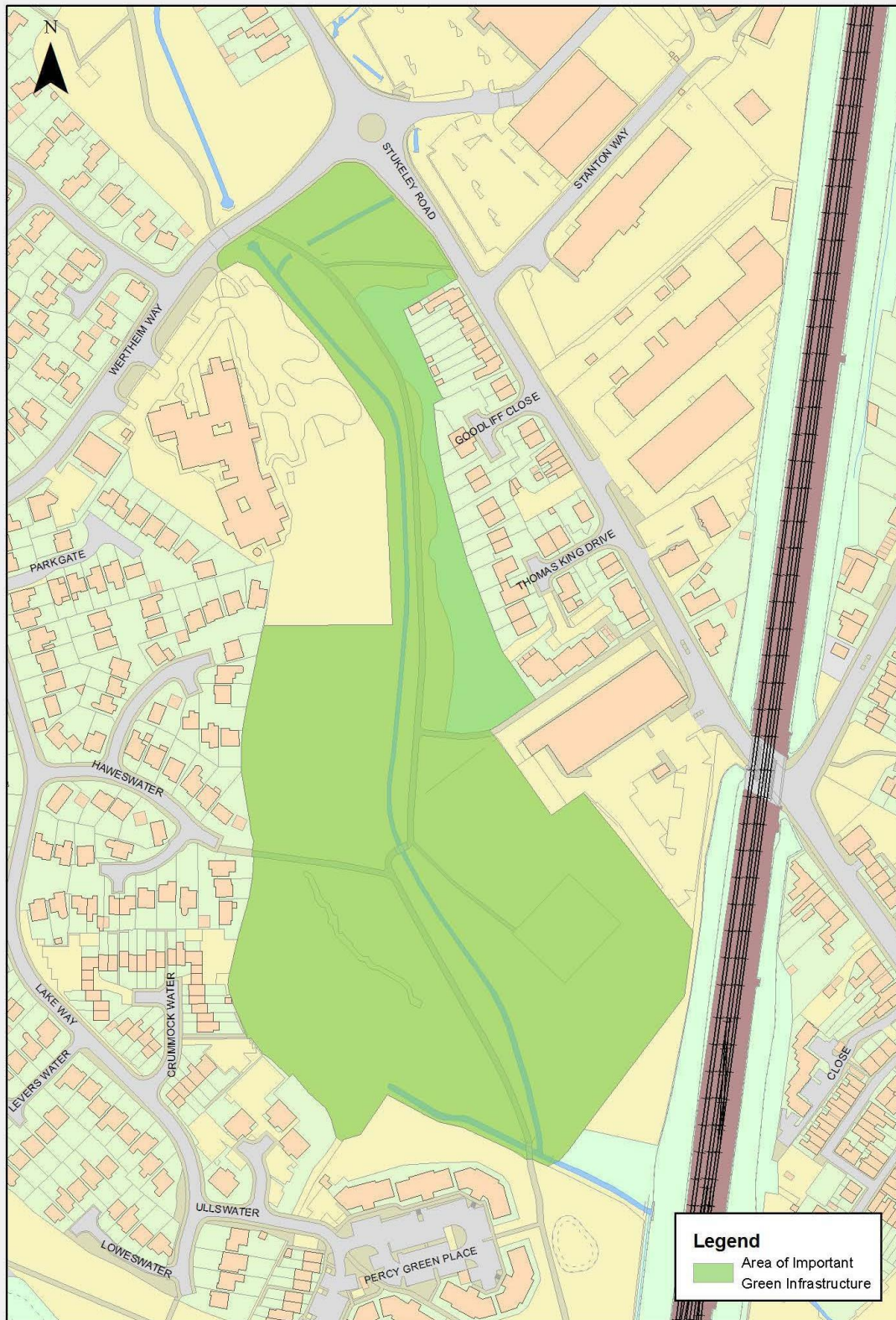


Scale 1:2,500

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This formal town centre park contains a significant number of trees and it provides a significant opportunity for quiet reflection and tranquillity in a central location. It contains a children’s play area, a bandstand and a hedge maze. The park is commonly used for informal play, dog walking and other ad-hoc recreational activities. There is potential for the park to accommodate further leisure facilities.

Land at Stukeley Meadows Local Nature Reserve



Scale 1:2,500

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This site is made up of grassland, bramble thickets and wetland, located near the Stukeley Meadows housing estate. The site is a well-used green space within a relatively densely built up housing estate. It is also home to a variety of wildlife. There is also a multi-use games area, a trim trail and a skate park located on the site. The site has potential to accommodate further leisure facilities to enhance its use as an open space for the community.

Appendix 3 - Descriptions of Areas Referred to as Part of the Setting of Huntingdon (Policy NE3)

Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI

This site is an extensive railway cutting which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This is a habitat type which was widespread on the claylands of Huntingdonshire at the turn of the Century, but which is now scarce as a result of reclamation for agriculture. This habitat type is also scarce throughout its normal range in Britain. Two distinct communities are represented, and these reflect the degree of past and present management. The most herb-rich areas are present on the steep cutting which runs the length of the site.

Portholme Meadow SSSI and Portholme Meadow SAC

Portholme Meadows is situated between Huntingdon and Godmanchester. A small section is located within the boundary of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan area. This large site represents lowland hay meadows in eastern England. This site is the largest surviving traditionally-managed lowland hay meadow in the UK. It holds grassland communities of the alluvial flood meadow type. The meadow is surrounded by channels of the River Ouse. Portholme Meadow is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Alconbury Brook

The Alconbury brook runs through Alconbury and on into Hinchingsbrooke Park before joining the River Great Ouse at Huntingdon Bridge. The brook floods occasionally during winter months but conversely, the brook can become almost dry in the summer in certain areas. It forms part of the southern boundary to the Town of Huntingdon and is an important element of the setting of the Town.

River Great Ouse

The River Great Ouse is the longest of several British rivers called "Ouse". From Syresham in central England, the Great Ouse flows into East Anglia before entering the North Sea through the Wash. With a course of 143 miles, mostly flowing north and east, it is the one of the longest rivers in the United Kingdom. It forms the southern boundary to the Town of Huntingdon and constitutes an important element of the setting of the Town. The river is navigable, and the Huntingdon Bridge has a clear headway of 3.4m for boat traffic.

Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

Hinchingsbrooke Country Park covers 170 acres of open grasslands, mature woodland and lakes. It lies partially within the Neighbourhood Plan area and partially outside. It provides a strategic role and is a great place to visit for families, nature spotters, dog walkers and everyone wishing to enjoy the great outdoors. It includes play area, a café, a visitor centre, a countryside centre and has a wealth of wildlife. The Country Park exhibits the characteristics that would warrant designation as a Local Green Space, however it is considered to be strategic in scale and would therefore be deemed to be an extensive tract of land which makes it ineligible for Local Green Space designation.

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026

Referendum Version
June 2019

Huntingdon Town Council
Town Hall
Market Hill
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE29 3PJ

www.huntingdowntown.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan



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Appendix 2 - The Examiners Report



Report on Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2026

An Examination undertaken for Huntingdon District Council with the support of Huntingdon Town Council on the October 2018 submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Andrew S Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Date of Report: 09 May 2019

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and its supporting documentation, including the representations made, I have concluded that, subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- the Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Huntingdon Town Council;
- the Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Area as shown on the map on Page 11 of the Plan;
- the Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2018 - 2026; and
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to Referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2026

- 1.1 Huntingdon is one of five principal towns in the district of Huntingdonshire within the county of Cambridgeshire. It is situated about 30km to the northwest of Cambridge and a similar distance to the south of Peterborough. The town lies north of the river Great Ouse and is bisected by the A14 principal road, as well as the main line railway between Peterborough and King's Cross / St Pancras.
- 1.2 The surrounding area is largely rural in nature. However, much of Huntingdon itself is developed with the main built-up area extending between the Great Ouse to the south and the A141 which loops around the town to the north. The town's High Street has been by-passed and part pedestrianised. The general area within the B1514 ring road, including High Street, is the principal shopping location although there are a number of out-of-town retail sites. The primary shopping area is wholly within the Huntingdon Conservation Area and contains a large number of listed buildings.

- 1.3 As indicated below, initial work towards preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan began in 2015. Designation in April 2015 was followed by many meetings, drop-in sessions, exhibitions and surveys. The submitted Plan represents more than three years detailed work by those involved. The Plan contains a Vision covering the period 2018 to 2026; also, four broad objectives, five policy areas and 18 detailed policies.

The Independent Examiner

- 1.4 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan by Huntingdonshire District Council, with the agreement of Huntingdon Town Council.
- 1.5 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector with over forty years' experience. I have worked in both the public and private sectors. I am an independent examiner and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

- 1.6 As the independent examiner, I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or
 - (b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 1.7 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the 1990 Act"). The examiner must consider:
- whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions;
 - whether the Plan complies with provisions under Sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act"). These are:
 - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
 - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;

- it specifies the period during which it has effect;
 - it does not include provisions and policies for “excluded development”;
 - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;
 - whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the Plan proceed to referendum; and
- such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“the 2012 Regulations”).

1.8 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.9 The “Basic Conditions” are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations; and
- meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.¹

¹ This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Huntingdonshire District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, includes the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy adopted September 2009. This is where strategic policies are to be found. The Development Plan also includes the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan (adopted February 2011) and saved policies from the Local Plan 1995 and the Local Plan Alteration 2002.
- 2.2 Strategic policies can also be identified in the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. It is anticipated that this Plan will be adopted on 15 May 2019.
- 2.3 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) policies should be implemented.² PPG Reference ID: 41-009-20160211 makes clear that whilst a neighbourhood plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan, the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the Basic Conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. PPG also states, "Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area". On this basis, I refer to the emerging Local Plan in this report.
- 2.4 I also consider whether the policies are sufficiently clear and unambiguous, having regard to advice in the PPG. A policy should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.³

Submitted Documents

- 2.5 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:
- the draft Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2026, October 2018;

² Planning policy for England is set out principally in the NPPF and the PPG offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. A revised NPPF was published on 19 February 2019. All references in this report are to the February 2019 NPPF and its accompanying PPG.

³ PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

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- a map which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates (Page 11 of the draft Neighbourhood Plan);
- the Consultation Statement, October 2018;
- the Basic Conditions Statement, October 2018;
- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation; and
- the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening, October 2018, as prepared by the Town Council.

Site Visit

2.6 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 19 April 2019 to familiarise myself with it and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.7 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulate the objections to the Plan and present arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

Modifications

2.8 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.1 The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by Huntingdon Town Council which is a qualifying body for an area that was designated by Huntingdonshire District Council on 23 April 2015.

3.2 The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan is the only neighbourhood plan for the Plan area. It does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

- 3.3 The Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2018 to 2026. This is in line with the adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy. In the Regulation 16 representations, it has been suggested that the Plan period should align with that of the emerging Local Plan to 2036. I note that the PPG advises that, "Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop over the next 10, 15, 20 years in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people".⁴ However, in my view this does not amount to it being prescriptive on this point and as stated in Paragraph 149 of the Plan, it is unlikely that the Neighbourhood Plan would remain current and entirely relevant, if the Plan period were extended. Given also the commitment to consider a partial review, and the changing planning context in this part of Cambridgeshire, I consider the Plan period to be entirely appropriate.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.4 Details of plan preparation and consultation are set out in the Town Council's Consultation Statement October 2018. Application for designation as a neighbourhood area was made in March 2015. Following statutory publicity, the Neighbourhood Plan Area was approved by Huntingdon District Council on 23 April 2015.
- 3.5 The details of community engagement are also summarised in Paragraph 31 of the Plan. Since designation, various elements of continuous consultation have been undertaken. Initial consultation on "early issues" took place in mid-2015, with consultation on "issues" in early 2016. Further consultation then took place through a series of community roadshows in early 2017.
- 3.6 At the Regulation 14 stage, representations were submitted by 14 different consultation bodies, organisations or individuals. Several changes to the Plan were made with the aim of addressing the representations, all as documented in the Consultation Statement.
- 3.7 At the Regulation 16 stage, 36 discrete representations were made by 17 different parties.
- 3.8 I am satisfied that, at both the Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 stages, the consultation process met the legal requirements and there has been procedural compliance. Regard has been paid to the advice on plan preparation and engagement in the PPG.

⁴ PPG Reference ID: 41-003-20140306.

Development and Use of Land

- 3.9 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with Section 38A of the 2004 Act.

Excluded Development

- 3.10 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for “excluded development”.

Human Rights

- 3.11 Huntingdon Town Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). Huntingdonshire District Council has not alleged that the Plan breaches Human Rights and from my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

EU Obligations

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by Huntingdon Town Council which found that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion, I support this conclusion.
- 4.2 The Plan was further screened for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which also was not triggered. This effectively concludes that the Plan would not have an adverse effect under the terms of the 2017 Regulations. Natural England agreed with this conclusion in its Regulation 14 representations. From my independent assessment of this matter, I have no reason to disagree.

Correction of Errors

- 4.3 Before proceeding to my detailed assessment of the remaining Basic Conditions, there are a number of necessary editing points that need to be addressed and minor inaccuracies and the like that needs to be corrected. These can be tackled by the Town Council in preparing the final version of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan. Of this nature is the reference to Regulation 14 (instead of Regulation 16) at the start of the document and

in the header. However, there are certain errors that require particular comment.⁵

- 4.4 The first matter is reference to the NPPF. At the time the draft of the Neighbourhood Plan was being finalised, the edition of the NPPF issued in July 2018 was the operative version. However, since that time, this has been replaced by a version published in February 2019. The changes in the latest version are minor and do not affect the content of the Plan or the Basic Conditions Statement. Nevertheless, the correct reference should be used as in proposed modification **PM1**. On a related point, "Section 7" in Paragraph 114 should refer to "Section 12" of the NPPF (proposed modification **PM6**).
- 4.5 The second matter is reference to the role of the Development Plan. In the Forward, and in Paragraphs 1 and 6, there is an indication that planning applications must comply with/be in accordance with the Development Plan. However, it would be important to add the qualification "unless material considerations indicate otherwise". Without this qualification, false expectations could arise. Main modifications **PM2 to PM4** refers.
- 4.6 A third matter is the statement "Listed Building Consent is required for all works to a Listed Building" (Para 122). The legislation actually indicates that consent is required for all works *of demolition, alteration or extension* to a Listed Building *that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest* (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)). Again, the relevant qualification should be added as in proposed modification **PM5**.
- 4.7 A final point regarding accuracy is the definition of heritage assets. The NPPF definition is set out in the Plan's Glossary. However, Paragraph 118 uses a "shorthand" version. The correct definition should be referenced as in proposed modification **PM7**.

Main Issues

- 4.8 Having considered whether the Plan complies with various procedural and legal requirements, it is now necessary to deal with whether it complies with the Basic Conditions, particularly the regard it pays to national policy and guidance, the contribution it makes to the achievement of sustainable development and whether it is in general conformity with strategic development plan policies. I test the Plan against the Basic Conditions by considering specific issues of compliance of all the Plan's policies.

⁵ Modifications for the purpose of correcting errors is provided for in Paragraph 10(3)(e) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.

4.9 Having regard for the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, the consultation responses and other evidence, and the site visit, I consider that there are six main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination.

These relate to:

- Allocations;
- Huntingdon Town Centre;
- Tourism, Leisure, Sport and Community Facilities;
- Natural, Built & Historic Environment;
- Travel and Transport; and
- Employment and Investment

Issue 1: Allocations

4.10 The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate sites for development. As stated in Paragraph 12 of the Plan, sites are already allocated in the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. In my opinion, it is entirely appropriate for the Town Council to choose not to allocate land for development in its Neighbourhood Plan, including sites that may have been granted planning permission.

4.11 Notwithstanding the stated approach, Paragraph 12 of the Plan indicates that the Town Council would support additional development on land to the north of the A141. Land within the designated area is shown on a plan within the document. I appreciate that this support is not in the form of a policy. Nevertheless, I consider that these references are inappropriate.

4.12 First, the identified land is not allocated in the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, so although not fatal in itself, it does not align with the emerging Local Plan. Secondly, whilst it would be open to the Town Council to make allocations, I would expect this to follow an appraisal of options and an assessment against clearly identified criteria.⁶ In addition, SEA may be necessary. All in all, I find that the approach taken is not supported by proportionate, robust evidence.⁷ The final sentence of Paragraph 12 and the following plan should be deleted (proposed modification **PM8**).

Issue 2: Huntingdon Town Centre

Retail Development

4.13 Amongst other things, Policy TC1 (Retail Development) supports the subdivision of existing shop units or the creation of larger shop units involving two or more existing units. However, as noted above, the primary

⁶ See PPG ID 41-042-20170728.

⁷ See PPG ID 41-040-20160211.

shopping area contains a large number of listed buildings. The policy should respond to this planning context by ensuring that the reconfiguration of shop units does not adversely affect listed buildings or the Huntingdon Conservation Area.⁸ A modified form of wording is set out in proposed modification **PM9**.

Public Realm

4.14 The evidence in Paragraphs 61 and 64 of the Plan indicates that St Germain Street and St Benedict's Court are areas where the public realm needs improvement. This need was confirmed at my site visit. As presently worded, Policy TC2 will require a demonstration of how development proposals will contribute to the public realm. To address this, it would seem appropriate to align it with the approach in Policy LP11 (Design Context) of the emerging Local Plan to 2036, so that a positive contribution needs to be sought. This would be recognised under proposed modification **PM10**.

St Benedict's Court

4.15 Policy TC3 offers support for temporary uses at St Benedict' Court as well as regeneration proposals. However, this does not adequately recognise longer term opportunities including redevelopment of the area. The additions in proposed modifications **PM11** would ensure the policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, drawing on the evidence of emerging possibilities (Regulation 16 representations of Huntingdonshire District Council) as well as giving focus to the particular mixed-use scheme that would be strongly encouraged.

Town Centre Car Parking

4.16 Policy TC4 of the Neighbourhood Plan gives support to the development of additional car parking provision; also, improvements to the quality of parking. Be that as it may, local authorities should also be seeking measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists (NPPF, Paragraph 106). To ensure better accordance with national policy, encouragement should be given to non-car modes as in proposed modification **PM12**.

Local Neighbourhood Shopping

4.17 Policy TC5 is directed at protecting existing local neighbourhood shops. Where a loss is in prospect, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the site has been marketed for "a reasonable period of time".

⁸ See NPPF paragraph 195.

However, this phrase is not defined. To avoid uncertainty, a time period should be inserted as in proposed modification **PM18**.

- 4.18 Accordingly, with the recommended modifications, I consider that the policies relating to Huntingdon Town Centre would generally conform with strategic statutory policies, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and have due regard to national policy and guidance. Therefore, the Basic Conditions are met.

Issue 3: Tourism, Leisure, Sport and Community Facilities

Tourism Development

- 4.19 Policy TL1 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals for visitor accommodation will not be supported outside the built up area of the town. However, there is likely to be confusion over what is meant by "visitor accommodation". Reference to Paragraph 83 of the Plan indicates that a need for additional holiday accommodation is anticipated. As such, in the interests of clarify, it would be better to use the term "overnight accommodation" as in proposed modification **PM19**.

Provision of Sports Facilities

- 4.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 96) states that, with regard to open space, sport and recreation, planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need. To have regard to national policy, a related criterion should be added to Neighbourhood Plan Policy TL3 (Provision of Sports Facilities) – see proposed modification **PM13**.
- 4.21 Accordingly, with the recommended modifications, I consider that the policies relating to Tourism, Leisure, Sport and Community Facilities would generally conform with strategic statutory policies, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and have due regard to national policy and guidance. Therefore, the Basic Conditions are met.

Issue 4: Natural, Built & Historic Environment

Local Green Space

- 4.22 Policy NE1 deals with the designation of Local Green Spaces. However, modifications in order to meet the Basic Conditions are needed in respect of a number of matters:
- There is inadequate qualification of development that would be supported (NPPF Paragraph 145 b);

- The policy should seek to provide net gains for biodiversity (NPPF, Paragraph 170 d);
- For Land at Oxmoor Lane, the boundary of the suggested site should be modified to allow for the potential expansion of the Oak Tree Health Centre; and
- Larger scale plans of each site should be provided so as to facilitate development management.

4.23 Appropriate amendments are set out in proposed modifications **PM20 to 23**. Otherwise, I am content that the remaining sites should be designated as Local Green Spaces.

Open Space and Green Infrastructure

4.24 The third and fourth paragraphs of Policy NE2 are directed at protecting open spaces within Huntingdon. However, I confirmed on my site visit that there are large areas of low-quality open space in the area. Development of some areas and improvement of others could make a greater contribution to sustainable development than simple protection. A more flexible approach regarding the loss of open space is set out in proposed modification **PM14**. Land at Stukeley Meadows (omitted in error) should also be referenced in Paragraph 108, as in proposed modification **PM15**.

Setting of Huntingdon

4.25 Policy NE3 of the Plan (Setting of Huntingdon) gives rise to a number of problems:

- The first paragraph of the policy could be seen as unduly restrictive, as written, and potentially impede sustainable development;
- In addition, the first paragraph does not provide sufficient clarity for a decision maker to determine a planning application;
- Paragraphs four and five of the policy would benefit from being strengthened to reflect the ecological value of the subject sites and provide net gains to biodiversity; and
- There is a potential for internal conflict between this policy and Policy TL3 (Provision of Sports Facilities) of the emerging Local Plan to 2036.

4.26 These problems can be avoided and the Basic Conditions met through a number of amendments to the text. Proposed modification **PM16** refers.

Heritage Assets

- 4.27 Policy BE3 (Heritage Assets) contains the sentence, "Development should maintain history and wildlife trails, help to restore forestation and hedgerows to ensure the green heritage is enhanced." However, there is no explanatory text describing what is expected. A decision maker would struggle to apply such provisions consistently and with confidence. In the circumstances, the sentence should be deleted as in proposed modification **PM17**.
- 4.28 Accordingly, with the recommended modifications, I consider that the policies relating to Natural, Built & Historic Environment would generally conform with strategic statutory policies, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and have due regard to national policy and guidance. Therefore, the Basic Conditions are met.

Issue 5: Travel and Transport

- 4.29 Policy TT1 concerns sustainable transport. There is reference to maximising the potential for cycling and walking. However, there is no provision for adding links to existing rights of way networks (including equestrian access) as referred to in Paragraph 98 of the NPPF. An appropriate addition is suggested in proposed modification **PM24**. On a similar theme, and in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy, the reference to cycleways and footpaths should be widened, as in proposed modification **PM25**. With these modifications, the Plan's policies for Transport will meet the Basic Conditions.

Issue 6: Employment and Investment

- 4.30 There remains one policy area that has not been the subject of scrutiny in the foregoing report. That concerns employment and investment. Proposals for economic development would be supported under Policy E1, (Opportunities for Employment); and schemes that would involve business investment would be supported under Policy E2 (Business Investment). This is in line with Section 6 of the NPPF which is concerned with building a strong, competitive economy. The policies are compliant with the Basic Conditions.

5. Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal

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requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan and the evidence documents submitted with it.

- 5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

- 5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan as modified has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

- 5.4 It is evident that a considerable amount of time and effort has been devoted to the development and production of the Plan and I congratulate all those who have been involved. The Plan should prove to be a useful tool for future planning and change in Huntingdon over the coming years.

Andrew S Freeman

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Page 5	Replace the final sentence of Paragraph 5 with the following text: "The NPPF published in February 2019 replaces versions issued in March 2012 and July 2018."
PM2	Page 4	In the Foreword, at the end of the fourth paragraph, add the words "unless material considerations indicate otherwise".
PM3	Page 5	At the end of Paragraph 1, add the words "unless material considerations indicate otherwise".
PM4	Page 6	At the end of the penultimate sentence in Paragraph 6, add the words "unless material considerations indicate otherwise".
PM5	Page 37	For the first sentence of Paragraph 122, substitute the following: "Listed Building Consent is required for all works of demolition, alteration and extension to a Listed Building that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest."
PM6	Page 34	At the beginning of Paragraph 114, substitute "Section 12" for "Section 7".
PM7	Page 35	In Paragraph 118, after the words "Heritage assets", insert "(as defined in the Glossary)".
PM8	Page 7	Delete the second sentence of Paragraph 12 and the following plan (Land north of the A414 (within the Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area)).
PM9	Page 20	At the end of Policy TC1, add the words "...provided that development, without clear and convincing justification, avoids harm to, or loss of, the significance of the Huntingdon Conservation Area and any nearby listed buildings."
PM10	Page 21	At the end of both the second and third paragraphs of Policy TC2, substitute the

		words "make a positive contribution" for "contribute".
PM11	Page 22	At the end of the first paragraph of Policy TC3, add the following sentence: "A mixed-use redevelopment with a wide range of town centre uses (including retail, hotel, food and drink, cultural and leisure, office and residential) would be welcomed."
PM12	Page 22	Change the title of Policy TC4 to "Town Centre Parking and Access". At the end of the first paragraph, add the following sentence: "Development proposals will be supported where they maximise the potential for cycling and walking linkages to and within the town centre."
PM13	Page 27	Add the following bullet point at the end of Policy TL3: "The proposed scale and mix of uses is justified through robust evidence of local need which takes into account existing public and private sector provision within the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area."
PM14	Page 33	Substitute the following for the third and fourth paragraphs of Policy NE2: "A proposal involving the loss of open space that provides an amenity or recreation function will only be supported where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative open space of equal or higher quality is provided in close proximity; or • The alternative use would address locally identified issues and the loss of open space would be compensated for by qualitative improvements to open space in close proximity."
PM15	Page 31	In Paragraph 108, add the following bullet point: "Land at Stukeley Meadows Local Nature Reserve".
PM16	Pages 33 and 34	Substitute the following for the first paragraph of Policy NE3: "Development within or on the edge of

		<p>Huntingdon will only be permitted where it responds positively to the area’s character and identity.”</p> <p>Substitute the following for the final three paragraphs of Policy NE3:</p> <p>“Development affecting Alconbury Brook, the River Great Ouse or Portholme Meadow will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance, setting, recreational purpose and biodiversity value of the river corridor.</p> <p>“Development affecting Hinchingsbrooke Country Park will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance, setting, recreational purpose and biodiversity value of the park.</p> <p>“Development affecting the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance and biodiversity value of the SSSI.”</p>
PM17	Page 37	Delete the final sentence of paragraph four of Policy BE3.
PM18	Page 23	At the end of the first paragraph of Policy TC5, delete “a reasonable period of time” and insert “a continuous period of at least 12 months”.
PM19	Page 25	In the final sentence of Policy TL1, substitute “overnight accommodation” for “visitor accommodation”.
PM20	Page 30	Delete the second bullet point in the second paragraph of Policy NE1 and replace with the following: “Provide appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport or outdoor recreation in the circumstances set out in Paragraph 145 b) of the NPPF February 2019”.
PM21	Page 30	In the second paragraph of Policy NE1, third bullet point, add the following after “of the site”: “(and provide net gains where

		practical)”.
PM22	Page 30	Re-draw the boundary of Land at Oxmoor Lane in accordance with the plan “Proposed amendment to the Northern boundary of Oxmoor Lane”, Huntingdonshire District Council, 25/03/2019.
PM23	Page 30	Provide a larger scale plan of each of the proposed Local Green Space sites.
PM24	Page 39	In the second paragraph of Policy TT1, delete “linkages” and all the following wording and insert: “appropriate links including to bus routes to the town centre, to employment areas, to services and facilities elsewhere in Huntingdon as well as to the rights of way network.”.
PM25	Page 40	In Paragraph 138, change the third bullet point to read “Improvements to cycleways, footpaths and the rights of way network”.

Appendix 3 - The draft Decision Statement

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Decision Statement



Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet confirmed on the 18 July 2019 that the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

Background

The Huntingdon neighbourhood area was designated on 23 April 2015 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The plan area covers the parish of Huntingdon and is contiguous with the town council's administrative boundary.

Huntingdon Town Council Parish Council, as the qualifying body, submitted the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council on 6 February. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 11 February 2019 to 5pm on 25 March 2019.

Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with Huntingdon Town Council, appointed an independent examiner, Andrew S Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Mr Freeman issued his report on 9 May 2018 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.

Following discussions with the qualifying body it was decided that the Examiner's recommendations would be accepted in full.

The Basic Conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

Decision and Reasons

Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on **18 July 2019** and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Examiner's Recommended Modifications Received 9 May 2019

The statement below sets out the modifications considered by the examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

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PM25	Page 40	In Paragraph 138, change the third bullet point to read “Improvements to cycleways, footpaths and the rights of way network”.

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) – 9th July

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development – Councillor Ryan Fuller

Report by: Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager (Growth)

Wards affected: All, but specifically St Neots Wards and Wards in the southwest of the District

Recommendation:

That the Panel makes comments on the consultation document report to Cabinet.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements
Meeting/Date:	Cabinet – 18th July
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development – Councillor Ryan Fuller
Report by:	Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager (Growth)
Wards affected:	All, but specifically St Neots Wards and Wards in the southwest of the District

Executive Summary:

On the 3rd June an eight week consultation on proposals for improving the route between the A428 Black Cat roundabout and Caxton Gibbet roundabout, including the construction of a new dual carriageway and a number of new junctions, was launched. The consultation seeks feedback on the proposals for the scheme including:

- Detailed alignment of the route
- Junction designs
- Enhanced routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- Plans for environmental mitigation

This follows a previous consultation held in 2017 on preferred route options and proposals for the Black Cat roundabout.

This scheme is a key part of current investment in the area and will improve journey times for residents and businesses particularly during rush hour on the A421, A1 and A428 at the Black Cat roundabout. It will support local and regional economic growth by way of improved access to the ports of Felixtowe and Harwich and it forms part of the wider scheme Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford (CaMkOx) Expressway. The National Infrastructure Commission identified in their report "Partnering for Prosperity: A new deal for the Cambridge Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc", economic prosperity is not guaranteed. Without investment in new infrastructure designed to support housing growth and link communities, the area will fall behind and fail to attract or retain the talent which helps maintain its position in the UK economy.

Due to its size, this is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which are required to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. Highways England plan to submit the application, subject to the outcomes of the current consultation, in early 2020. If it is successful, a Development Consent Order will be granted.

The full consultation can be found via the link to [A428 consultation 2019](#) (Appendix 1). The consultation closes at 23:59 on Sunday 28th July 2019. Page 80 of the document also lists a number of consultation events which includes St. Neots Priory centre on Friday 21st June.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet is recommended to provide comments on this consultation and delegate authority to submit the Council's final consultation submission comments on this consultation to the Head of Development and Planning Service Manager (Growth), in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an outline of the consultation on the proposals for improving the route of the A428 between the Black Cat roundabout and Caxton Gibbet roundabout, including the construction of a new dual carriageway and a number of new junctions.

1.2 The report provides:

- Feedback on the previous consultation
- Details of the section of the chosen route alignment
- Outlines improvements for walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- Seeks a formal response on the support for the scheme submitted

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

2.1 The A428 improvement scheme is one of a number of key strategic transport schemes within the district. A previous consultation was held in 2017 on the preferred route options and proposals for the Black Cat roundabout.

2.2 The preferred route was announced in February 2019. The 'Orange' route as supported by this Council was chosen with some minor changes to move it slightly further south-west from St Neots where it crosses Potton Road and the B1046 as also recommended by this Council. The Orange route is shown on pages 16 and 17 of the consultation document.

2.3 This process will inform the Development Consent Order (DCO) application to be submitted to government in early 2020, with the DCO examination anticipated later that same year. It is hoped that the Planning Inspectorate (PINs) will issue their recommendation in 2021, with the DCO decision following shortly thereafter. It is anticipated that construction would start in late 2021 with the road itself opening in 2025/26.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

3.1 The current consultation provides the opportunity to provide any feedback on the final proposals including on:

- Detailed alignment of the route
- Junction designs
- Enhanced routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- Plans for environmental mitigation

3.2 The existing A428 near to St Neots and Caxton Gibbet is the only remaining stretch of single carriageway between the two key economic hubs of Cambridge and Milton Keynes. The road is regularly congested and causes significant delays to the public and businesses. The Black Cat roundabout, where the A1 meets the A421, and the A428 near St Neots is a daily source of delays and congestion – currently in the top 20% nationwide.

3.3 Highways England aims to support economic growth in the region and across the wider country through the delivery of the proposals. The scheme has seven objectives

- Connectivity
- Safety
- Economic Growth

- Environmental Improvements
- Accessibility
- Resilience
- Customer Satisfaction

4. CONSULTATION DETAIL AND OFFICER RESPONSE

4.1 The route, including the minor changes from the 2017 consultation, is shown in Appendix 1. It includes a new three tier junction at Black Cat roundabout for free traffic flow; new junctions at Caxton Gibbet and Cambridge Road to connect the new dual carriageway to the existing A428; a new Roxton Road link to connect Wyboston and Chawston; new bridges over the new dual carriageway at Roxton Road, Barford Road, the B1046; and new bridges over the River Great Ouse and East Coast Main Line Railway. This report includes an initial officer response that has been developed collaboratively with colleagues from Cambridgeshire County Council Highways, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

4.2 Proposed Scheme

For ease of understanding the scheme is broken down into the Western and Eastern sections of this scheme. The Western section focusses on the A421, through Black Cat beyond the Cambridge Road Junction to Croxton. The Eastern Section overlaps the Western section between Cambridge Road and Croxton to Caxton Gibbett. The routes are shown in more detail on pages 20 - 23 of the consultation document.

4.3 Black Cat Junction

4.4 The new Black Cat Junction will have three levels with the A1 passing under the new Black Cat roundabout and being below ground level; the new and bigger Black Cat roundabout being at ground level; and the new dual carriageway passing over the Black Cat roundabout and being above ground level. Access to Roxton via Bedford Road on the south-west side of the junction will remain the same. Full details are set out on pages 26 and 27 of the consultation document.

4.5 Cambridge Road Junction

4.6 A new two-tier junction to the east of the existing B1428 Cambridge Road roundabout will provide access to the new dual carriageway. As shown on pages 28 and 29 of the consultation document this will give greater access for those travelling to and from St Neots and provide better connections into the town and to the train station.

4.7 Eltisley New Link

4.8 As noted, the new dual carriageway will affect the current access to Eltisley from the A428 and B1040 St Ives Road. The new link, as shown on pages 30 and 31 of the consultation document will enable access to the village from the above roads using two roundabouts and a bridge of the new dual carriageway. There will be no access onto the new dual carriageway at Eltisley.

4.9 **Caxton Gibbet Junction**

A new two tier junction will be created at Caxton Gibbet to allow vehicles to travel to and from the new dual carriageway from the A1198, as set out on pages 32 and 33 of the consultation document.

4.10 **Walkers Cyclists and Horse Riders**

4.11 The needs of walkers and cyclist are highlighted in the scheme. The priority is to maintain and improve safety whilst ensuring that everyone can continue to reach their destinations.

4.12 The Wintringham development in St Neots has been considered as part of the scheme to ensure the proposals integrate and complement those of the recently approved strategic site. Key changes are identified at the Black Cat Junction, Wintringham development, Cambridge Road junction, Fox Brook bridge, Toseland Road bridge, Eltisley link and Pillar Plantation underpass and Caxton Gibbet junction.

4.13 **Officer Comments**

4.14 The initial officer response below has been developed collaboratively with colleagues from Cambridgeshire County Council Highways, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. Officers are currently considering drafting a joint response in addition to our individual responses to reinforce the significance of this infrastructure.

4.15 Key messages that we will want to reinforce in the Council's consultation response are: the importance of this project; the importance of ensuring that there are no further delays in the programme; the importance of the A428 as part of a multi-modal transport solution; and the benefits of the construction of the project starting at the Caxton Gibbet end. At this time of drafting this report officer discussions are still under way, and centred around 4 key themes. Any additional comments will be provided before or at the meeting:

Topic	Officer Comments
Traffic Impacts	
Traffic modelling	The traffic assumptions are unclear. Further detail is required to understand and analyse figures referenced.
	Where are the extra 24,000 vehicle movements referenced on the new road coming from, and what growth assumptions have been used? The scheme needs to support other transport initiatives, particularly those encouraging more sustainable modes of transport.
	What will the impacts be on local roads, specifically in the St Neots area? Other than the quantification of traffic flows on Cambridge Road, St Neots, and on the old A428, the information presented does not provide any information on how the scheme will impact upon traffic flows in St Neots.
	Modelling outputs will also inform the assessment of the impact of the scheme on CO ₂ emissions and climate change for the locality.
	A monitor and manage approach to potential traffic impacts on villages, with a commitment to introduce mitigation

	measures should the scheme fail to deliver expected reductions in traffic levels, or if other problems occur should be required.
Transport	
	There is no segregated cycle provision included along the route which would be anticipated to promote sustainable development. The new road needs to be part of a multi-modal transport solution including cycleways.
	Due to the growth approved and planned along the scheme, it is considered that the works should start at Caxton Gibbet.
	More needs to be understood on the traffic management of the existing A428 and the new one as it comes on line to ensure any impacts on local communities, such as St Neots, is considered and minimised.
Environmental issues	
Red line boundary	Is this wide enough? It needs to ensure there is the necessary space for enough land for landscaping. Lessons have been learnt from the A14 DCO where additional applications outside the DCO have been required e.g. due to landscaping requirements and change in land ownership
Flood risk	It is noted that the new road may potentially cross over 20 watercourses and a number of areas at risk to flooding. Where appropriate measures should be implemented to reduce the risk to existing communities such as those in St Neots. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) could be incorporated into the development.
Air Quality	An update will be provided at the meeting.
Noise	An update will be provided at the meeting
Green Infrastructure	<p>The A428 project also provides excellent opportunities to deliver objectives of Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Habitat Opportunity Map key areas for grassland, wetland and woodland creation across the county. Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, a 78 hectares of lakes, riverside, meadow, reedbed, scrub and land, is a key local initiative which could benefit from the connections with biodiversity and public access initiatives.</p> <p>The inclusion of green bridges at key locations across the scheme, such as Black Cat, River Great Ouse and Eltisley/Croxton would be expected.</p> <p>Legacy projects and their potential implementation should be considered from an early stage with partners.</p>
Zero carbon	It is unclear how this fits into the Government agenda of achieving Zero Carbon? The levels of ambition around environment need to be demonstrated.
Social issues	
Communication	It is important to understand how local communities will be engaged and kept informed during the delivery of the scheme. Further information on this is required.

Local impact	The accommodation of road crews during the build programme is not clear. Lessons learnt from the A14 have shown that not enough accommodation either onsite or at caravan sites where needed was planned for in advance.
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5. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 Subject to the DCO consent and funding for the scheme being approved by central government, it is anticipated that delivery would likely take place as part of the Government Road Investment Strategy. Construction is expected to start in late 2021 with the road being opened in early 2025/26.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan includes a work programme and actions that include:

- Supporting new and growing businesses and promoting business success
- Supporting economic growth in market towns and rural areas
- Promoting inward investment
- Influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy
- Facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth
- Improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The District Council is a statutory consultee to this process. As a tier 1 stakeholder it will enable the Council to participate in the Examination in Public that will consider the DCO application, if it so wishes along with other partners, including Cambridgeshire County Council.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 8.1 The preferred route detail has considered the recommendation by members from 2017 and:

- a) retains the local road along its whole length between the A1 and Caxton Gibbet;
- b) provides a free-flow route for the A421/A428 and the A1 through the new Black Cat junction, as well as supporting all movements within the junction;
- c) aims to support the free flow of the A1 and so should assist the future A1 improvement scheme, and
- d) aims to support and form part of the wider Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford (CaMkOx) Expressway.

- 8.2 In light of the above it is recommended that:

The Cabinet provides comments on this consultation and delegates authority to submit the Council's final consultation submission to the Head of Development and Planning Service Manager (Growth), in consultation with the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.

9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – A428 – Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements
Appendix 2 – Consultation Response From

BACKGROUND PAPERS

A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements Consultation June 2019

[Report to April 2017 Cabinet - A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements](#)

CONTACT OFFICER

Claire Burton, Implementation Team Leader

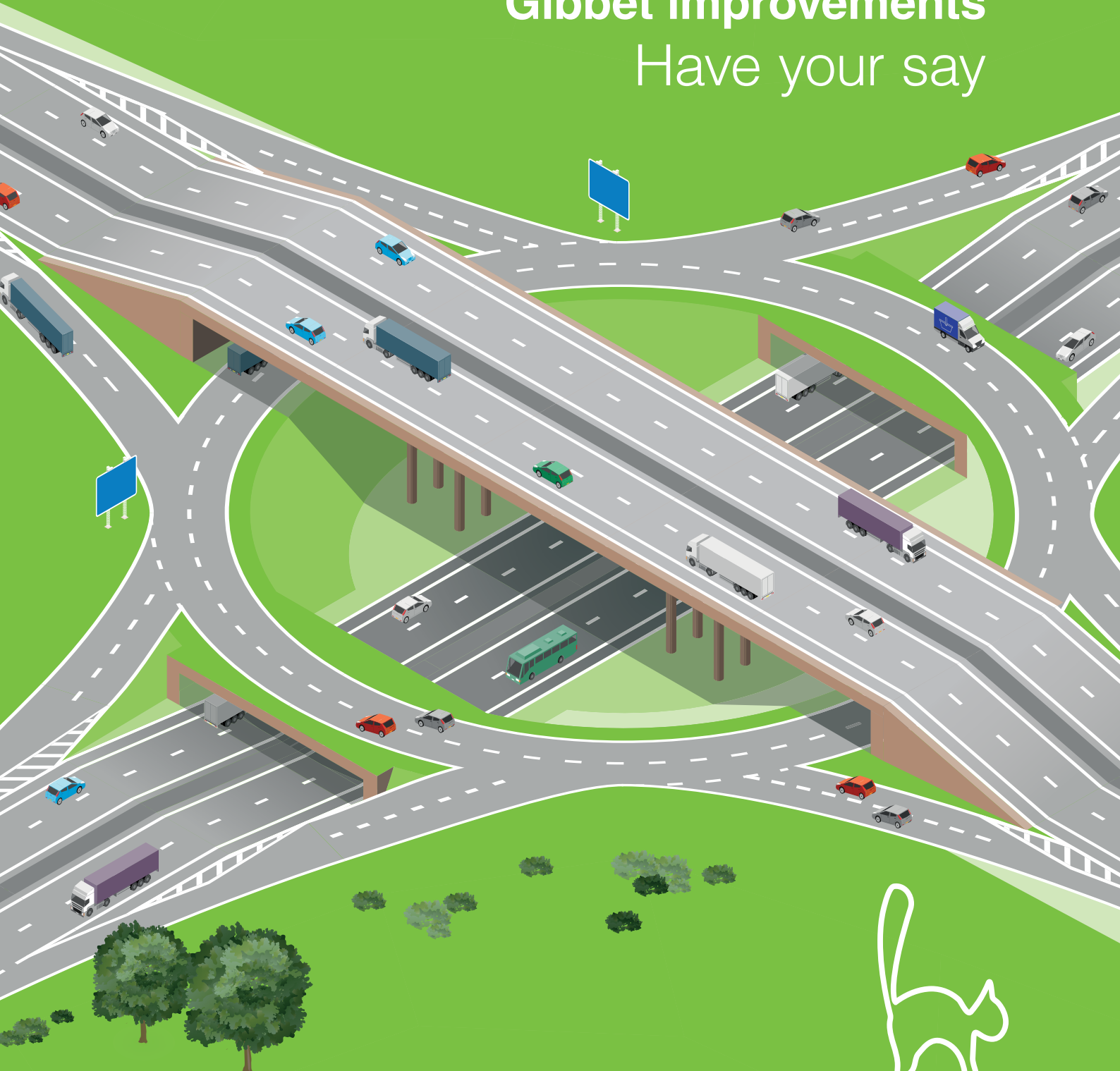
Tel No: 01480 388274

Email: claire.burton@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

A428

**Black Cat to Caxton
Gibbet improvements**

Have your say



Public consultation June 2019

Foreword



At Highways England, we believe in a connected country and our network enables these connections to happen. The A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements scheme is a critical part of our investment in the East; by reducing congestion in the area, the scheme will transform connections between Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

We'll be improving journeys for the thousands of drivers that face long delays during rush hour on the A421, A1 and A428 at the Black Cat roundabout in Bedfordshire.

A good transport project goes beyond the road you drive on. Quicker, safer and more reliable journeys will bring communities together, create new job opportunities and support long term and sustainable growth.

We understand the potential that this scheme can bring. That's why it's vital that we work with partners such as local authorities and local communities to understand what matters most to the region.

We also recognise that building a scheme of this scale can affect the local community. So making sure that we are a good neighbour to those living and working nearby, during and after construction, is important.



Have your say

See page 78 for ways to respond to this consultation.

Take part in our consultation and submit your response by **23:59 on 28 July 2019.**

And we work with all our customers – drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, local communities and businesses – to ensure they have a voice in determining our priorities.

We'd like to thank all those who have contributed to the development of our proposals so far, whether as part of our previous consultation or through discussion.

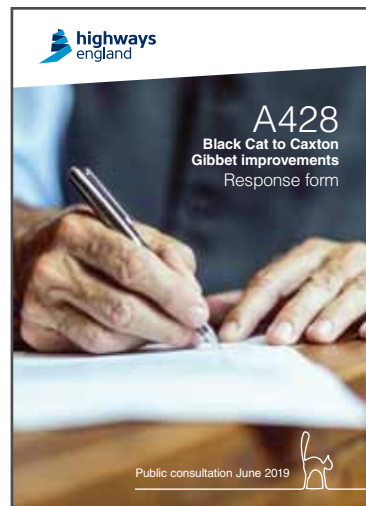
Technology gives us new ways to explore the route and designs of our plans before they are even built. It also offers the chance to bring more young people into the planning process. From modelling the scheme in Minecraft to using augmented reality, we are discovering new ways to share our ideas and engage the engineers of tomorrow.

There are still important details for us to finalise before we submit our Development Consent Order (DCO) application to build the scheme. This consultation is your chance to help shape our final plans, so please take the time to get involved.

Technology gives us new ways to share our ideas and engage.

Lee Galloway
Programme leader

About this booklet



Better connected: cutting congestion, improving safety and bringing communities together

This booklet is about our consultation on proposals for improving the route between the Black Cat roundabout and Caxton Gibbet roundabout, including the construction of a new dual carriageway and a number of new junctions. It is designed to be read alongside our consultation response form, which will help you provide feedback to the consultation.

You can also explore our proposals and view the routes and junctions in the world of Minecraft and in augmented reality by using our A428 app. See page 79 for details.



Have your say

See page 78 for ways to respond to this consultation.

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We believe that connecting people with friends builds communities and that connecting families with places creates memories.



About Highways England

Highways England operates, maintains and improves England's motorways and major A-roads.

Our 4,300 miles of roads sit at the centre of a transport network of local roads, railways, airports and ports. This network joins communities together, links the regions of the UK, and connects our nation to the world. Everything we do is focussed on making our roads safer, meeting our customers' needs and delivering better and more reliable journeys.

We believe that connecting people with friends builds communities, that connecting families with places creates memories, that connecting workers with jobs creates opportunities, and that connecting businesses with markets helps our nation thrive.

The change we're bringing

We are delivering a £15bn public investment in the biggest upgrade to our network in a generation. This scheme, alongside the upgrade to the A14, is one of the many major improvements to our roads in the East of England that will help transform connections and sustain economic growth across the region and beyond.

By the time we have finished, commuters will enjoy better connections to the local and London economies, and business will find it easier to compete with better transport.

Connecting businesses with markets helps our nation thrive. That's just one reason why we are delivering the biggest upgrade to our network in a generation.



Your views are important to us and will help shape our designs.

What are we consulting on and why?

We are consulting on our proposals to improve journeys between Milton Keynes and Cambridge with a new 10 mile dual carriageway between the Black Cat and Caxton Gibbet roundabouts. We also want your views on a number of new and improved junctions along the route.

Your feedback from our first consultation in 2017 has influenced our designs. We now want your views on more detailed areas, such as our plans to support walkers, cyclists and horse riders and how we are protecting the environment.

You can provide feedback on all of our proposals for the scheme, including:

- Detailed alignment of the route
- Junction designs
- Enhanced routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders
- Plans for environmental mitigation



Find out more

You can find further information on how to feedback your comments on page 78

Why?

Because of its size, the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements scheme is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. Applications to build schemes like these are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport, rather than the local planning authorities. If the application is successful, the consent granted is called a Development Consent Order (DCO).

Before an application for a DCO is submitted, the local community and other stakeholders must be formally consulted on our proposals for the scheme and the likely significant environmental effects based on the information available at the time.

After consultation, we will carefully consider all the points raised and take them into account in preparing our application for development consent, which we plan to submit in early 2020.

Our consultation closes at 23:59 on Sunday 28 July.



Find out more

For more information on this planning process, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's website: [infrastructureplanninginspectorate.gov.uk/applicationprocess/the-process/](https://www.infrastructureplanninginspectorate.gov.uk/applicationprocess/the-process/)

We'll be cutting journey times by more than a third at peak times.



Why the scheme is needed

The existing A428 near St Neots and Caxton Gibbet in Cambridgeshire is the only remaining stretch of single carriageway between the two key economic hubs of Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

The existing A428 is painfully congested as it cuts through small communities and villages and carries twice the traffic it was designed for. Drivers suffer daily congestion, delays and incidents on their journeys to work and home. The infamous Black Cat roundabout, where the A1 meets the A421, and the A428 near St Neots are a daily source of queues, delays and congestion. Delays are currently in the top 20 percent nationwide.

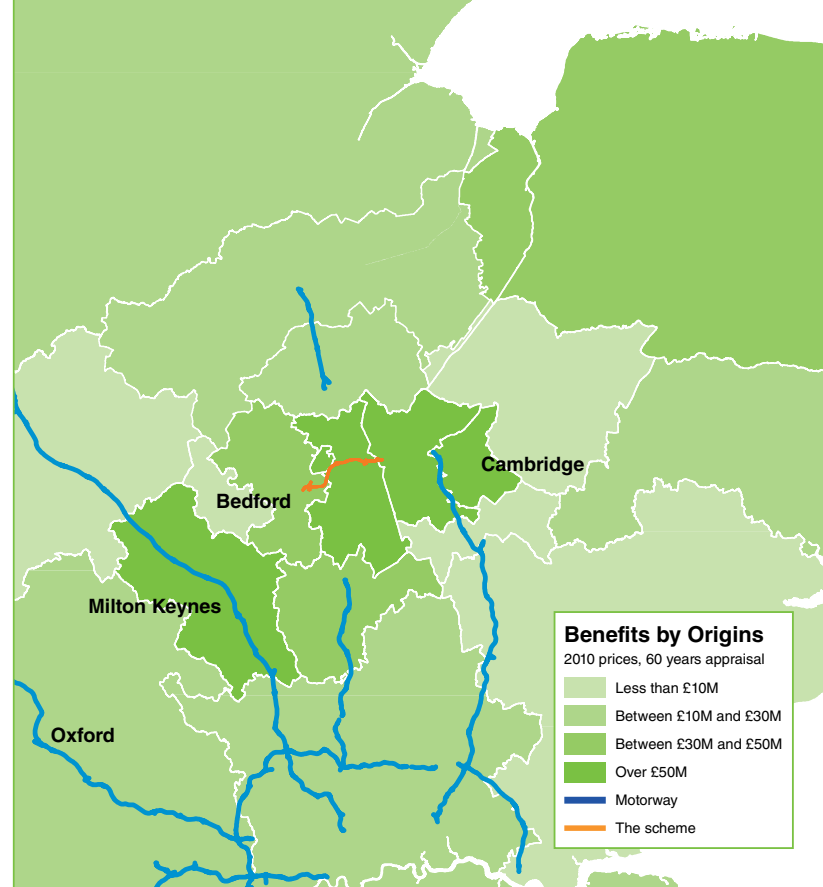
Quicker, safer and more reliable journeys

A new 10 mile dual carriageway will cut some journeys by more than a third at peak times, making journeys safer and more reliable. Together with new and better junctions, the scheme will save motorists as much as 1.5 hours in a working week as they travel daily between the Black Cat and Caxton Gibbet roundabouts.

A three tier free-flowing junction at Black Cat will allow traffic to move freely north-south and east-west and then travel on a new 70 mph dual carriageway with over twice the existing capacity past St Neots, to the Caxton Gibbet junction where drivers can pick up the existing dual carriageway to Cambridge.

Around 22,000 vehicles travel every day between Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet. With housing and employment growth, this number is forecast to grow to 27,000 by 2038.





The economic benefits will be felt as far as Milton Keynes.

Once complete, it will mean drivers can enjoy dual carriageway journeys all the way from Milton Keynes to Cambridge.

Supporting local and regional economic growth

We'll be helping people get to their jobs and homes quicker and more safely, bringing real benefits to the local economy and people's lives in an area which is forecast to see further growth in housing and traffic.

The new dual carriageway will mean better connections into St Neots town centre and train station.

The new dual carriageway will also form part of a key route to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich, with economic benefits being felt in locations such as Milton Keynes and Cambridge, as shown above.

Helping life in local villages

Today, with few available diversion routes, accidents result in disruption over a wide area. Rat-running on local roads through villages is also a problem as drivers seek alternative routes to avoid the heavy congestion.

Rat running through local villages could become a thing of the past.

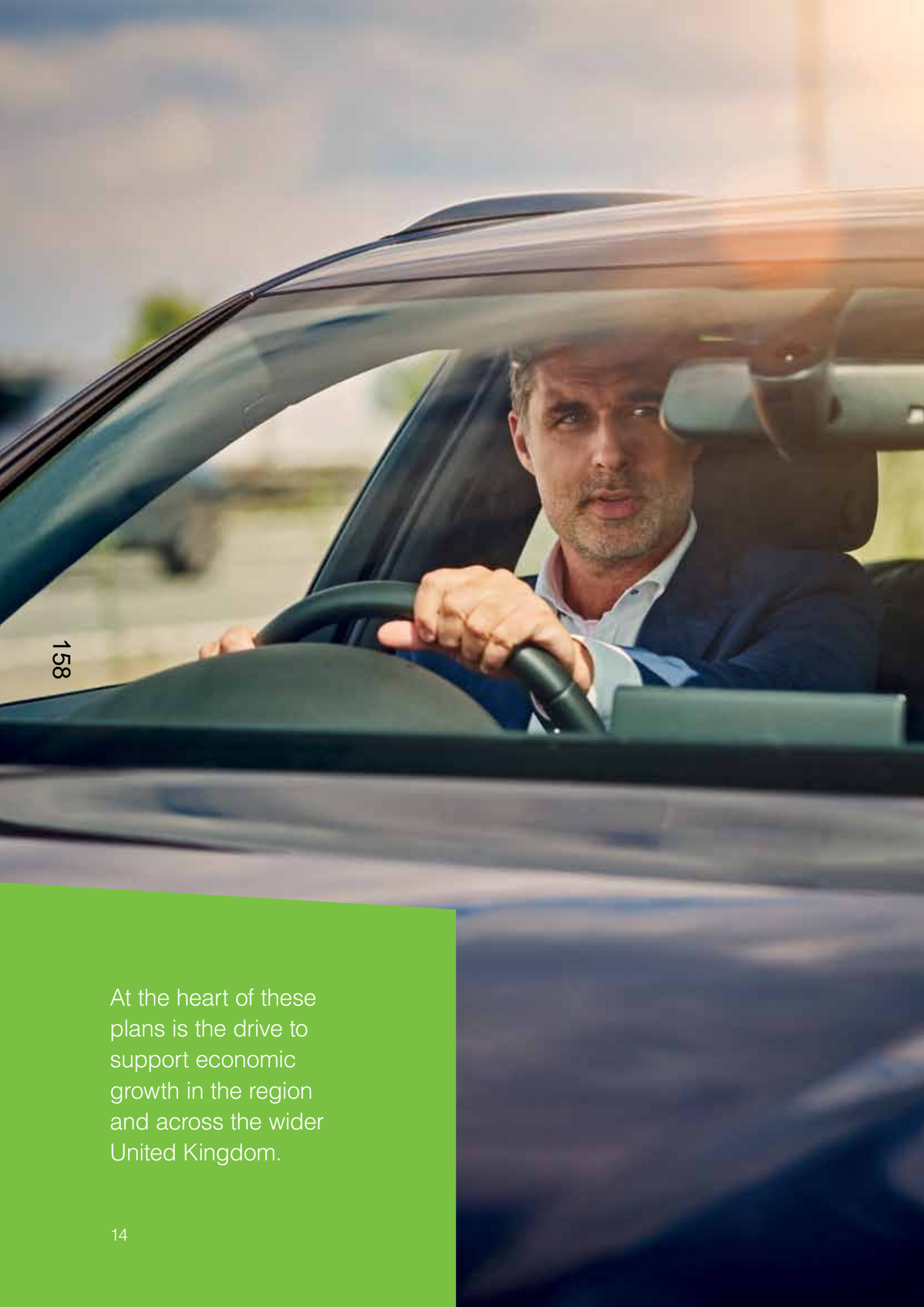
The new dual carriageway will help remove long distance traffic, including lorries, from using these roads when accidents occur. The existing A428 will become part of the local road network, serving the local community. With fewer vehicles travelling on this road – up to 5,000 each day – safety is also expected to improve.

Part of a sustainable and integrated transport approach

The scheme is at the heart of a major investment in infrastructure in the region, including plans to improve east west rail connections between Bedford and Cambridge and the government's ambition to improve road connections between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

These improvements will follow the completion of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme, which is creating a major new bypass for Huntingdon and upgrading 21 miles of the A14. The result? A hugely upgraded, more resilient road network that will further boost the economy and journeys between the economic heartland of the region, through to the Midlands and to the east coast ports.

Beyond better journeys, the scheme will deliver environmental improvements to air quality and noise impact and maintain existing levels of biodiversity. Not only motorists, but walkers, cyclists and horse riders will enjoy better and safer connections through investment in paths and bridleways.



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At the heart of these plans is the drive to support economic growth in the region and across the wider United Kingdom.

Scheme objectives

Connectivity:

Cut congestion and increase capacity and journey time reliability between Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

Safety:

Improve safety at junctions, side roads and private accesses by reducing traffic flows on the existing A428. Improve safety on the A1 by removing existing side road junctions and private accesses onto the carriageway.

Economic growth:

Enable growth by improving connections between people and jobs and supporting new development projects.

Environmental improvements:

Maintain existing levels of biodiversity and have a beneficial impact on air quality and noise levels in the surrounding area.

Accessibility:

Ensure the safety of cyclists, walkers, horse riders and those who use public transport by improving the routes and connections between communities.

Resilience:

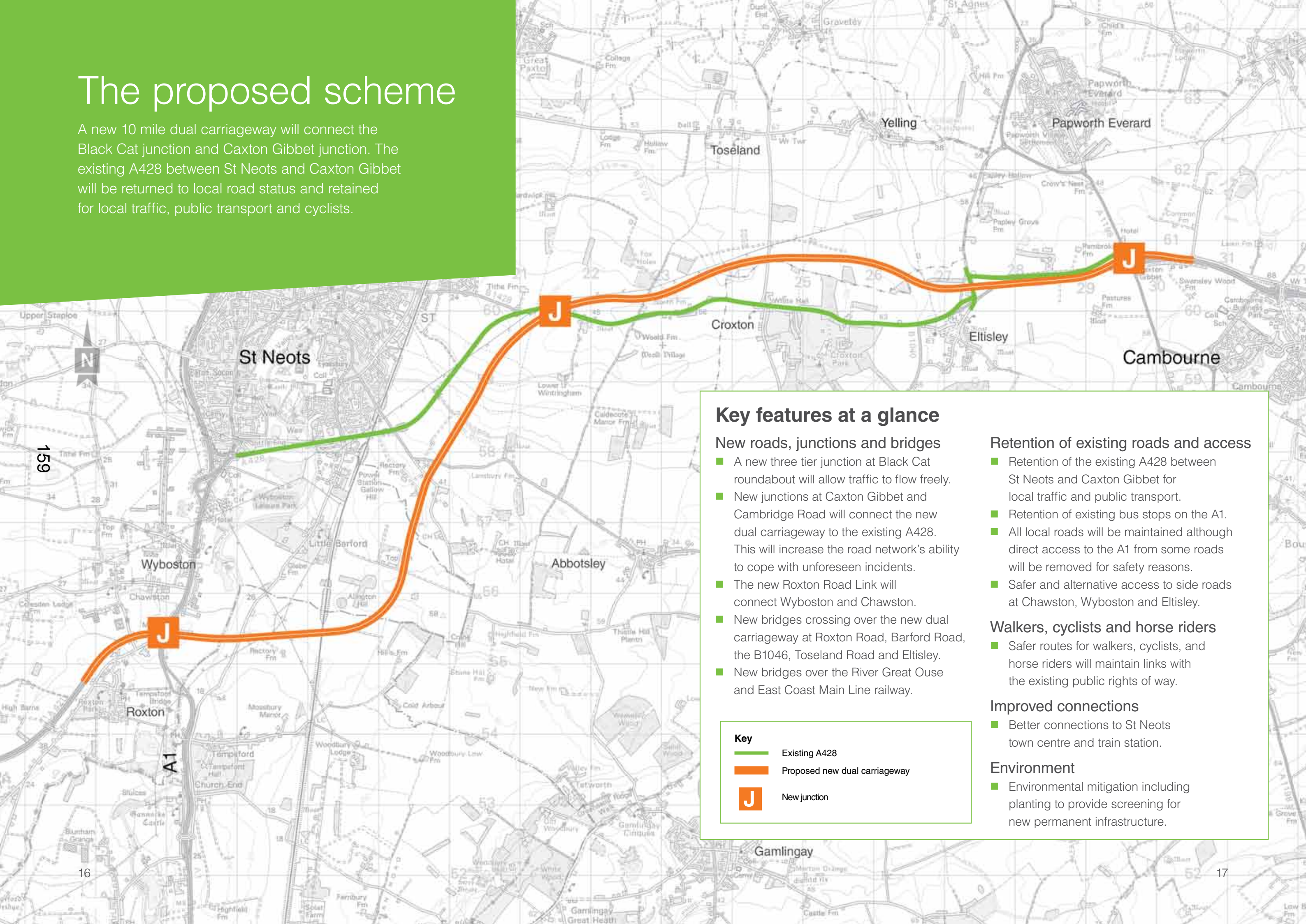
Improve the reliability of the road network so that it can cope better when accidents occur.

Customer satisfaction:

Listen to what is important to our customers to deliver a better road for everyone and improve customer satisfaction.

The proposed scheme

A new 10 mile dual carriageway will connect the Black Cat junction and Caxton Gibbet junction. The existing A428 between St Neots and Caxton Gibbet will be returned to local road status and retained for local traffic, public transport and cyclists.



Key features at a glance

New roads, junctions and bridges

- A new three tier junction at Black Cat roundabout will allow traffic to flow freely.
- New junctions at Caxton Gibbet and Cambridge Road will connect the new dual carriageway to the existing A428. This will increase the road network's ability to cope with unforeseen incidents.
- The new Roxton Road Link will connect Wyboston and Chawston.
- New bridges crossing over the new dual carriageway at Roxton Road, Barford Road, the B1046, Toseland Road and Eltisley.
- New bridges over the River Great Ouse and East Coast Main Line railway.

Retention of existing roads and access

- Retention of the existing A428 between St Neots and Caxton Gibbet for local traffic and public transport.
- Retention of existing bus stops on the A1.
- All local roads will be maintained although direct access to the A1 from some roads will be removed for safety reasons.
- Safer and alternative access to side roads at Chawston, Wyboston and Eltisley.

Walkers, cyclists and horse riders

- Safer routes for walkers, cyclists, and horse riders will maintain links with the existing public rights of way.

Improved connections

- Better connections to St Neots town centre and train station.

Environment

- Environmental mitigation including planting to provide screening for new permanent infrastructure.

Key

- Existing A428
- Proposed new dual carriageway
- New junction



Detailed look at the route

We have developed the scheme following the feedback from our first consultation in 2017. Since announcing the preferred route in February 2019, we have continued to develop the design.

Through this process, the new dual carriageway's alignment has been adjusted to reduce its impact on nearby farms and to better follow the existing natural landscape to reduce the visual impact of the scheme. The existing A428 will be returned to local road status between St Neots and Caxton Gibbet.

The route

The new 10 mile dual carriageway will start just west of the Black Cat junction and end just east of the Caxton Gibbet junction.

There will be a three tier junction at Black Cat and two tier junctions at Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet. These type of junctions use two or more levels to direct traffic towards different destinations and help traffic flow more freely.



Have your say

To comment on the route, please answer questions 2a and 2b in the response form.



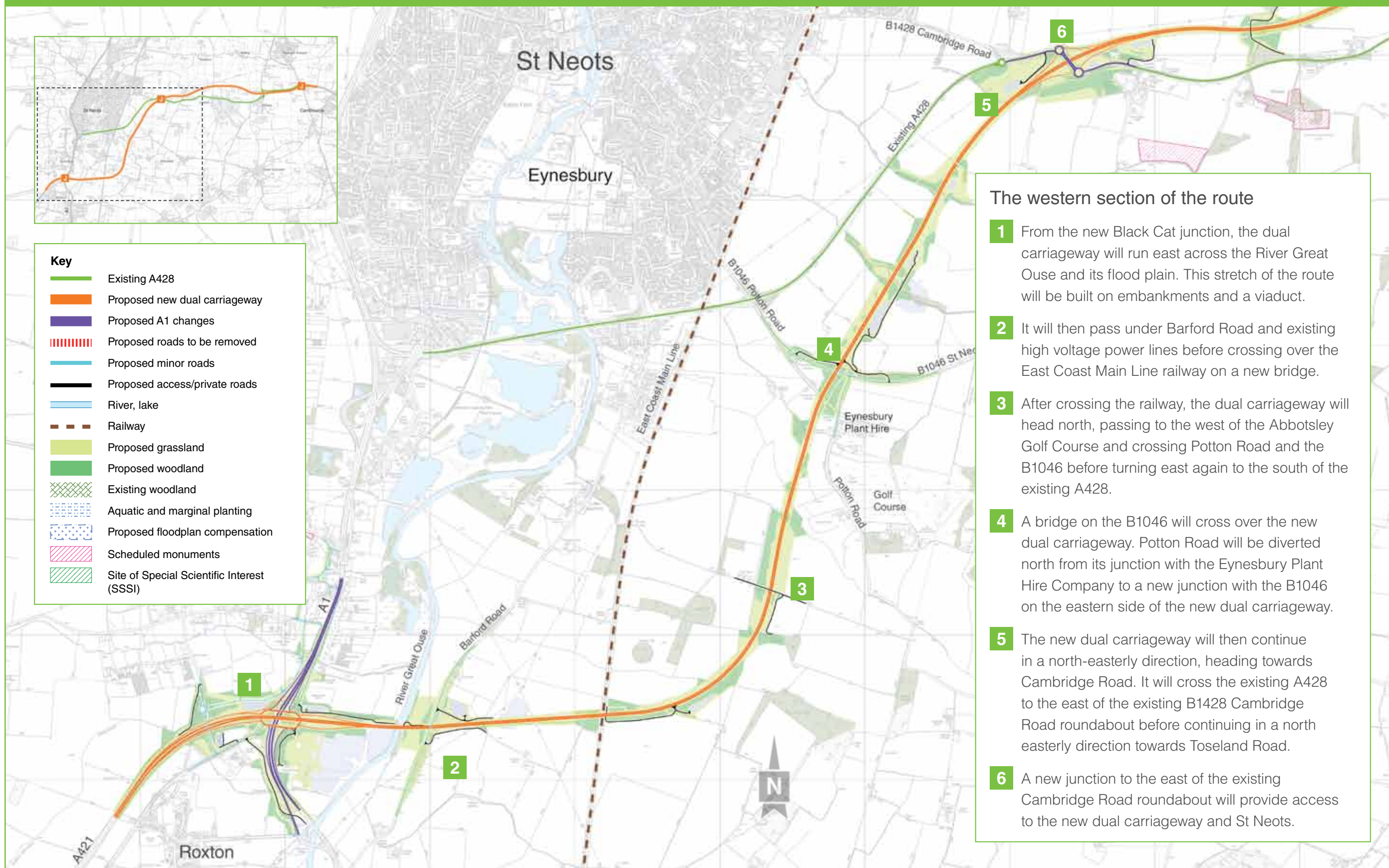
Find out more

To see the route and how the junctions will operate, watch our fly-through video:

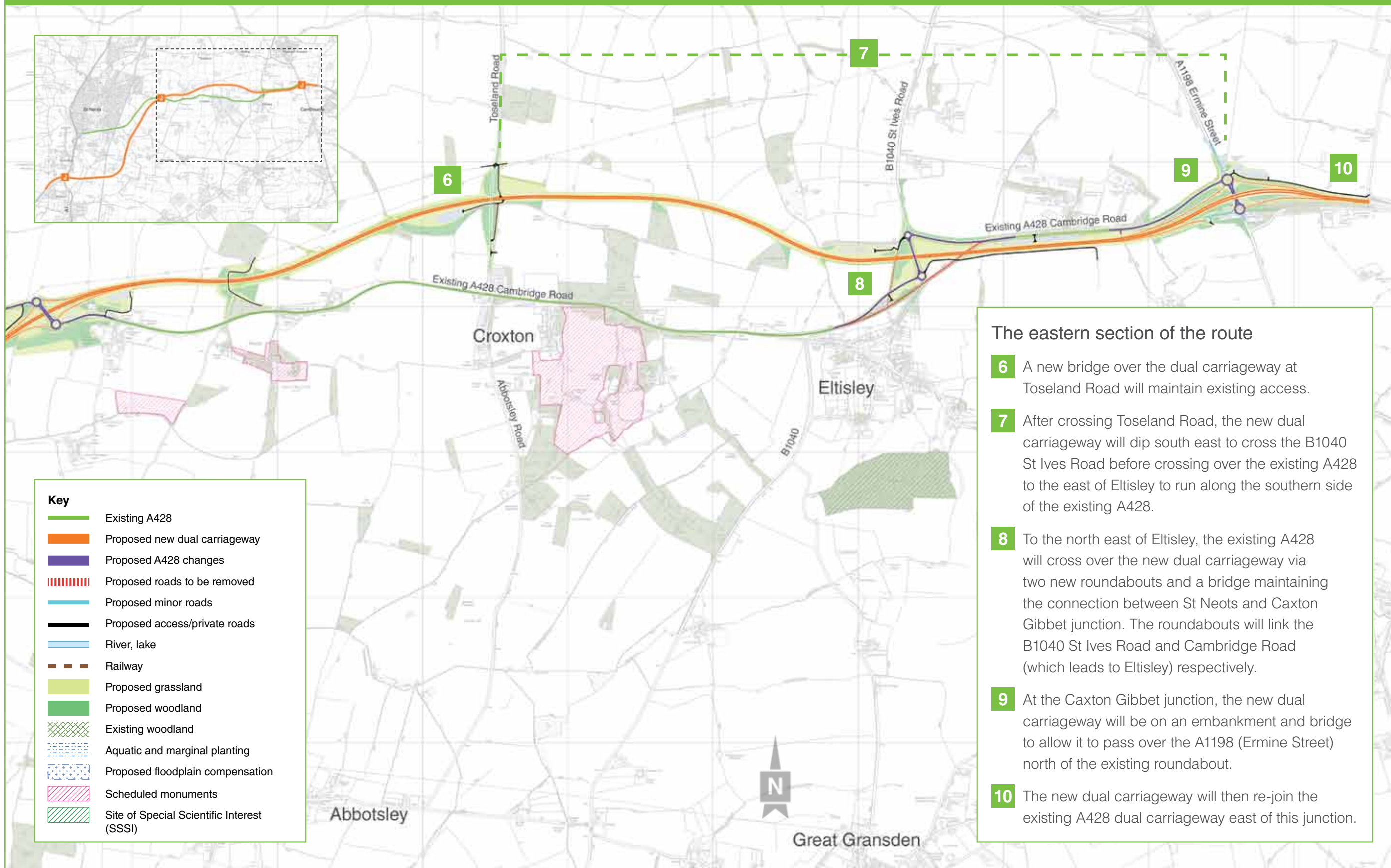
highwaysengland.co.uk/a428

There will be a three tier junction at the Black Cat roundabout. One of the most effective ways to solve congestion, the three tier junction will help traffic flow more freely.

The western section of the route



The eastern section of the route





The Black Cat roundabout today (above) and in the future (right).



Black Cat junction

A new junction at the Black Cat roundabout will mean traffic can flow freely along the A1 and the new dual carriageway. Additionally, a dedicated left-turn lane will be provided between the A421 eastbound and the A1 northbound carriageway. Drivers heading east on the A421 will no longer need to use the Black Cat roundabout to access the A1 northbound.

Have your say
To comment on the junction, please answer question 2c and 2d on the response form.



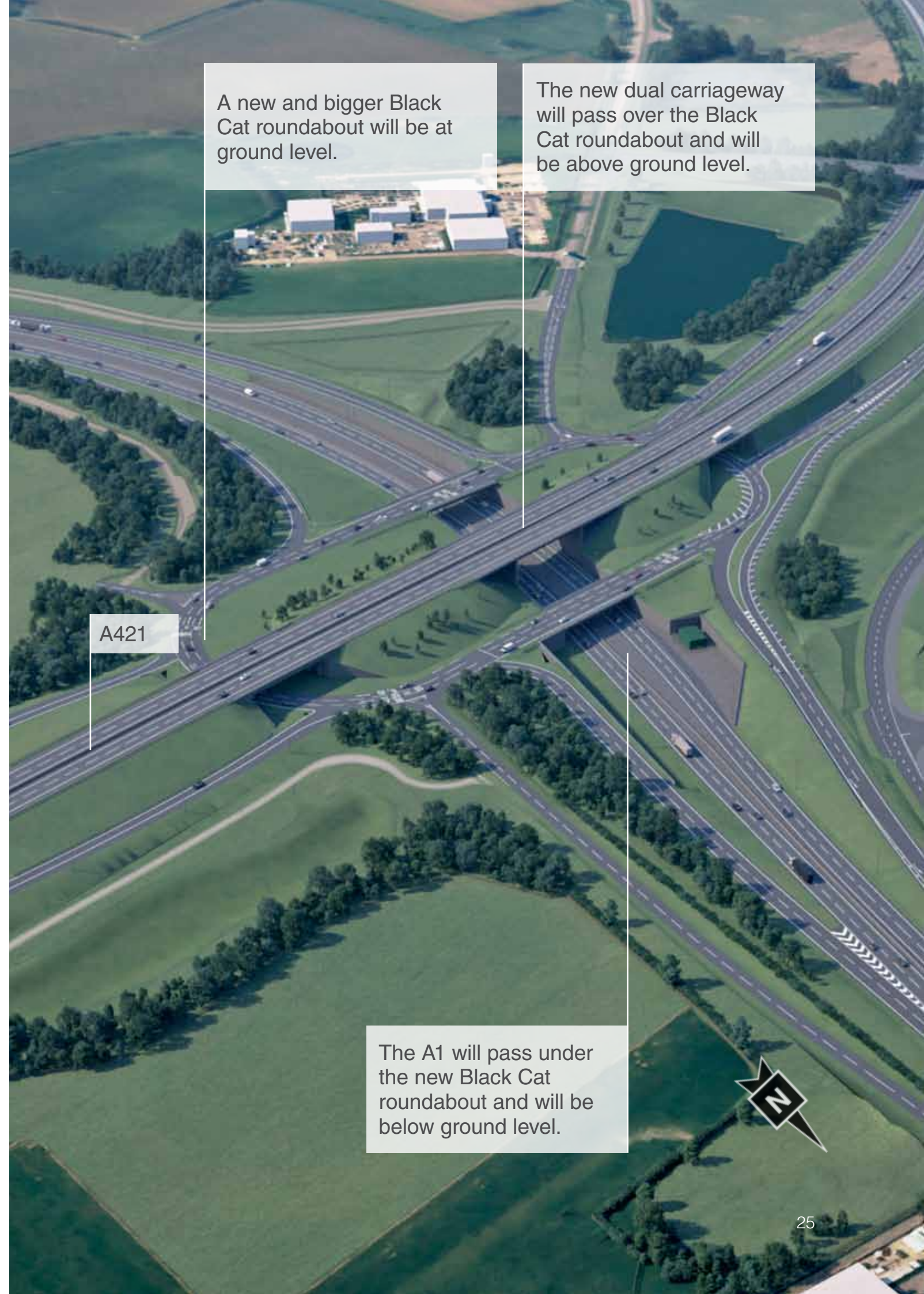
Find out more

To see how the junctions will operate, watch our fly-through video: highwaysengland.co.uk/a428

The new Black Cat junction will have three levels:

- The A1 will pass under the new Black Cat roundabout and will be below ground level.
- A new and bigger Black Cat roundabout will be at ground level.
- The new dual carriageway will pass over the Black Cat roundabout and will be above ground level.

Access to Roxton via Bedford Road on the south-west side of the junction will remain the same.



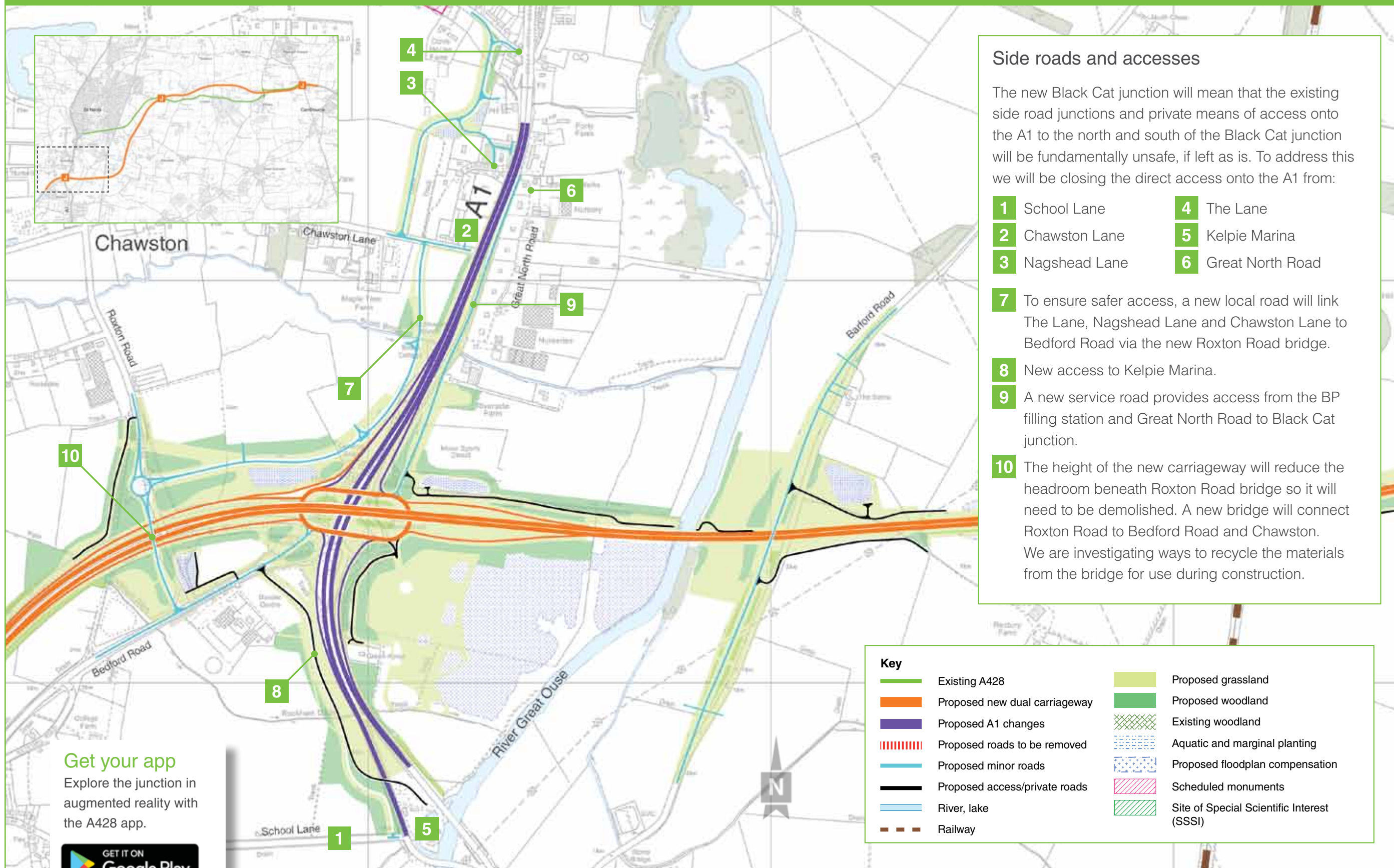
A new and bigger Black Cat roundabout will be at ground level.

The new dual carriageway will pass over the Black Cat roundabout and will be above ground level.

A421

The A1 will pass under the new Black Cat roundabout and will be below ground level.

The Black Cat junction: new layout



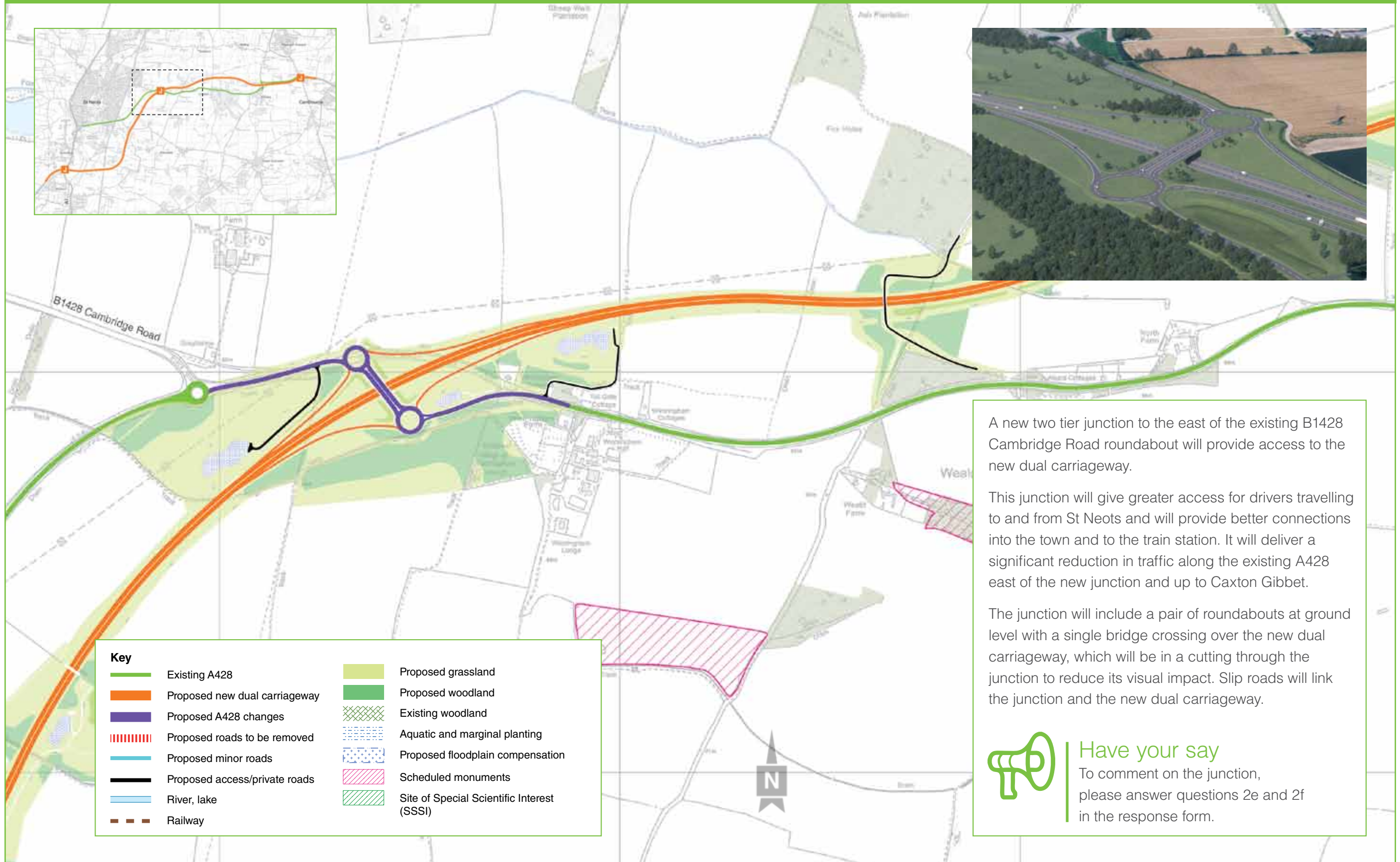
164

Get your app
Explore the junction in augmented reality with the A428 app.



Cambridge Road junction: new layout

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A new two tier junction to the east of the existing B1428 Cambridge Road roundabout will provide access to the new dual carriageway.

This junction will give greater access for drivers travelling to and from St Neots and will provide better connections into the town and to the train station. It will deliver a significant reduction in traffic along the existing A428 east of the new junction and up to Caxton Gibbet.

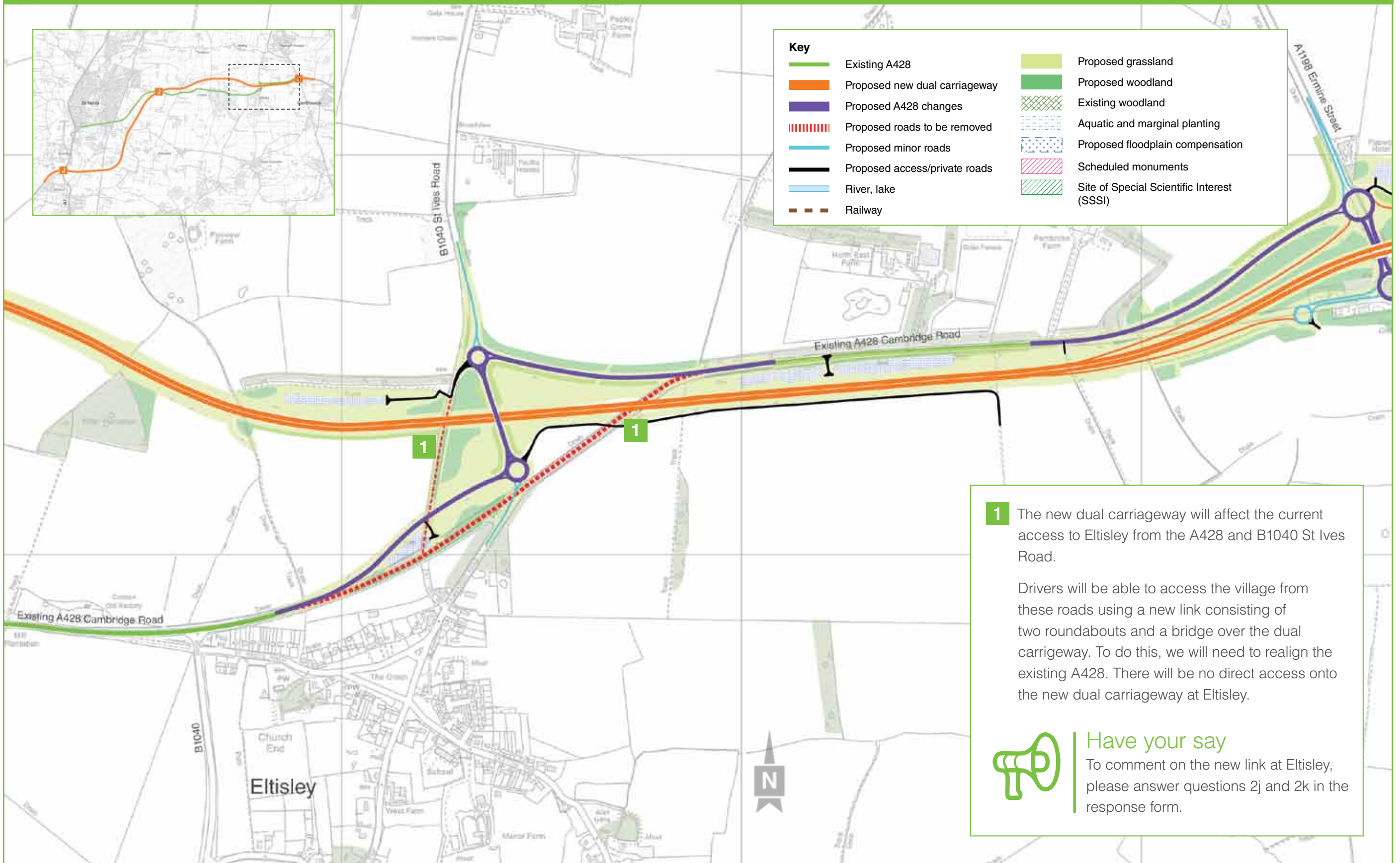
The junction will include a pair of roundabouts at ground level with a single bridge crossing over the new dual carriageway, which will be in a cutting through the junction to reduce its visual impact. Slip roads will link the junction and the new dual carriageway.

Have your say
To comment on the junction, please answer questions 2e and 2f in the response form.

Eltisley: New link



Key			
	Existing A428		Proposed grassland
	Proposed new dual carriageway		Proposed woodland
	Proposed A428 changes		Existing woodland
	Proposed roads to be removed		Aquatic and marginal planting
	Proposed minor roads		Proposed floodplain compensation
	Proposed access/private roads		Scheduled monuments
	River, lake		Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
	Railway		



1 The new dual carriageway will affect the current access to Eltisley from the A428 and B1040 St Ives Road.

Drivers will be able to access the village from these roads using a new link consisting of two roundabouts and a bridge over the dual carriageway. To do this, we will need to realign the existing A428. There will be no direct access onto the new dual carriageway at Eltisley.

Have your say
To comment on the new link at Eltisley, please answer questions 2j and 2k in the response form.



Caxton Gibbet junction: new layout

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Walkers, cyclists and horse riders

We have considered the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and people with disabilities in our design.

Our priority is to maintain and improve safety while ensuring that everyone can continue to reach their destinations and it is our aspiration to improve existing access.

Understanding your needs

Our surveys have helped us identify the most frequently used walking, cycling and horse riding routes that may be affected by the scheme. We will work closely with local authorities and community groups, including local cycling clubs, to understand what is most important to the people that use these routes.

We have considered the new Wintringham Park housing development near St Neots to ensure that our scheme integrates with and complements their plans for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

We're also putting in place new bridges and underpasses so people can safely cross the new dual carriageway, existing A428 and junctions and link to existing public rights of way. For safety reasons, walkers, cyclists and horse riders will not be able to access the new dual carriageway. You can find more details of these changes overleaf.



Did you know?

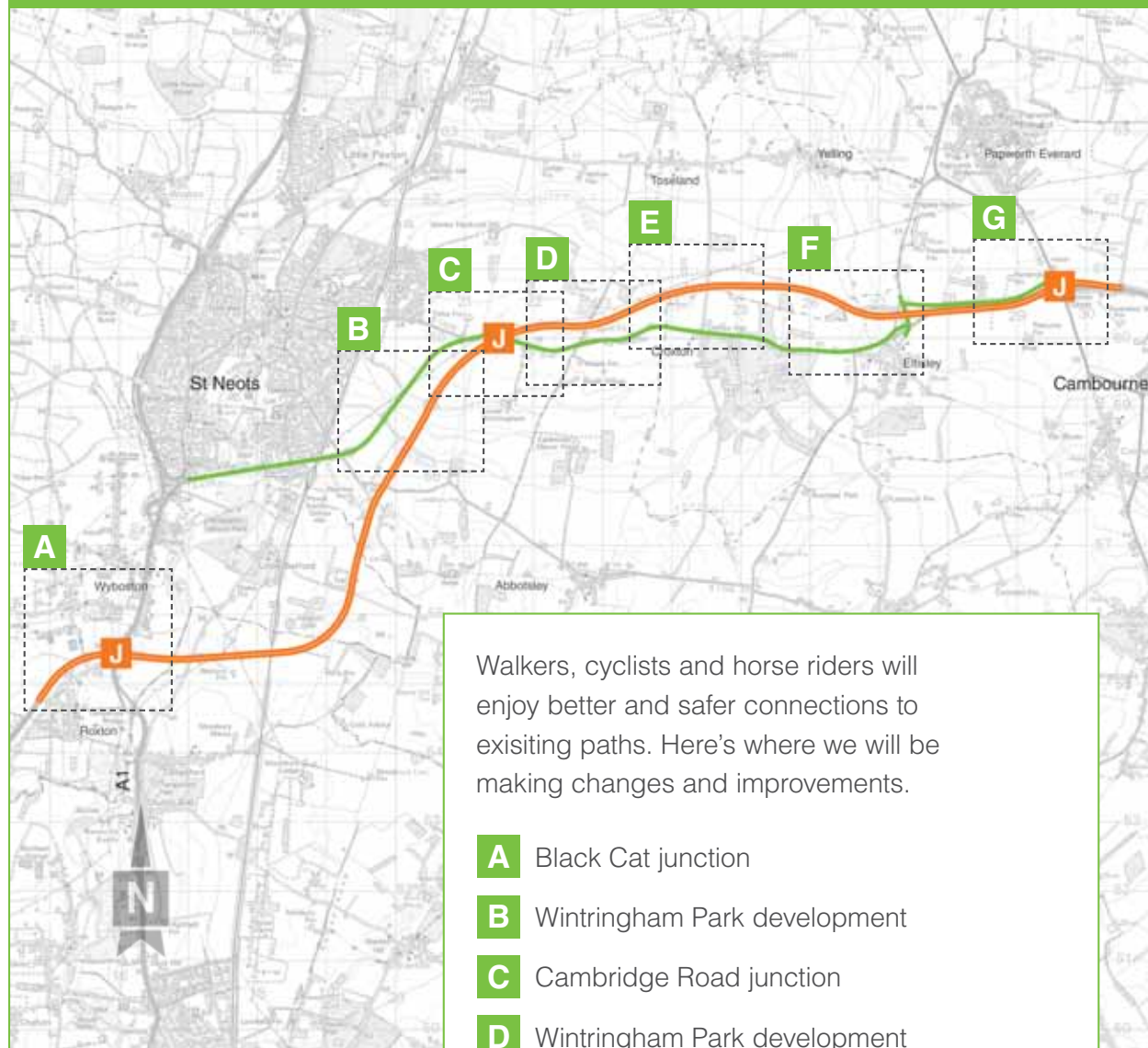
Walkers, cyclists and horse riders will benefit from safer crossings and better connections to existing paths.



Have your say

To comment on our plans for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, answer questions 4a and 4b in the response form.

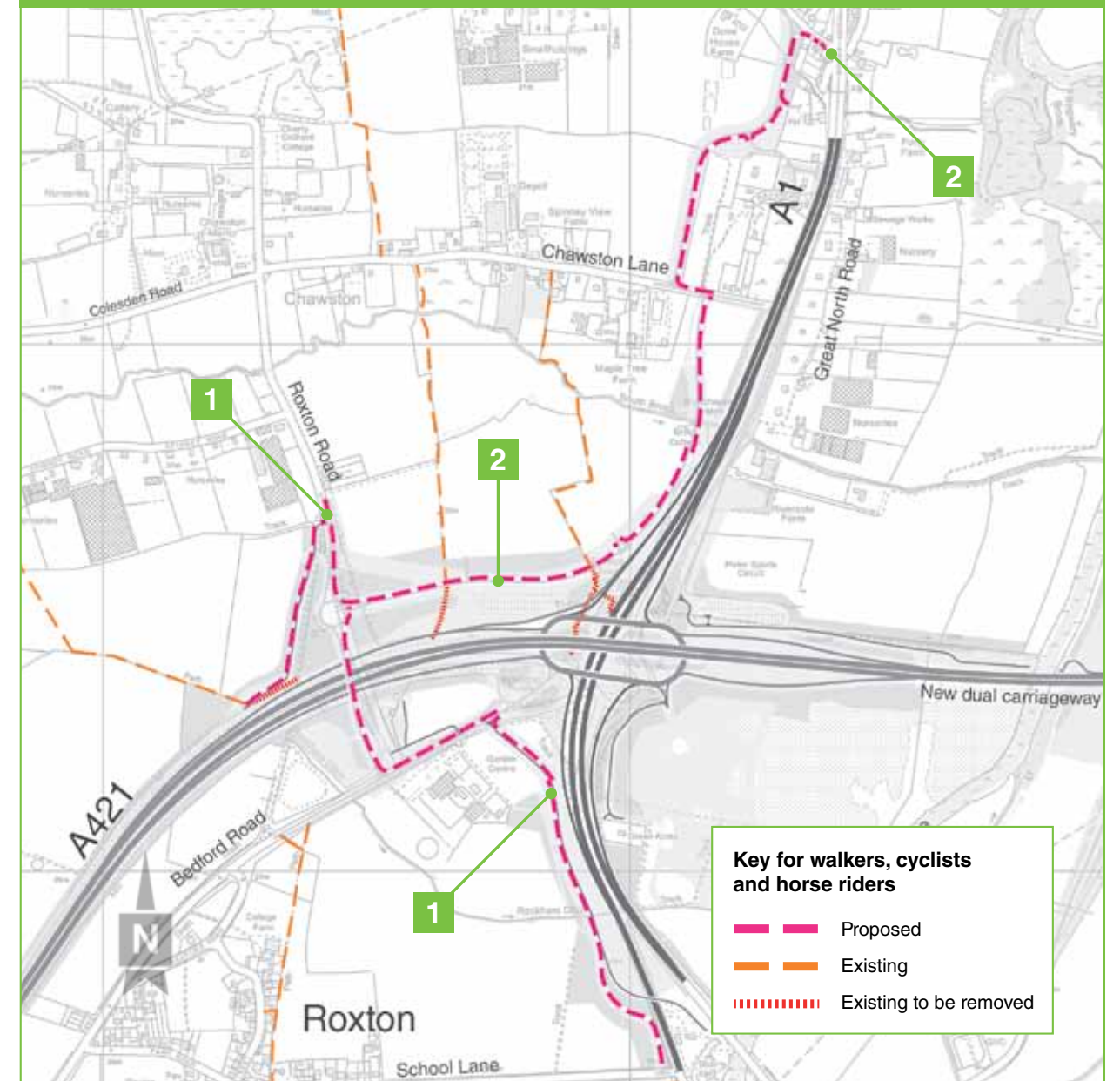
Walkers, cyclists and horse riders: overview



Walkers, cyclists and horse riders will enjoy better and safer connections to existing paths. Here's where we will be making changes and improvements.

- A** Black Cat junction
- B** Wintringham Park development
- C** Cambridge Road junction
- D** Wintringham Park development
- E** Fox Brook bridge
- F** Eltisley link and Pillar Plantation underpass
- G** Caxton Gibbet junction

A | Black Cat junction



Key for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

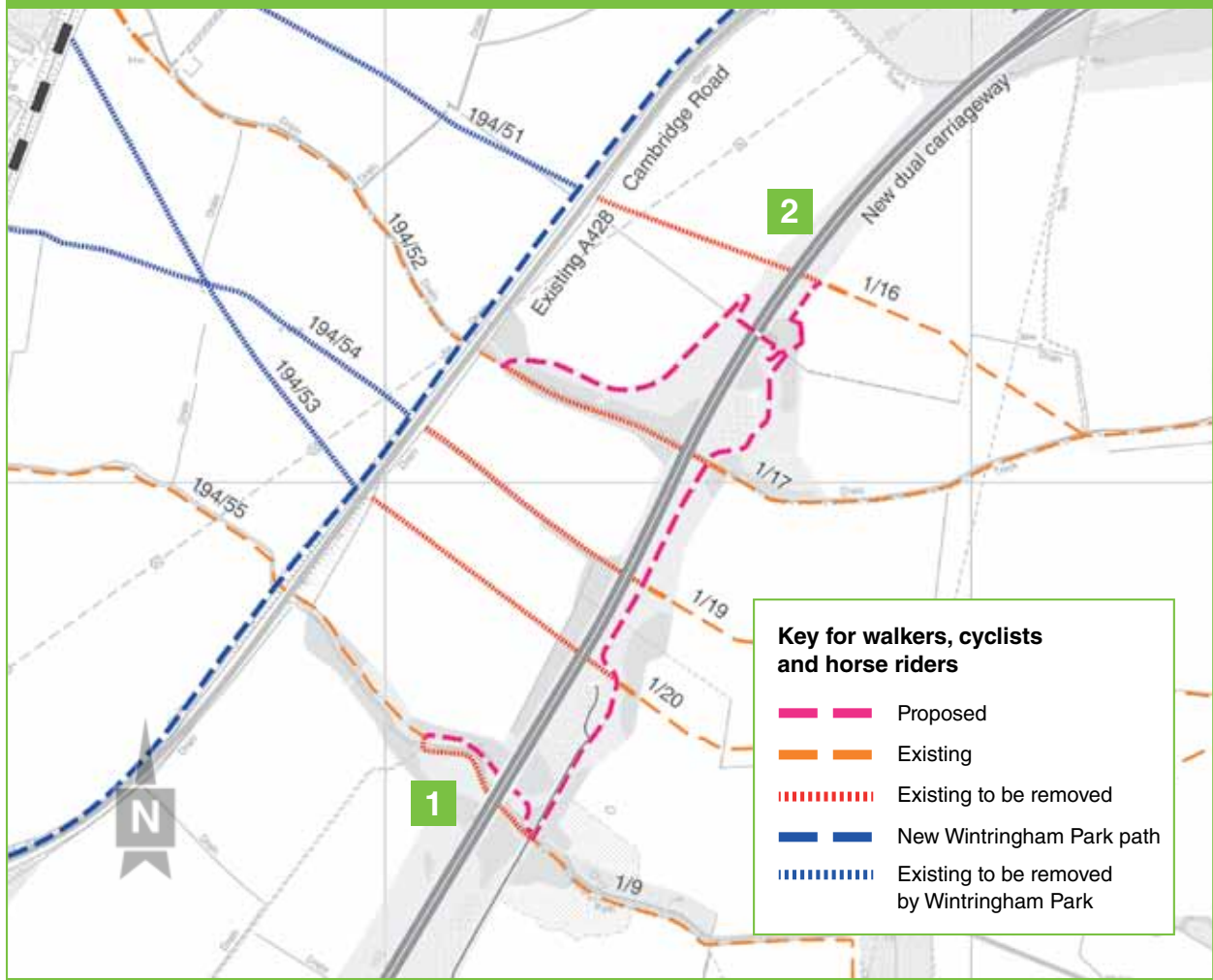
- Proposed
- Existing
- Existing to be removed

We have maintained existing access via a new route with safer crossings.

1 At Black Cat junction the existing combined cycleway/footway will move to a safer location away from the new junction. This will link School Lane to Bedford Road and Roxton Road, connecting to National Cycle Network Route 12.

2 From Roxton Road, a new route along the link road will connect to Chawston Lane, The Lane and the existing cycleway/footway along the A1 north of Black Cat junction.

B | Wintringham Park development



The Wintringham Park development, a major housing project under construction by Urban&Civic, is reducing the five public footpaths that pass through the site and across the existing A428 down to two.

The development is proposing to close:

- 194/51
- 194/54
- 194/53

We will close sections of the footpaths that these paths link to between the existing A428 and the new dual carriageway:

- 1/16
- 1/19
- 1/20

We will keep footpaths:

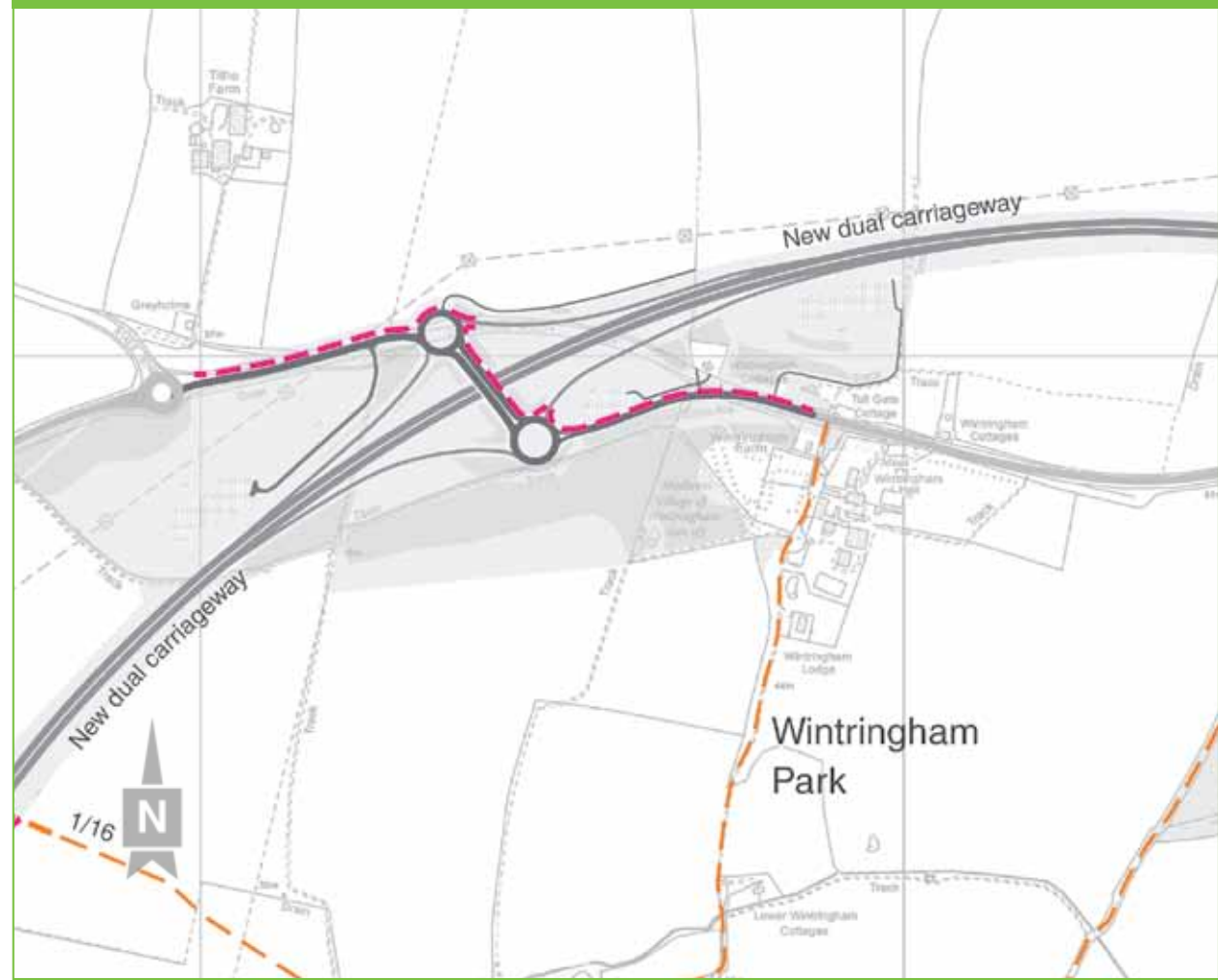
- 194/55 (linking to 1/9)
- 194/52 (linking to 1/17)

Walkers will be able to cross the dual carriageway as follows:

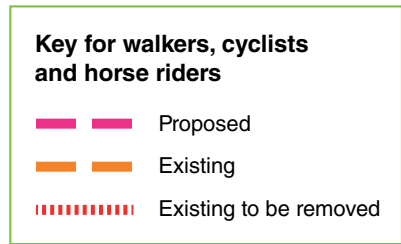
- 1/9 will cross the new dual carriageway via an underpass.
- 1/17 will be realigned and will cross the new dual carriageway via a footbridge.

We will maintain all the public rights of way to the east of the dual carriageway and a new footpath adjacent to the new dual carriageway will link these to the new crossings.

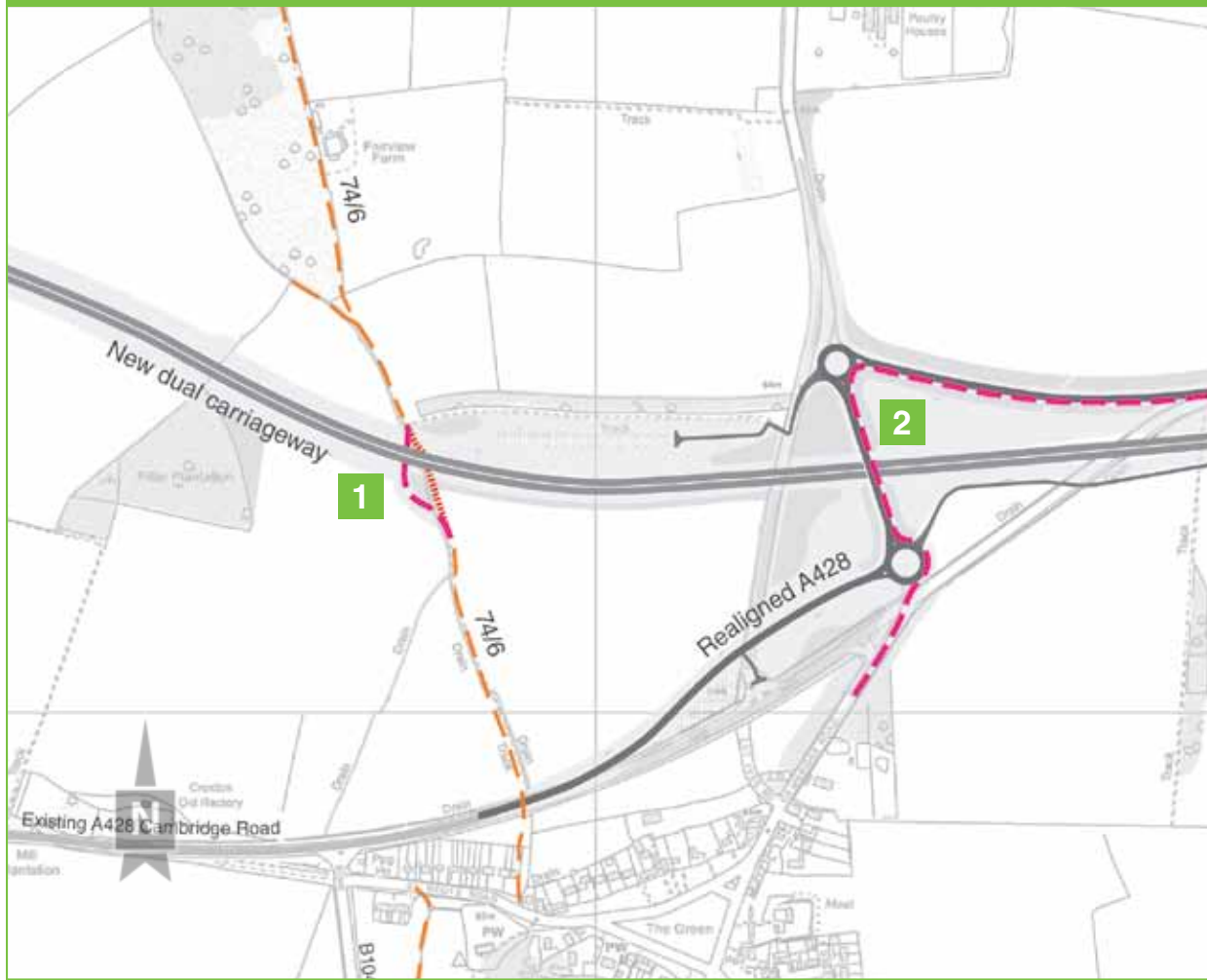
C | Cambridge Road junction



We will provide a new cycleway/footway through the junction with safe crossings for walkers and cyclists.



F | Eltisley link and Pillar Plantation underpass



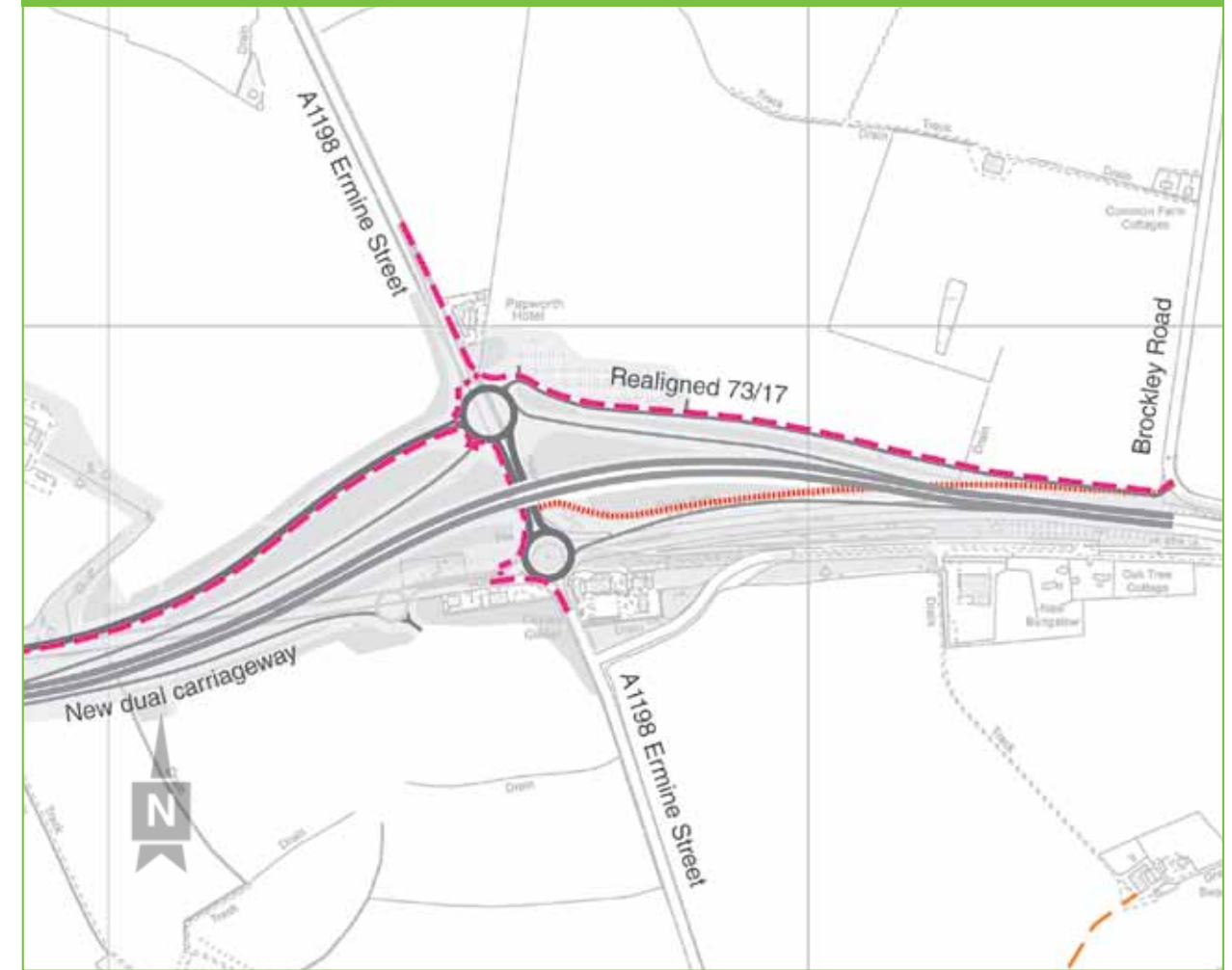
1 We are maintaining access to bridleway 74/6 via a new route. The bridleway will be diverted under the new dual carriageway via an underpass to the west of its existing route.

2 At Eltisley, we will provide a new combined cycleway/footway at road level and over the new St Ives Road bridge.

Key for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

- Proposed
- Existing
- ⋯ Existing to be removed


G | Caxton Gibbet junction



We are creating dedicated, safer access and crossing points for cyclists and pedestrians to cross Caxton Gibbet junction via the A1198 (Ermine Street) route. Cycleway/footway 73/17 will be moved further north of the dual carriageway to maintain access to Brockley Road.

Key for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

- Proposed
- Existing
- ⋯ Existing to be removed



We'll be cutting congestion and journey times, meaning more time to do the things you love.



What the scheme means for you

This section sets out how our scheme will impact you when it is opened.

You can find more information on how we will minimise the impact on the community and be a good neighbour during construction on page 70.

Quicker and more reliable journeys

We're creating a reliable, high quality route from Black Cat junction to Caxton Gibbet junction that will meet the future traffic needs of the region.

Free-flowing junctions and increased capacity on the new dual carriageway will reduce congestion.

We will cut journey times by more than a third at peak times, saving up to ten minutes each way - and as much as 1.5 hours over a working week. When the new dual carriageway is built, traffic will change in the following ways:

- There will be considerably less traffic, including lorries, on the existing A428, especially between Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet.
- There will be less traffic on the A1 between Black Cat junction and Wyboston as those travelling across the region use the new dual carriageway instead of the A1.

We're cutting journey times by more than a third, saving drivers up to ten minutes on their morning commute.



The route will support the success of world class technology and research in the region.

The new dual carriageway will also cut journey times between Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

While those on long distance trips will use the new and quicker dual carriageway, other drivers can take advantage of the existing A428 as a local road to travel between St Neots and the villages of Croxton and Eltisley.

There will be more reliable journey times for residents, commuters and local businesses, with fewer incidents delaying people in reaching their destinations. The existing A428 will remain in place for public transport.

Helping life in local villages

The scheme will improve road safety for communities by reducing dangerous rat-running on local roads and through villages such as Chawston, Wyboston and Little Barford. The new dual carriageway will provide a new and reliable route for long distance traffic, reducing congestion on the existing A428 and removing the temptation for drivers to try and avoid delays by using local roads, which are unsuitable for large volumes of traffic.

Better resilience

The new dual carriageway will improve the ability of the road network to cope with accidents and disruption. This will reduce the number of incidents which shut the road, leading to delays and large volumes of traffic congesting local roads.

Improve travel for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

We will improve the safety of walkers, cyclists and horse riders and those who use public transport by enhancing connections between communities, especially to St Neots, Eltisley and villages along the A428. By reducing traffic on the existing A428, and making dedicated crossings for walkers and cyclists at the new main junctions (Black Cat, Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet), we will improve safety.

Enable economic growth

The dual carriageway will help support the future traffic demands of two of the UK's fastest growing places. Cambridge possesses world class biotechnology and research organisations, ranging from small start ups to global leaders. The scale and pace of growth in Milton Keynes, meanwhile, is powered by a dynamic research and professional services market. Both Cambridge and Milton Keynes are front runners in the UK for innovation. Both have enjoyed strong employment growth and are a major focus for job opportunities.

New investment in transport infrastructure such as this scheme will help ensure the continued success of both these places. It will also improve connections into St Neots town and train station. By bringing businesses closer together, we will help increase productivity across the region. The new route will also make it easier for those living locally to travel and take up job opportunities.

In addition, the new dual carriageway, together with the new and greatly improved A14, will also form part of a key route to the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich.

Delivering environmental improvements

The scheme as a whole will improve noise and air quality. Fewer vehicles waiting in traffic queues reduces vehicle emissions, as well as improving air quality for cyclists along the existing A428. We are committed to maintaining existing levels of biodiversity where possible and leaving a positive legacy for nearby communities by providing new landscape planting and wildlife areas.

The new route will help support two of the UK's fastest growing places, improving access to jobs and markets.

The existing A428 will remain in place to maintain important existing public transport links.

Wherever you find one of our major road projects, you'll find our team giving back to the community in a meaningful way.

A new life for the Black Cat

The Black Cat is a well known and much loved waymarker on the current roundabout. As part of our plans, we'll make sure that this local landmark lives on in our new junction.

Leaving a lasting legacy

Creating a good transport project goes beyond the road you drive on.

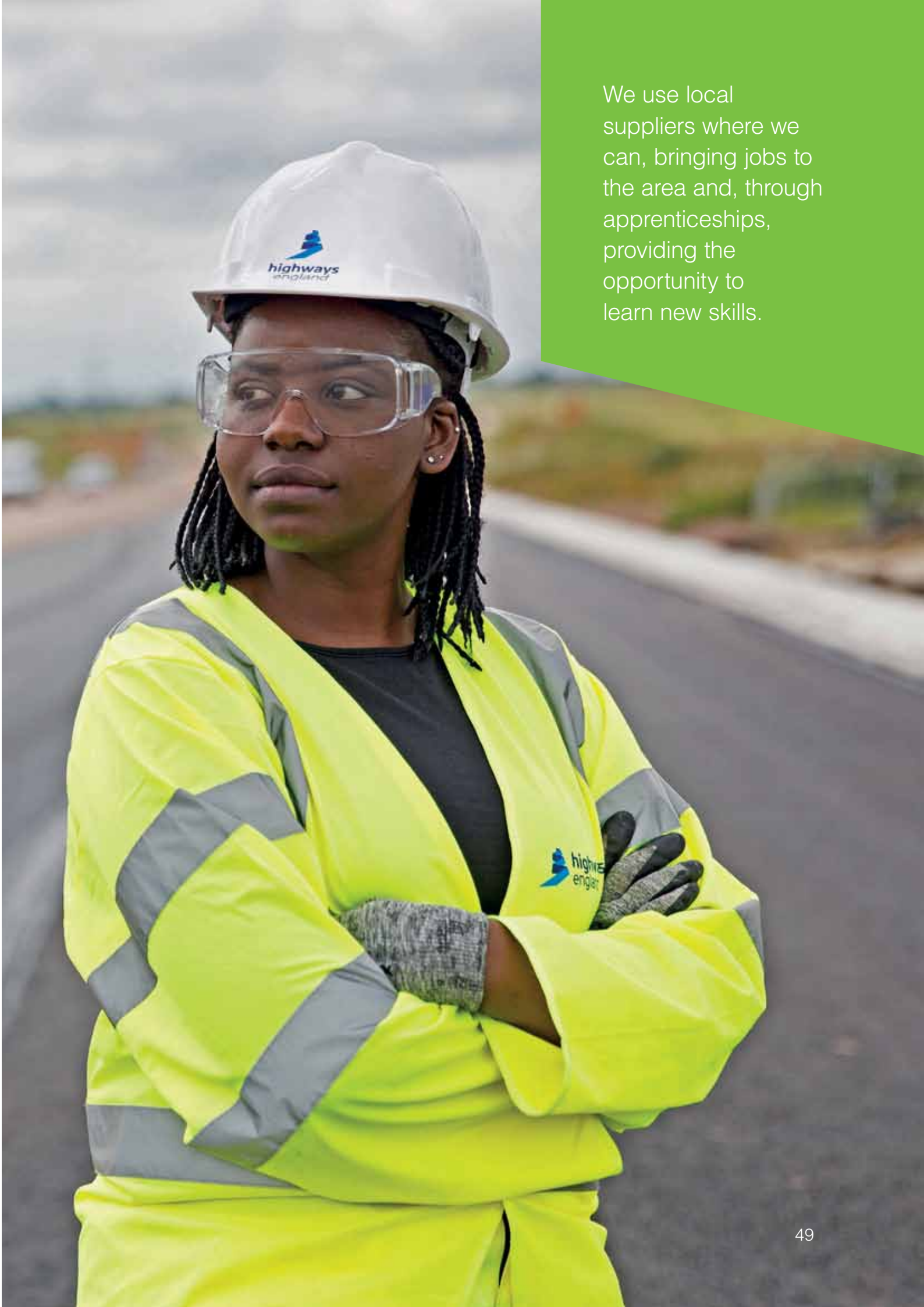
Today's best organisations realise they need to engage with communities that they serve and the communities in which they operate.

Throughout the country, wherever you find one of our major road projects, you'll find our team giving back to the community in a meaningful way.

This can range from small but cherished local projects, such as a refurbished car park for allotments to education around dangerous driving. It can also mean bringing our skills and knowledge to the classroom to help students of all ages get the best education in science, technology, engineering and maths.

We use local suppliers where we can, bringing jobs to the area and, through apprenticeships, providing the opportunity to learn new skills.

We will take the same approach for this scheme, listening to the needs of those who live and work in the region to leave a lasting and positive legacy.



We use local suppliers where we can, bringing jobs to the area and, through apprenticeships, providing the opportunity to learn new skills.

Property and landowners

Since the preferred route was announced in February 2019, we have set out a development boundary, pictured on page 52, that outlines the extent of the land we may need to acquire, either for permanent or temporary use, through compulsory purchase powers.

We are seeking to reduce the impact on landowners and will provide all the help and support we can.

We are already talking with landowners and occupiers whose land we believe is affected by the proposals and we will continue to work closely with them. Our dedicated team is working with them to explain the proposals and rights they may have. While significant areas of land are required for the scheme, we are seeking to reduce the impact on landowners. We understand that if you live in the area, you will have concerns about how the scheme may affect you – and we will provide all the help and support we can.

Within this boundary, some of the land along the route of the new dual carriageway will be needed permanently. Other areas may only be needed temporarily, for example for construction compounds, storage sites or land needed to divert utilities including power lines or gas pipes.

When work is complete, any land that is not needed permanently will be returned to its previous use wherever possible.



Find out more

There is more information about the compulsory purchase process and when compensation may be available in the Highways England publications shown below.

For copies, visit our website or contact us using the details at the back of this booklet.

 highwaysengland.co.uk/a428



Your property and blight

Information for property owners within the development boundary



Your property and discretionary purchase

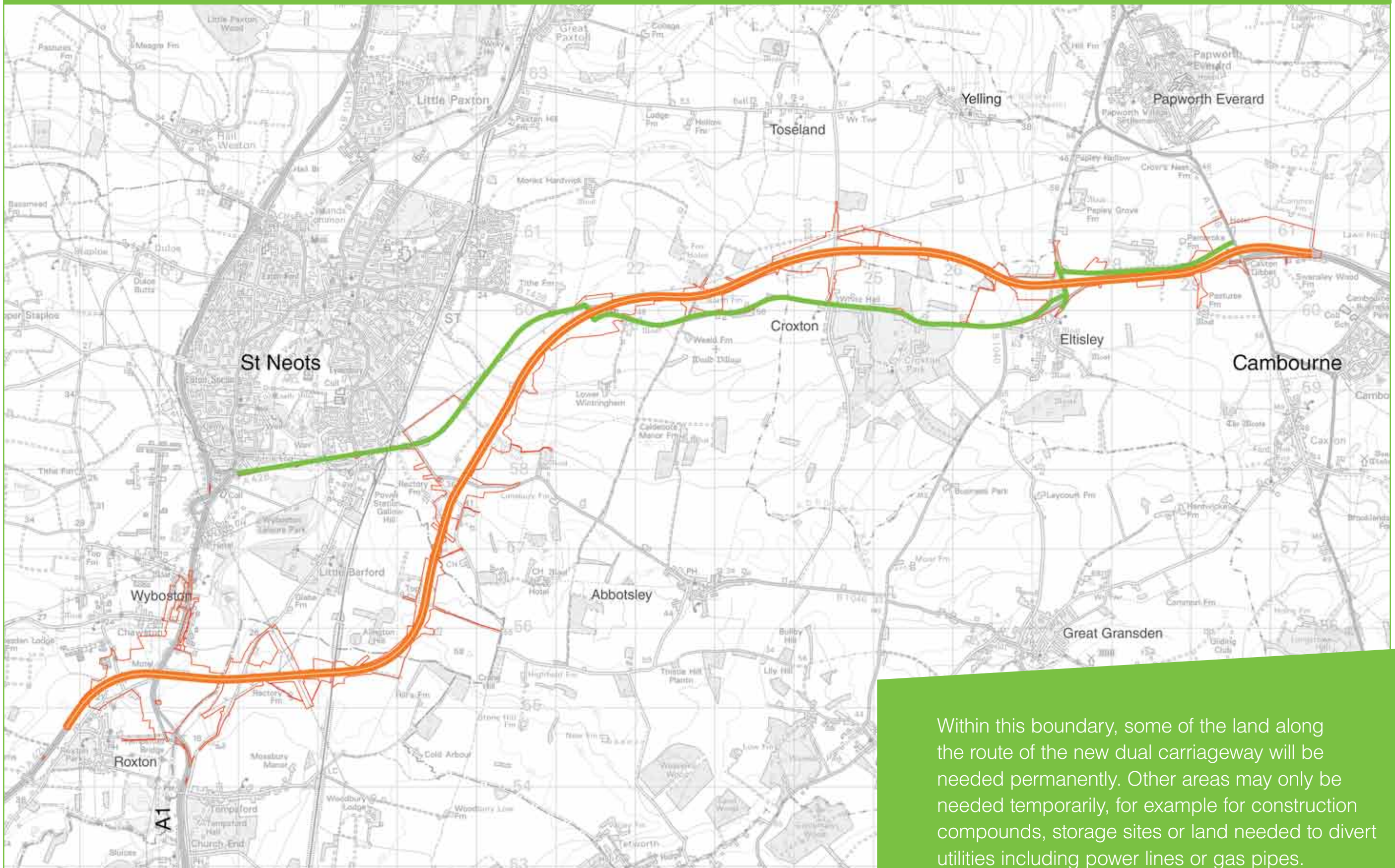
Information for those who live outside the development boundary but may need to sell their property



Your property and compulsory purchase

How compulsory purchase works

Development boundary



Within this boundary, some of the land along the route of the new dual carriageway will be needed permanently. Other areas may only be needed temporarily, for example for construction compounds, storage sites or land needed to divert utilities including power lines or gas pipes.



Impacts on traffic and the environment

Traffic

Understanding how people use our roads helps us design schemes that suit the demands of the community and road users.

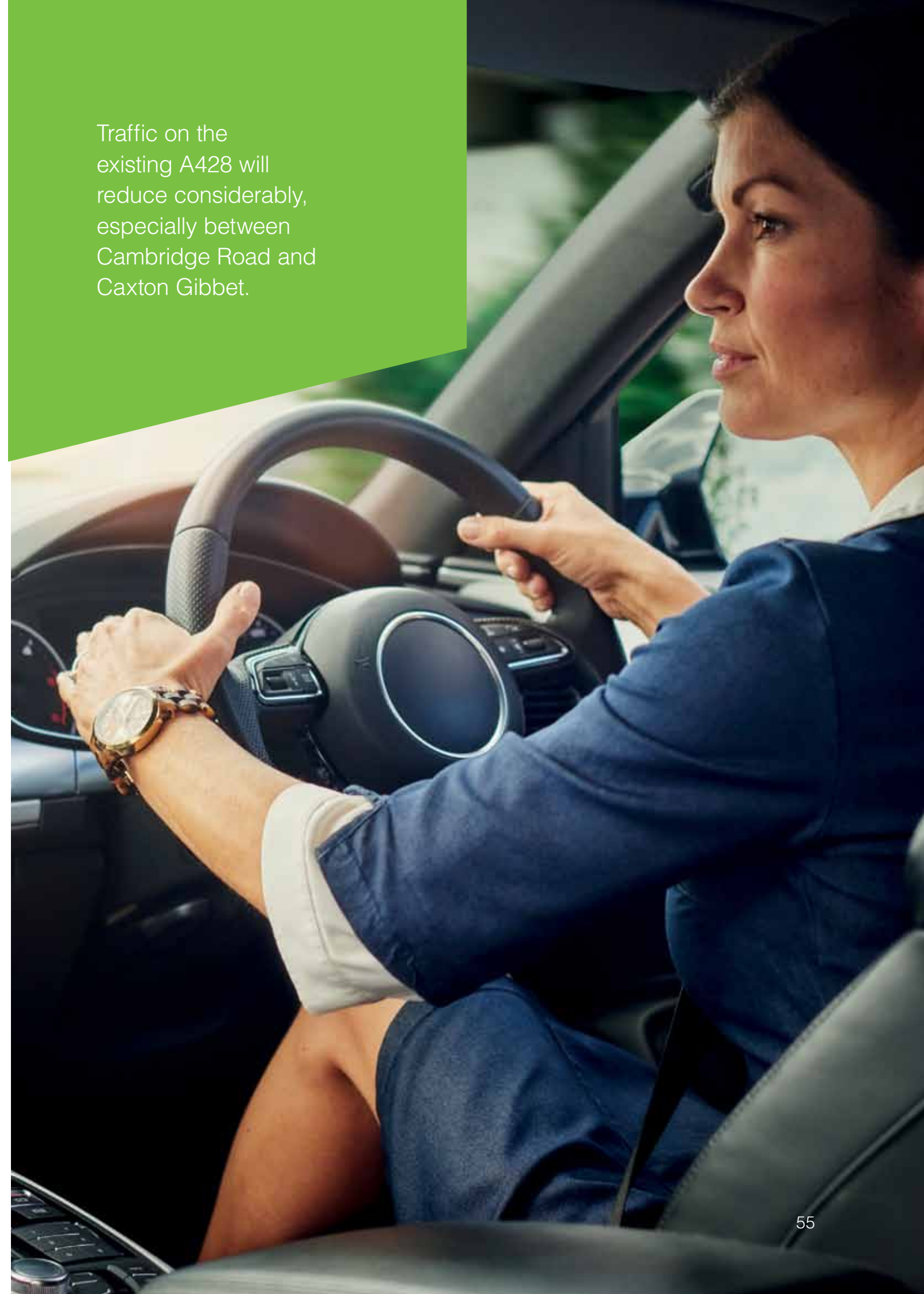
We have used traffic surveys and analysed traffic data over a large area covering the roads from Milton Keynes to Cambridge and beyond to create traffic models.

Traffic modelling has continued to inform:

- The design of the scheme, such as the number of lanes and types of junctions required on the new dual carriageway
- Our environmental assessment, including impacts relating to noise and air quality
- Our economic assessment of the scheme's value for money by weighing the costs against the benefits.

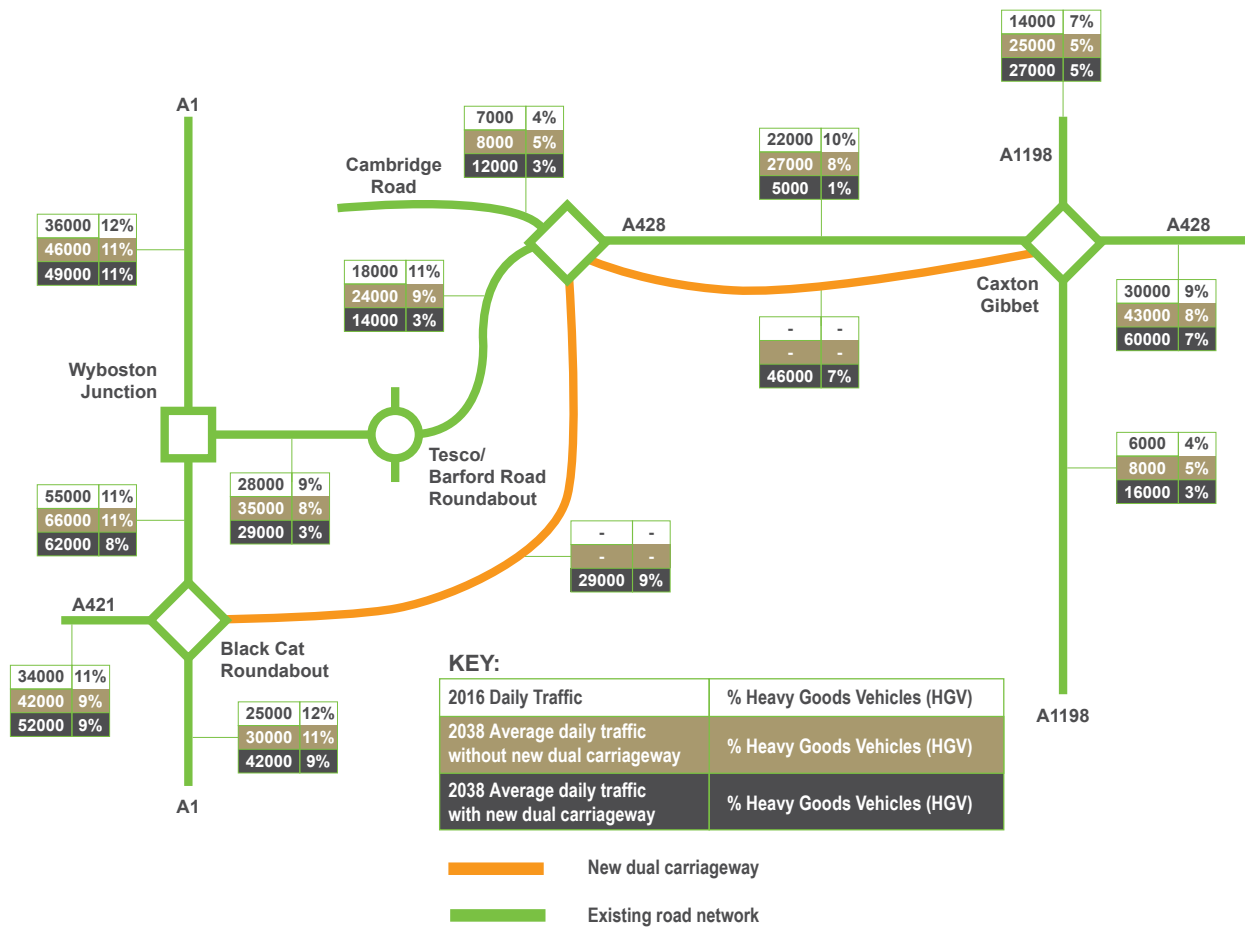
To understand how journeys will change as a result of the new dual carriageway, we have compared the volume of traffic on the region's roads now and once the scheme has been open for a number of years. This takes into account predicted housing and economic growth. Using our traffic model, we have also explored what traffic will be like if there were no improvements to the network.

Traffic on the existing A428 will reduce considerably, especially between Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet.



Did you know?

Traffic models are computer-based assessments that predict how our proposals will affect the road network, vehicle movements and travel times. We analyse existing traffic numbers, trip patterns, delays, congestion problems and predicted traffic growth.



The diagram above shows the current road network in green and the new dual carriageway in orange. We have modelled the following scenarios:

- Average number of vehicles per day in 2016
- Average number of vehicles per day in 2038 with the new route
- Average number of the vehicles per day in 2038 without the new route.



Find out more

To see the route and junctions, watch our fly-through video: highwaysengland.co.uk/a428

The map also shows how the percentage of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on each road will change when the new dual carriageway is built.

We're developing our traffic models as the project evolves. We'll also analyse a much wider geographic area so we can test how the design impacts traffic in different parts of the region.

How your journey will change

A significant amount of traffic will transfer to the new dual carriageway from the existing A428 and other routes. In particular:

- Traffic on the existing A428 will reduce considerably, especially between Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet.
- Traffic to the east of Caxton Gibbet and to the west of the Black Cat junction will increase as drivers use the new dual carriageway. This shift in traffic onto the new route will reduce rat-running on local roads.
- The percentage of HGVs on the existing A428 will reduce as lorries transfer to the new dual carriageway.
- To avoid delays at Black Cat roundabout those currently using local roads, such as the A505 and A603, to reach Bedford and Cambridge will transfer onto the new dual carriageway. Although this will mean traffic on the A1 to the south of the junction will increase, this shift in traffic will reduce rat-running on local roads.
- As drivers re-route from other local roads to join the new dual carriageway at the improved Caxton Gibbet junction, traffic on the A1198 south of Caxton Gibbet will increase. The shift of traffic onto the A1198 will reduce rat-running on local roads.
- There will be less traffic on the A1 between the Black Cat junction and Wyboston as those travelling to and from the Cambridge area use the Black Cat junction and the new dual carriageway instead of the A1.



Protecting the environment

Protecting the places we love, and what makes them special, is an important part of how we plan and build our major road schemes.

This area is home to wildlife and plants, such as mammals, great crested newts and reptiles. Bats, including the distinctive barbastelle bat, also live in Eversden and Wimpole Woods, a Special Area of Conservation. Several of these species are protected by law. Knowing exactly where they live is vital to making sure we can protect them and their habitats.

Our surveys and assessments make sure we have as much information as possible to help us make the right decisions about design and construction. Understanding the impacts that our scheme may have on the environment and local communities has been a key consideration in the development and selection of the design.

Our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), gathers information on how construction, operation and maintenance of the scheme will impact environmentally sensitive areas, features and wildlife. This process helps us identify opportunities to enhance the environment along the route and develop measures to avoid or minimise adverse impacts. The findings of the EIA will be reported in the Environmental Statement and will be part of our DCO application.



Did you know?

A 300-year-old elm tree was identified during surveys near Eynesbury, to the east of Pottton Road. Due to the tree's age and to avoid the scheme impacting the root system of the tree, the new dual carriageway was moved to the east by approximately 30 metres.



Find out more

Our Preliminary Environmental Information Report and non-technical summary helps people understand the effects of the proposed development on the environment.

Download a copy from our website: highwaysengland.co.uk/a428.

Reference copies are available at the locations listed on our website.



Managing the environmental impacts

Our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI Report) sets out how the scheme could impact the environment and is summarised below.

Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Air quality Our assessments indicate that air quality along the A428 between St Neots and Caxton Gibbet will improve as traffic will transfer from local roads onto the new dual carriageway. There will also be less stationary traffic idling at junctions.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects on air quality at community facilities and residential properties close to the scheme, associated with the movement of HGVs, demolitions and earthworks.</p> <p>Operation Overall beneficial effects from the transfer of traffic onto the new dual carriageway for the wider community.</p>	<p>Measures to minimise effects include ensuring equipment is clean to prevent the build-up of dust, enforcing site rules (for example covering materials on vehicles), and addressing any issues through our community liaison team.</p>

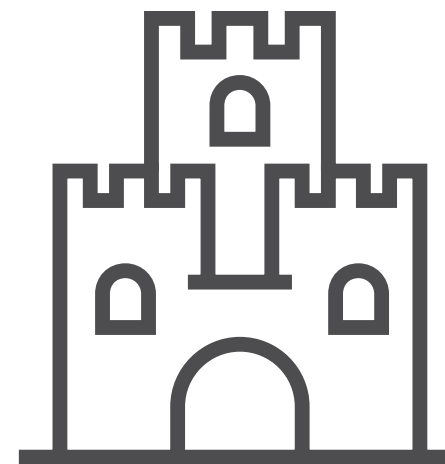
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Have your say

To comment on the PEI Report, please answer questions 3a and 3b in the response form.

Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Cultural heritage Our assessments have identified that a number of heritage assets will be physically affected as a result of the scheme, or will have their setting altered.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects on the setting of some historic monuments and buildings associated with construction activity taking place in their setting. The Grade II listed Brook Cottages will be demolished and a Grade II listed milepost will be removed to enable the scheme to proceed.</p> <p>Beneficial effects on the understanding of archaeology and cultural heritage, and improvements to the landscapes of the medieval village at Croxton, and the setting of Croxton Park.</p> <p>Operation Both adverse and beneficial effects on some historic buildings and monuments associated with the presence of the scheme and changes in traffic within their settings.</p>	<p>We are refining the design to avoid impacts on assets and their settings, where possible. Landscaping and earthworks will reduce noise and visual impacts.</p> <p>Surveys will identify the risk of disturbing archaeological remains during construction.</p> <p>The condition of historic sites, monuments and buildings will also be recorded.</p> <p>Construction measures to minimise these effects may include temporary screening around working areas, and the careful location of lighting and signage.</p>



Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Landscape and visual We are assessing how areas of distinctive landscape character and existing views may alter during construction and operation of the scheme, and how the scheme will affect landscape features such as woodland, designated landscapes and important views.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects are likely on a number of landscape character areas, for example the Ouse Valley, as a result of construction activities taking place in the landscape and through the removal of trees and hedgerows.</p> <p>Adverse visual effects on users of footpaths and bridleways, occupants of isolated dwellings and residents in nearby settlements, namely Roxton, Tempsford, Chawston, Wyboston, Little Barford, Croxton and Eltisley.</p> <p>Operation Adverse landscape and visual effects are likely from the introduction of new road infrastructure and lighting, but some locations will experience a beneficial change in their view from the proposed landscaping, once established.</p>	<p>We are exploring whether earth bunds and landscaping can be established early in the construction programme to screen activities and operations within existing views.</p> <p>Following construction, we will restore areas of the landscape to their former condition where possible by reinstating disturbed land and replacing vegetation.</p> <p>Our landscaping proposals will provide visual interest to users of some footpaths and bridleways, and will also help integrate the scheme into the local landscape pattern.</p>

Following construction, we will restore areas of the landscape to their former condition by reinstating disturbed land and replacing vegetation.

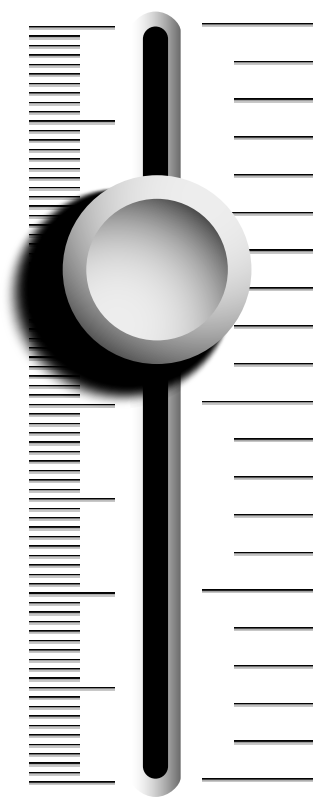


Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Biodiversity A range of ecologically important plants, habitats, species and designated sites may be affected. Our surveys have identified bats, badgers, great crested newts and reptiles in the local area. Diverse habitats and designated ecological sites such as ancient woodland and protected road verges have also been recorded, some of which are nationally important.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects relating to the loss of habitat and disturbance of species are likely.</p> <p>Operation We will maintain existing levels of biodiversity and leave a positive legacy for nearby communities by providing new landscape planting and wildlife areas. Some adverse effects associated with noise, air and water pollution are likely on habitats adjacent to the scheme. We expect some beneficial effects relating to improved habitat connectivity once the landscaping and ecological measures are in place.</p>	<p>During construction we will avoid, where possible, conflicts with seasonal windows such as the bird breeding season. We will also relocate protected species to other sites in advance of the works and ensure they are excluded from areas of construction activity.</p> <p>The design includes comprehensive landscaping and biodiversity measures that will help to connect habitats on either side of the new dual carriageway and guide animals safely under, over or away from the road.</p>

The area is home to bats, badgers, great crested newts and reptiles.



Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Noise and vibration We have completed noise surveys and are using computer modelling as part of our assessments to identify properties and locations likely to experience changes in noise and vibration levels.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects are likely to be experienced near construction areas. These will be associated with operations and activities such as piling, and from the movement and operation of construction vehicles and machinery.</p> <p>Operation The scheme as a whole will have a beneficial impact on noise for the surrounding area. Properties along the existing A428, and in some of the surrounding settlements such as St Neots, Croxton and Eltisley are likely to benefit from noise reduction. Some noise increases are likely to affect some isolated properties, such as those east of Little Barford.</p>	<p>Construction compounds will be carefully located to minimise disruption to properties and other sensitive locations such as schools and hospitals. We will use standard measures to control and reduce noise and vibration, for example by restricting construction working hours and the possible use of screening around sites.</p> <p>Low noise road surfacing along the new dual carriageway may be used to reduce traffic noise.</p>



Low noise road surfacing is often used to reduce traffic noise.

Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Geology and soils Our assessments have identified that the scheme will be constructed in areas of land that contain versatile and productive agricultural soils, some of which are a nationally important resource. We are also investigating the potential risk of encountering land that has been contaminated by previous uses, and whether groundwater could be affected.</p>	<p>Construction There could potentially be adverse effects to the health of workers and the public should contaminated land be identified. Current farming operations may be adversely impacted as a result of agricultural soils being lost or disturbed by the works.</p> <p>Operation No significant effects are expected once the scheme is open to traffic.</p>	<p>The scheme is being designed to avoid and minimise any potential interaction with contaminated land to prevent harm to people and the environment.</p> <p>The extent of land required to build the scheme has been minimised to reduce agricultural soil loss. Where possible, soils will be retained and redistributed as part of the landscaping and reinstatement strategy.</p>



Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Water environment Our assessments are examining the risk of pollution to groundwater and surface waterbodies such as the River Great Ouse and its tributaries, which the scheme crosses. We are also examining how the scheme may affect flood risk, including its vulnerability to flood events, with help from the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects on water quality may occur from the accidental spillage of soil, sediments, oils, fuels or chemicals, and from the movement of contaminated material, during construction.</p> <p>Operation Adverse effects on water quality and habitats may occur from polluted water running off the new dual carriageway.</p> <p>The way in which water flows is likely to change as a result of new structures being installed within or across some watercourses.</p>	<p>We are designing the scheme to protect the water environment from highway pollution once it is open to traffic. Measures include minimising the number of locations at which water discharges into local watercourses.</p> <p>To reduce the risk of flooding, areas of land are being included within the scheme to compensate for the loss of floodplain.</p> <p>Standard pollution prevention measures will be used during construction to reduce the risk of pollution entering watercourses during construction. These include, for example, the careful storage of liquids and powders away from drains.</p>

We are designing the scheme to protect the water environment from highway pollution once it is open to traffic.



Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Materials Our assessments have identified that a large volume of materials will be required during construction. We are identifying how much waste material will result during construction, and how this can be minimised.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects are likely to occur from the removal and transportation of materials needed to build the infrastructure. There may also be effects on local waste management sites from the disposal or recovery of certain types of construction waste.</p> <p>Operation No significant effects are expected once the scheme is open to traffic.</p>	<p>To reduce the volume of construction waste, we are developing an approach to reuse materials where possible. This will also minimise the need for materials to be transported from other locations.</p>

To reduce construction waste, we will reuse materials wherever possible.



Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Population and health Through our assessments we are establishing the impacts on the local population and the health and wellbeing of communities. We are considering how different types of land, community facilities such as schools and open spaces, driver journeys, and footpaths and bridleways will be affected.</p> <p>We're considering ways to reduce the impact on access to community facilities, homes, businesses and agricultural businesses.</p> <p></p> <p>Have your say To comment on the PEI Report, please answer questions 3a and 3b in the response form.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects are likely from the loss of agricultural, commercial and private land, and the demolition of a small number of commercial properties and residential dwellings. Disruption to some journeys made by walkers, cyclists and horse riders is likely, as well as on the road network. There may be effects on the health and wellbeing of people from temporary changes in noise and air quality.</p> <p>Operation Permanent changes to footpaths, bridleways and the road network are likely to result in both adverse and beneficial effects on journeys. Agricultural and commercial operations may be affected, for example through new or modified accesses. Beneficial effects on social infrastructure and employment are likely.</p>	<p>Where possible, the extent of land required both temporarily and permanently has been minimised to reduce effects on businesses, farms and private property. To reduce the impact on access to community facilities, homes, businesses and agricultural land, measures such as landscaping and footpath diversions have been incorporated into the scheme. Construction activities will be managed using standard measures and techniques, for example traffic management, to minimise disruption to journeys.</p> 

Aspect of the environment	Expected effects	What we are doing and why
<p>Climate We are identifying the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that the scheme is likely to cause during its period of its operation to determine how these will influence the UK's ability to reach its legally binding emission reduction targets. The vulnerability of the scheme to climate change events such as flooding is also being considered.</p>	<p>Construction Adverse effects on climate may occur from greenhouse gases from vehicles transporting materials. Carbon contained in some construction materials is also likely to contribute to climate change.</p> <p>Operation Adverse effects may occur as a result of vehicle emissions once the new dual carriageway and junctions are open to use by traffic, and from activities associated with its future maintenance.</p>	<p>To ensure resilience to future climate change events, the design is being developed to include sustainable drainage systems and energy efficient equipment. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we are considering whether recycled materials can be used. New and diverted footpaths will improve journeys for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, and will offer alternative methods of transport that do not generate greenhouse gases.</p> 



What happens during construction

We understand that a scheme of this scale can have an impact on the local community. Making sure that we are a good neighbour to those living and working nearby is important to us.

We are confident that our experience in managing major construction projects, combined with the feedback from this consultation, will help us plan the construction in a way that keeps both disruption and inconvenience to a minimum.

Community relations

We value our relationships with our customers who use the strategic road network and those that live and work in the local area who will be affected by the scheme. Our dedicated community relations and community investment team on the ground will keep building on the good relationships that we have already developed with local people and businesses and will ensure anyone who is interested in the scheme is fully informed throughout construction.

We will also provide regular updates on our website and through social media, as well as via mail-drops and meetings.



Location of construction compounds

To build the new dual carriageway efficiently and minimise impacts on the local community, our site compounds will need to be close to the construction site. These sites will include welfare facilities as well as space for handling construction materials and storage.

Our main compound is likely to be within the central section of the new dual carriageway, between the B1046 and Cambridge Road. Access will be from the existing A428. We will build either a roundabout or a left-in / left-out junction from the existing A428 for construction traffic so our people can access the site compound safely.

We will also need another compound at the western end of the new dual carriageway to build the new Black Cat junction. We are proposing to use the site previously used to build the A421 Great Barford bypass, located north of Bedford Road near Roxton. Access to this compound will be from Bedford Road.

A third compound will be located at the eastern end of the new dual carriageway to the north west or north east of Caxton Gibbet junction. Construction traffic will access this compound via a left-in / left-out junction arrangement from the A1198 (Ermine Street).

Being a good neighbour means listening and talking to our customers and finding ways to make life that little bit easier.



Find out more

Discover more about how construction will impact the environment in our PEI report and non technical summary. See page 58.

We will work closely with local authorities to help minimise disruption during construction.

When construction will take place

If development consent is granted, we expect construction to start in late 2021 and the road to be open in early 2025. We will build the Black Cat junction at the same time as the new dual carriageway to deliver the scheme as quickly and efficiently as possible, and to reduce the impact on the local area.

Before we can start the main construction, we need to prepare the site. This includes:

- archaeological and groundwork investigations
- ecology work such as the relocation of habitats
- diverting utilities
- building compound facilities

All our preparatory work will be set out in our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate.

Traffic management during construction

We recognise that at times there will be roadworks and diversions which will affect those living and working in the area. We are committed to minimising the impact on people who will need to travel locally and throughout the region. While it won't always be possible to completely avoid some short term delays and congestion, we are working closely with local authorities to agree traffic management measures that will keep traffic moving during construction.

The A1 and existing A428 will remain open for the duration of the works. This is apart from very occasional overnight closures when we will need to connect the new and existing roads, build bridges and unload large items of equipment or materials.

Our commitment to be a good neighbour means we will work with the appointed contractor to plan and phase the construction to minimise impacts to road users and the surrounding community. For example, we are considering a temporary large roundabout at Black Cat to keep traffic moving. We will work closely on our plans with Cambridgeshire County Council, Bedford Borough Council



and Central Bedfordshire Council. The local authorities will be required to approve our proposals for any temporary traffic diversions on the local road network, as well as noise and air quality mitigation measures during construction. Before we start any work, we will inform residents, businesses and road users in advance so they can also plan ahead. We will share information on our progress, keeping the safety of vulnerable road user groups, such as walkers, cyclists and horse riders, a primary consideration.

During construction we may need to temporarily close or divert existing public rights of way. We will consult on these proposals with local authorities and the wider community closer to the time.

We will coordinate any road closures and associated diversion routes with the rest of the road network to ensure that we minimise disruption to our customers. To achieve this we will work closely with local authorities and our area maintenance teams to avoid our works conflicting with other schemes.

Using local roads

The main routes that contractors will use to gain access to the working areas are the A1, A421, the existing A428 and the A1198. Limited access may be required from local side roads. Although most construction traffic will move within the site boundaries, we will need to bring some materials into the site

How we build the road is as important as what we build. And how our people behave is as important as the engineering.

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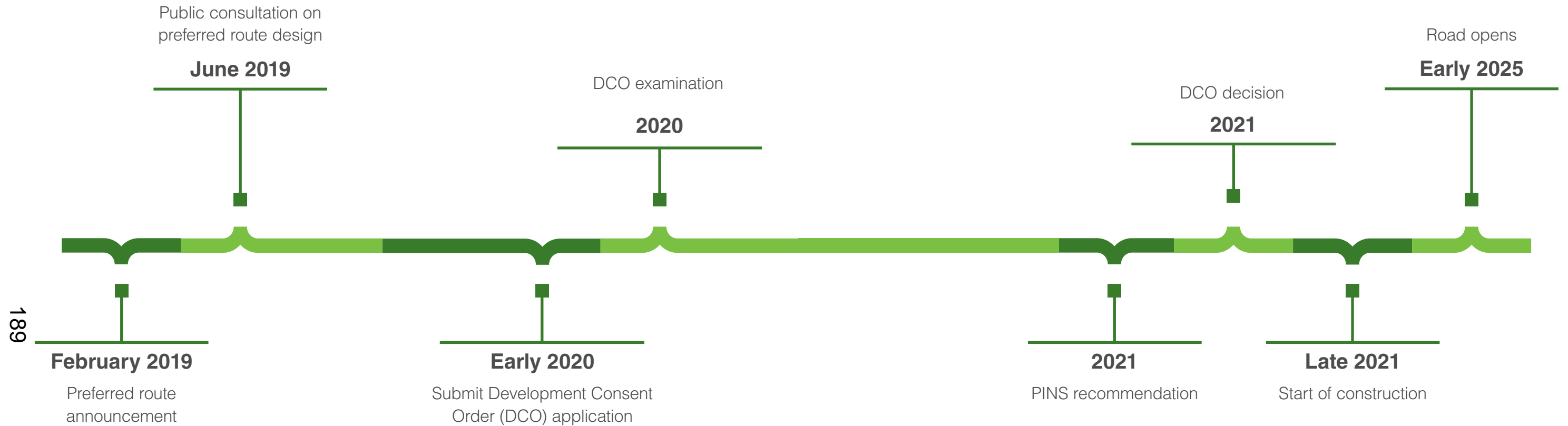
from around the UK. Wherever possible, we will work with our contractors to arrange these deliveries to arrive during off-peak traffic periods.

Our construction vehicles will keep to designated roads to minimise the impact of construction traffic on the local area. We will create a site traffic route within the construction site boundary (not on existing roads) that will extend from the East Coast Mainline Railway through to the Caxton Gibbet junction. This route will allow our vehicles to move around the construction site. Any interaction with road users will be limited to where our vehicles cross side roads. At these points, we will put traffic lights in place to ensure safety and minimise any impact to the travelling public.

Construction work hours and noise

We will agree the exact details of construction working hours with the local authorities and these will be detailed in our Construction Environmental Management Plan. Wherever possible, we will carry out work to minimise additional noise. Working with our contractor, we will monitor noise throughout the scheme's construction to ensure we minimise any impact on the local community.

What happens next



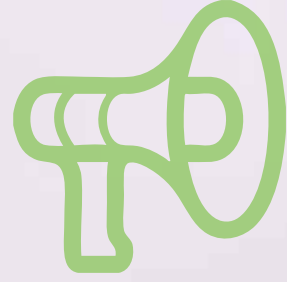
Once the consultation has closed on **28 July 2019**, your feedback, together with our ongoing technical work and environmental assessments, will influence the design of the scheme that will be included in our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate.

If the Planning Inspectorate accepts our application, there will then be an examination of the application in which the public can participate. This examination will take a maximum of 6 months. The Planning Inspectorate then has 3 months to make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who then has a further 3 months to make a final decision.



Find out more

Discover more about DCO process on the Planning Inspectorate's website: [infrastructure planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/](https://www.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/)





Have your say


Please get involved and submit your response by **23:59 on 28 July 2019**.

 highwaysengland.co.uk/a428

You can also send your response form and comments to:

 FREEPOST, A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet

 info@a428.co.uk

 0300 123 5000



How to find out more

You can find out more about our proposals in the following ways.

Go online for all the consultation materials, including technical and environmental reports.

Watch our flythrough video on our website to see the route and junctions.

Make it in Minecraft; explore the scheme in the world of Minecraft by coming to one of our drop in workshops for those aged 7 and up. Or if you have Minecraft, play at home:

To join the server, open Minecraft and click the Play button. Go to the Servers tab and click Add Server. Then give the server a name of your choice in the Server Name field and in the Server Address field type:

 a428.blockbuilders.co.uk

Then click Play. (Only suitable for phone, tablet and Windows 10 versions of Minecraft).

Join us at one of our events (overleaf).

Get the A428 app to explore the new Black Cat junction in augmented reality.




Pick up copies of our consultation booklet and response form at the local libraries and council offices listed on our website. Reference copies of all our consultation materials, including technical and environmental reports, will also be available.

Contact us

 0300 123 5000









 info@a428.co.uk

 FREEPOST, A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet

Come and join us to find out more

Why not come along to one of our consultation events? Our team will be available to answer your questions and discuss our plans in more detail.

Consultation events

VENUE	DATE
 Wyboston Training Centre (Oakley Suite), Wyboston Lakes, Great North Road, Wyboston, Bedfordshire MK44 3AL	Thursday 13 June 12:00 to 20:00
 St Neots Priory Centre, Priory Lane St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 2BH	Friday 21 June 12:00 to 20:00
 Wyboston Village Hall, Wyboston Bedford MK44 3AG	Monday 24 June 12:00 to 20:00
 Newton Primary School, Caxton End, Eltisley, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 6TL	Saturday 29 June 10:00 to 16:00
 Stuart Memorial Hall, Church Street, Tempsford, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2AW	Tuesday 2 July 12:00 to 20:00
 Yelling Village Hall, High Street, St Neots, PE19 6SB	Thursday 11 July 12:00 to 20:00
 Doubletree by Hilton, Cambourne Cambridge Belfry, Back Lane, Cambourne, Cambridgeshire, CB23 6BW	Monday 15 July 12:00 to 20:00
 Roxton Village Hall, High Street, Roxton, Bedford MK44 3EA	Thursday 18 July 12:00 to 20:00

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Pop up events

Our team will also be visiting the following shopping centres:

VENUE	DATE
Harpur Centre Horne Lane, Bedford, MK40 1TJ	Saturday 22 June 9:00 to 16:00
Centre:MK 24 Silbury Blvd, Milton Keynes MK9 3ES	Saturday 13 July 10:00 to 15:00

Mobile visitor centre

You can also visit our mobile visitor centre at the following places and times:

VENUE	DATE
Sandy Town Centre Car Park 55-57 High St, Sandy SG19 1AG	Friday 7 June 8:30 to 14:30
Sidney Street, Cambridge	Sunday 9 June 10:00 to 15:00
Extra, Cambridge Services A14/M11, CB23 4WU	Monday 10 June 15:00 to 19:00
ASDA Milton Keynes Bletcham Way, Bletchley, Milton Keynes	Saturday 15 June 10:00 to 15:00
Pendrill Court, Ermine Street North Papworth Everard, Cambridge, CB23 3UY	Friday 12 July 8:30 to 14:30

Have a Minecraft mad child?

Inspire them to be an engineer of the future with our Minecraft workshops for those aged 7 and up.

Just drop in to one of our consultation events marked with a block.



Please get involved and submit your response by **23:59 on 28 July 2019.**

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

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For an accessible version of this publication please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

If you have any enquiries about this publication email info@highwaysengland.co.uk or call **0300 123 5000***. Please quote the Highways England publications code **PRxxx/19**.

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A428

**Black Cat to Caxton
Gibbet improvements**
Response form



Public consultation June 2019



Introduction

We are consulting on proposals to upgrade the route between the Black Cat roundabout and Caxton Gibbet roundabout.

The scheme is part of the government's strategy to improve the Strategic Road Network in the East of England. The scheme is a critical part of this investment and will improve journeys between Milton Keynes and Cambridge. It will bring communities together and support long term sustainable growth in the region.

Why we are consulting

The purpose of this consultation is to seek your views on the scheme proposals. Your feedback will inform our continuing development of the scheme, up to the point at which we are ready to submit our application for planning consent.

More information

A consultation booklet has been produced that describes our scheme proposals. The booklet and further information, including plans of the scheme and our Preliminary Environmental Information Report with its accompanying Non-Technical Summary, are available at:

- www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a428
- consultation events where the scheme proposals will be on display and members of the project team will be available to answer questions.
- deposit points where copies of the consultation documents can be viewed.

Details about the public events and deposit points are available on the scheme webpages and set out in the Statement of Community Consultation or can be obtained by calling 0300 123 5000. You can also write to us or email us using the contact details provided.

How to give us your views

You can respond to this consultation in a number of ways:



Online: by completing this response form at
www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a428



Email: by sending your response form to
info@a428.co.uk



Freepost: by posting your response form to
**FREEPOST, A428 Black Cat to Caxton
Gibbet (you do not need a stamp).**



Please feel free to use additional paper if the boxes within the form do not provide enough space for your comments. Remember to write down the question that your comments relate to.

Paper copies of the response forms can also be completed and handed in at our consultation events.

The closing date for responses to this consultation is 23:59 on Sunday 28 July 2019.

1. About you

Please answer the following questions. This information is optional but will help us update you on the outcome of the consultation and the next stages in this project. If you would prefer your comments to be anonymous, please just provide your postcode so we can understand where you live in relation to the scheme.

1a. Name:

1b. Address:

Postcode:

1c. Email address:

(If you provide an email address we may use it to let you know about important developments in our proposals).

1d. Do you own land or hold any interests or rights, such as private rights of way or sporting rights, covered by our proposal?

Yes No

If you have ticked yes, have you received a Section 42 letter to notify you of the consultation?

Yes No

1e. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation, business or campaign group? (If yes, which organisation?)

Yes No

1f. What is your primary interest in this scheme? (Tick as many as apply).

- Local resident
- Local business
- Regular user of the road (in a private vehicle)
- Regular user of the road (in a commercial vehicle)
- Regular user of the road (public transport)
- Regular user of the road (walking)
- Regular user of the road (cycling)
- Regular user of the road (horse-riding)

Other (please state)

1g. How frequently do you travel on the existing A428?

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Less often |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

1h. How frequently do you travel on the existing Black Cat roundabout?

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Less often |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

1i. What is your normal mode of transport on the existing A428 and/or Black Cat roundabout? (Select your main mode of transport only).

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car/van | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HGV | <input type="checkbox"/> On foot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle |

Other (please state)

1j. Other than your normal mode of transport, do you use any other methods of transport to travel on the existing A428 and/or Black Cat roundabout?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car/van | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HGV | <input type="checkbox"/> On foot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle |

Other (please state)

1k. What is your age?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

2. The scheme design

The proposed route for the new stretch of dual carriageway is outlined in the consultation booklet and at www.highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a428.

Our proposed design involves building a new dual carriageway between the Black Cat and Caxton Gibbet junctions. The new route will be built close to the alignment of the existing A428 and it will predominantly pass through open farm land. The design also includes a number of new junctions and an upgrade of the Black Cat junction to a three tier junction, so that the A1 and the new dual carriageway are both free flowing. To the north east of Eltisley, the existing A428 will be diverted via two new roundabouts and a new bridge to link the existing A428 on either side of the new dual carriageway. The existing A428 will not link to the new dual carriageway at Eltisley. It will be a local road between St Neots and Caxton Gibbet. This will improve the reliability and resilience of the network in the area. We will provide safety improvements such as a new local road that will link The Lane, Nagshead Lane and Chawston Lane to Bedford Road via the new Roxton Road bridge. We will also replace the accesses to Kelpie Marina and Great North Road, for safety reasons.

2a. Do you support or oppose the detailed alignment of the new dual carriageway? (See pages 17-23 of the consultation booklet).

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

2b Please provide us with any comments you may have on the detailed alignment of the new dual carriageway.

2c. Do you support or oppose the refined design for Black Cat junction?
(See pages 24 - 27 of the consultation booklet).

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

2d. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the refined design for Black Cat junction.

2e. Do you support or oppose the design for Cambridge Road junction? (See page 28 - 29 of the consultation booklet).

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

2f. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the design for Cambridge Road junction.

2h. Do you support or oppose the design for Caxton Gibbet junction?

(See page 32 -33 of consultation booklet).

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

2i. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the design for Caxton Gibbet junction.

2j. Do you support or oppose the changes to the existing A428 junction at Eltisley? (See page 30 - 31 of the consultation booklet).

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

2k. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the changes to the existing A428 junction at Eltisley.

2l. Please provide us with any comments you may have on the proposed design for the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements scheme? Please specify the location that your comments relate to.

3. Environmental impacts

Understanding the impacts that our scheme may have on the environment and local communities has been a key consideration in the development and selection of the scheme design. We are currently gathering information through a process called Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which focusses on environmentally sensitive areas.

While the EIA is ongoing we have produced a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI Report) of the initial emerging findings of the EIA. This describes the environmental setting and anticipated impacts of the proposed scheme. A Non-Technical Summary of the PEI Report has also been prepared to summarise the environmental effects. You can find these documents on our website

www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a428.

You can also find out more about the report and the environmental impacts on pages 57-58 of the consultation booklet.

- 3a.** Please provide us with any comments you may have on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI Report).

- 3b.** Do you have any additional suggestions you would like us to consider to mitigate the environmental impacts of the scheme contained in the PEI Report?

4. Walkers, cyclists and horse riders

We have considered the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and people with disabilities in our design. For safety reasons, they will not be able to directly cross or access the new dual carriageway. Based on our assessment, new bridges over the new dual carriageway or underpasses beneath the new dual carriageway will allow people to cross the new routes. Our surveys identified a lack of crossing points for walkers, cyclists and horse riders across the existing A428. As part of the scheme design we will provide new safe crossings at key points, linking in with public rights of way.

4a. Do you support or oppose the proposed routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders? (See page 35 - 41 of the consultation booklet).

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know

4b. Please provide us with any comments you may have on our proposed routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

5. Additional comments

5a. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about the scheme?

6. About this consultation

We would like to understand how you heard about this consultation so we can understand the best way to reach road users and those who are interested in this scheme.

6a. How did you hear about this consultation?
(Please select all that apply).

- Received a letter from Highways England
- Received an email from Highways England
- Received an email alert from the Highways England website
- Newspaper: name paper
- Online: name source
- Local radio or TV: name source
- Received information from local authority
- Poster
- Word of mouth
- Other (please state)

6b. Did you attend any of the consultation events?

Yes No

6c. If you answered yes, which event did you attend and how useful did you find it to help you to understand the proposed A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements?

6d. How useful did you find our consultation materials, including the consultation booklet, in helping you understand our proposals?

	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Useful	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Useful	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/> Not very useful	<input type="checkbox"/> Not useful at all	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Consultation booklet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exhibition boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preliminary Environmental Information Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Augmented Reality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minecraft	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scheme fly-through	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6e. Do you have any other comments about the consultation process and materials?

Data protection and you

On 25 May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) came into force. This legislation requires Highways England to explain to consultees, stakeholders and customers how their personal data will be used and stored.

Highways England adheres to the Government's Consultation Principles, the Planning Act 2008 and the Highways Act 1980 as required, and may collect personal data to help shape development of highways schemes.

Personal data collected for the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvements scheme will be processed and retained by Highways England and its appointed contractors until the scheme is complete.

Under the GDPR regulations you have the right to request the following information from us:

1. Right of access to the data (Subject Access Request)
2. Right for the rectification of errors
3. Right to erasure of personal data – this is not an absolute right under the legislation
4. Right to restrict processing or to object to processing
5. Right to data portability

If, at any point, Highways England plans to process the personal data we hold for a purpose other than that for which it was originally collected, we will provide you with information about what that other purpose is. This will be done prior to any further processing taking place. The extra information will include any relevant further information as referred to above, including the right to object to that further processing.

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority, the Information Commissioners Office.

If you'd like more information about how we manage data, or a copy of our privacy notice, please contact DataProtectionAdvice@Highwaysengland.co.uk

Contact us



0300 123 5000



info@a428.co.uk



FREEPOST, A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet

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**Public
Key Decision - Yes**

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Approval of Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) – 9th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Growth

Report by: Planning Service Manager (Growth)

Wards affected: All

Recommendations:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) makes comments to the Cabinet on this report and recommendation.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Approval of Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 18th July 2019

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Growth

Report by: Planning Service Manager (Growth)

Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is a new indicator for housing delivery introduced in the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The aim of this test is for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to meet at least 95% of their housing requirement over the previous 3 years. HDC achieved 92% so in line with national requirements, are encouraged to produce an action plan within 6 months of the publication of the HDT results. The results were published on 19th February 2019, meaning the deadline is 19th August 2019. The action plan highlights the key issues that have affected housing delivery across the District and the actions that can be pursued to reduce these. Not meeting the 95% threshold has no impact on the Council's 5 year housing land supply going forward. In addition, with the adoption of the Local Plan and anticipated completions in the 2018/2019 monitoring year, it is expected that Huntingdonshire will pass the HDT when the next set of results are published in November 2019 so will not have to produce an action plan next year, unless the Government introduced further legislative changes.

Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

- Endorses the Action plan at Appendix 1 for submission.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets the background to the Housing Delivery Test (HDT), what it is, why it is necessary, how it is calculated and the result for Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC). The attached action plan sets out the key issues that have impacted housing delivery as well as the key actions and responses which have been identified to lessen the impact of these issues on future housing delivery. The report also addresses the requirement of producing the action plan, and the future position of housing delivery in the District.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in July 2018 introduced the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) as a new indicator for net housing delivery over the previous 3 years against the housing requirement of the area.
- 2.2 It is the Government's aim that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should achieve a housing delivery rate of at least 95%. This is measured by a 3 year requirement which is based on either household projections or the latest adopted housing requirement, whichever is lower. The annual requirement of either of these over 3 years is totalled to give an overall 3 year requirement. To assess if an LPA has achieved at least 95% or not, the net completions of C3 dwelling houses and a multiplier of C2 student and communal accommodation for those 3 years are divided by the requirement to give a delivery percentage. Details are set out on pages 9 to 11 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Measurement Technical Note (February 2019).
- 2.3 Paragraph 75 of the NPPF states that a delivery rate of at least 95% over the past 3 years' worth of net completions against the requirement should be achieved. Paragraph 062 (reference ID: 3-062-20180913) of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) identifies that if the housing requirement is not delivered, the following consequences are imposed:
- the publication of an action plan if housing delivery falls below 95%;
 - a 20% buffer on LPA's 5-year land supply if housing delivery falls below 85%;
 - the presumption in favour of sustainable development if housing delivery falls below 75%, once transitional arrangements have ended.
- 2.4 The consequences of the test will apply until the subsequent results are published or a new requirement is adopted.
- 2.5 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development only applies to the 2018 HDT results when the delivery of housing was below 25% of housing required over the previous three years. The November 2019 results will see this increase to delivery below 45% and in November 2020 will see this rise to delivery below 75%.
- 2.6 The results of the first HDT were expected to be published in November 2018, however they were delayed due to a consultation on the appropriate methodology that should be used in order to calculate housing requirement figures. The results were instead published on 19th February 2019. HDC achieved 92%; this is only 3% short of the 95% threshold. HDC's result was calculated by using the household projection figures, as at the time of publication, the Local Plan had not yet been adopted and the previous Development Plan target was over 5 years old. The methodology used to calculate this

is on pages 3 and 4 of MHCLG's Technical Note and also in paragraph 12 of MHCLG's Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule book (referred to as the Measurement Rule book). As a result, HDC are encouraged to publish an action plan within 6 months of the publication of the HDT results (by 19th August 2019) to meet the requirements of paragraph 073 (reference ID: 3-073-20180913) of the PPG.

- 2.7 Since HDC adopted the new Local Plan to 2036 in the period after the HDT results were calculated, the option of a re-calculation was available. However, using the methodology set out in paragraph 12 of the Measurement Rule book, the result would be unchanged as the identified housing requirement of 804 is higher than the household projections. This is due to the transitional measures in place over the next 3 years. These transitional measures do not include the affordability ratio to the household projections; this instead will be added gradually each year so that by 2021 household projections will cease to form any part of the HDT. This is stated in footnote 18 and paragraph 23 of the Measurement Rule book.
- 2.8 The Action Plan is attached as an Appendix to this report. Page 5 sets out the previous trends in delivery across the District since the start of the Local Plan period (2011) against the identified annual target of 804 dwellings. The planning policy context at the time the HDT results were calculated in February 2019 is also set out so that the issues and actions stated later have greater context.
- 2.9 The action plan identifies a number of key issues that have impacted past housing delivery. These have been identified from a range of sources including housing trajectory responses from developers/agents/landowners for the 2018 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), discussions with planning officers and through the Local Plan examination hearing sessions held in July and September 2018. The issues identified have been grouped into four categories: site constraints; supply issues; the planning process and infrastructure and services.
- 2.10 From these issues, key actions and responses have been identified to address housing delivery. These stem from discussions with planning officers, and feedback received from the housing trajectory responses and the Local Plan examination. Many of the key actions identified are actions that are already underway or within the work program of the Local Plans Team and wider Development service. Other actions are already underway from HDC's delivery partners (such as the A14 improvement works and several of the projects identified by the Combined Authority). Other actions have already been actioned, the outcomes of which are still to be seen, for example, the adoption of the Local Plan and the implementation of its policies. Monitoring the impact of these policies is important to assess how the policies relate to decision making but also how they impact on housing and employment provision. By working proactively and collaboratively with internal and external delivery partners, this action plan identifies ways that housing delivery can be increased. Other actions include HDC's involvement with the Combined Authority and cooperation with partners to deliver various strategic priorities and transport improvements. This demonstrates that HDC are already being proactive in boosting housing supply and addressing historic under-delivery.
- 2.11 There is no impact on HDC's 5 year housing land supply position following the publication of the HDT results as a 20% buffer only applies if the delivery rate was below 85%. Furthermore, it is anticipated that HDC will pass the HDT next time the results are published in November 2019 based on the anticipated levels of completions for the 2018/2019 year. These are evidenced in the projections made in the AMR (December 2018) on page 63 and housing trajectory found in Appendix 1 of the AMR.

3 KEY IMPACTS / RISKS / OPTIONS

- 3.1 The key risk to not meeting the requirement and publishing the action plan by the 19th August as set out in the PPG includes the possibility of the Council potentially being vulnerable at appeals and having to defend their position on housing delivery, particularly addressing historic under-delivery.

4 LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The production of the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan and its key actions relates to the strategic priority of Enabling Sustainable Growth and specifically two associated strategic objectives.

- 4.2 The first objective under the strategic priority is as follows:

“Support development of infrastructure to enable growth.”

Our work programme includes:

- *“Influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy;*
- *Facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth.”*

- 4.3 The second related objective under the strategic priority is as follows:

“Improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need”

Our work programme includes:

- *“Ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs;*
- *Planning and delivering the provision of decent market and affordable housing for current and future needs;*
- *Ensuring there are the right community and leisure facilities to support new housing developments.”*

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Paragraph 75 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authority’s should prepare an action plan in line with national guidance to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.

- 5.2 Paragraph 073 (reference ID: 3-073-20180913) of the PPG states that the action plan should be published within 6 months of the release of the Housing Delivery Test results. The results were released on 19th February 2019 meaning the deadline for the publication of the action plan is the 19th August 2019.

- 5.3 There are currently no sanctions in place if an action plan is not produced to this timescale or at all. HDC have decided to produce one to meet the above requirements and proactively increase housing delivery.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The actions identified consist of ones that are already being undertaken or already planned by HDC or their delivery partners.

7 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

7.1 To meet government requirements as set out in the NPPF and PPG.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (December 2018)

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1220/annual-monitoring-report.pdf>

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (May 2019)

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf>

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule book (July 2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728523/HDT_Measurement_Rule_Book.pdf

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Housing Delivery Test 2018 Measurement Technical Note (February 2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2018-measurement>

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Chapter 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes and Annex 1: Implementation

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807247/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment#housing-delivery-test>

APPENDICES:

Housing Delivery Test Action Plan

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Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2019

Huntingdonshire District Council | Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2019

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It can also be viewed on our website at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388424 and we will try to meet your needs.

Andy Moffat
Head of Development

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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1** The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results were published on 19 February 2019. The result for Huntingdonshire District Council was **92%**. This falls only slightly short of the 95% threshold, therefore only an action plan is required to be produced.
- 1.2** An important milestone since the publication of the HDT results includes the adoption of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. This was adopted at Full Council on 15 May 2019 and is a significant step towards boosting housing delivery in the District.
- 1.3** This action plan identifies the key issues of under delivery in the District and the key actions that can help resolve these. It identifies what Huntingdonshire can still do to boost housing supply, as well as recognising and building upon the actions that the Council is already proactively pursuing to meet its housing target.

2 Introduction

2 Introduction

- 2.1** The Housing Delivery Test was introduced in the revised [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) in July 2018. It provides a new additional indicator for net housing delivery over the previous 3 years against the housing requirement for the area.
- 2.2** It is the Government's aim that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should aim to achieve a housing delivery rate of at least 95%. This is measured by a 3 year requirement which is based on either household projections or the latest adopted housing requirement, whichever is lower. The annual requirement of either of these over 3 years is totalled to give an overall 3 year requirement. To assess if an LPA has passed or not, the net completions recorded for those 3 years are divided by the requirement to give a delivery percentage. Details are on pages 9 to 11 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG's) [Measurement Technical Note](#), published on 19 February 2019.
- 2.3** As per paragraph 75 of the [NPPF](#), to pass the test without any further actions, a delivery rate of at least 95% over the past 3 years' worth of net completions against the requirement must be achieved. If the identified housing requirement is not delivered, the following consequences are applied in an attempt to boost housing supply ⁽¹⁾:
- the publication of an action plan if housing delivery falls below 95%;
 - a 20% buffer on the LPAs 5-year housing land supply if housing delivery falls below 85%;
 - the presumption in favour of sustainable development if housing delivery falls below 75%, once transitional arrangements have ended.
- 2.4** Huntingdonshire achieved 92%, this means that an action plan is required to be prepared in order to identify ways for Council's to proactively boost housing supply. The action plan is required to be published within 6 months of the publication of the HDT results (by 19 August 2019) to meet the requirements of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) ⁽²⁾.
- 2.5** This will remain in place until the subsequent results are published or a new requirement is adopted.
- 2.6** As per paragraph 215 of the [NPPF](#), the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies when the delivery of housing was substantially lower than the housing requirement over the previous 3 years. The threshold for applying this is:
- November 2018 - delivery below 25% of housing required;
 - November 2019 - delivery below 45% of housing required;
 - November 2020 - delivery below 75% of housing required.
- 2.7** This is Huntingdonshire's first action plan and identifies ways of ensuring the Council's housing requirement is met so that the HDT can be passed when the next results are published.

1 [Paragraph 062 \(reference ID: 3-062-20180913\)](#) of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2 [Paragraph 073 \(reference ID: 3-073-20180913\)](#)

3 Huntingdonshire Policy Context

- 3.1** Since the publication of the Housing Delivery Test results, the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) was adopted and superseded all previous development plans and saved policies (apart from made neighbourhood plans).
- 3.2** However, at the time the Housing Delivery Test was published, the planning policy context for Huntingdonshire was as follows:

Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995) and Alteration (2002)

- 3.3** The Huntingdonshire Local Plan was adopted in December 1995, and was superseded in part by the Local Plan Alteration, adopted December 2002, which relates to housing.
- 3.4** The [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#) provided for the saving of policies in adopted or approved local plans for a period of 3 years from its commencement, which was September 2004. In order to ensure continuity in the plan-led system and a stable local planning framework, the Secretary of State issued a Direction (Schedule 1) in September 2007, listing all policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and Local Plan Alteration 2002 which were to be saved beyond 28 September 2007 until such time as they are replaced by policies in Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The [schedule](#) can be viewed on the District Council's website. Those policies not saved in the schedule expired.

Core Strategy (2009)

- 3.5** The Core Strategy DPD was adopted in September 2009. The document sets the strategic spatial planning framework for how Huntingdonshire will develop up to 2026. It contains policies to manage growth and guide new development in the District. The Core Strategy provides the local context for considering the long-term social, economic, environmental and resource impacts of development.

Huntingdonshire West Area Action Plan (2011)

- 3.6** The Huntingdonshire West Area Action Plan was adopted in February 2011. The area action plan covers approximately 300 hectares of land west of Huntingdon Town Centre with the aim of delivering growth and regeneration to this part of Huntingdon. The remaining undeveloped sites included in this action plan have been carried forward as site allocations in the proposed Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

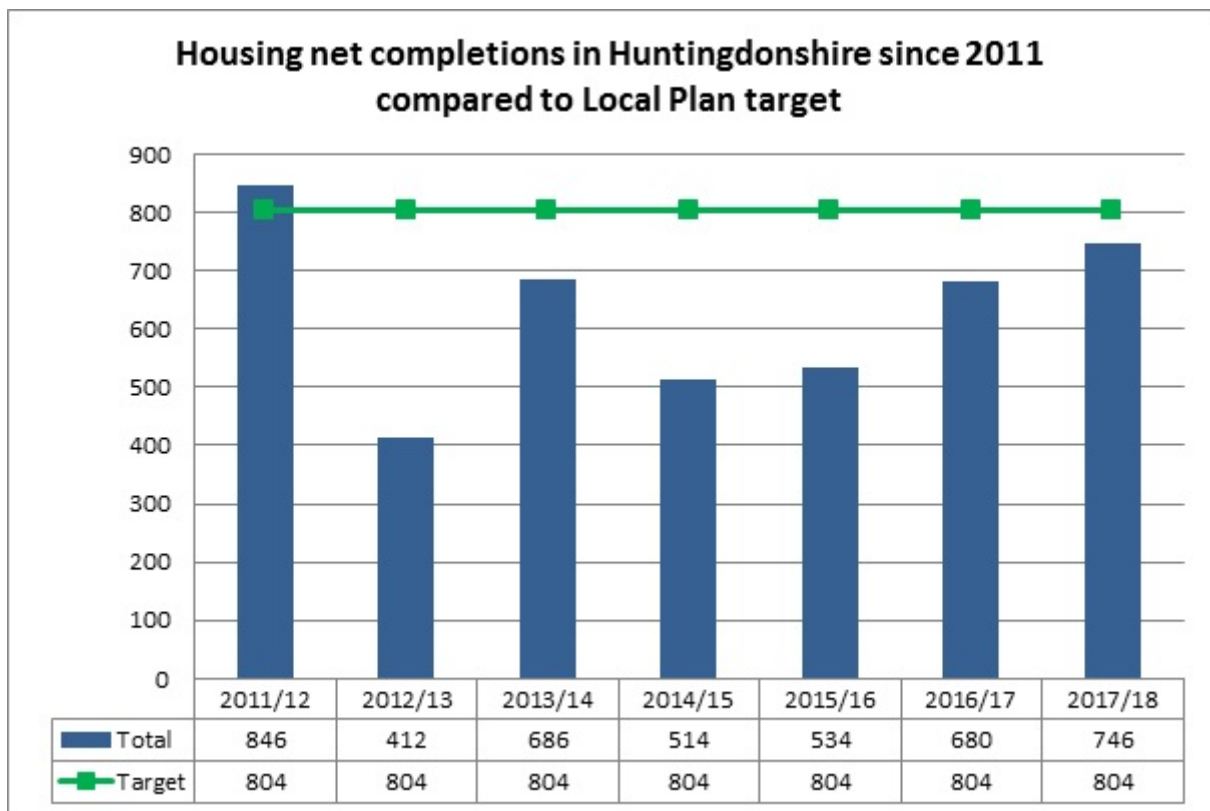
- 3.7** Changes in the national planning policy position, as well as changes in local circumstances, accelerated the need for the Council to pro-actively reconsider its local planning policy position.
- 3.8** At the time of the publication of the HDT results in February 2019, the Huntingdonshire Local Plan was still an emerging plan which incorporated both new local planning policies and identifying development allocations. It was submitted on 29 March 2018 for examination and completed several hearing sessions throughout July and September 2018. The Inspector declared that the Council complied with its duty to co-operate and that the Plan could be made sound through main modifications, consultation was completed in January 2019.
- 3.9** In February 2019, the Council were awaiting the Inspector's final report. In the time since the HDT results were published, the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 was adopted at Full Council on 15 May 2019 and supersedes the Local Plan 1995, the Local Plan Alteration 2002, the Core Strategy 2009 and the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011.

4 Housing Delivery in Huntingdonshire

4 Housing Delivery in Huntingdonshire

- 4.1 Huntingdonshire has a strong vision for future development by creating sustainable environments in which people want to live, work, play and visit.
- 4.2 The [Huntingdonshire Local Plan](#) Plan period is 2011 to 2036. The Local Plan identifies sites to meet its housing and employment needs in full by allocating sites best suited to meeting overarching sustainability objectives and offering suitable diversity and opportunity for its residents.
- 4.3 While Huntingdonshire has allocated enough land to meet its future need, there has been historic under delivery in the District which the proposed Local Plan seeks to address. The identified annual housing requirement figure is 804 net dwellings a year, over the plan period, this equates to 20,100 new homes.
- 4.4 Figure 4.1 sets out the delivery of new C3 homes (dwelling houses) against the Local Plan annual requirement figure since the start of the Plan period.

Figure 4.1 C3 Housing net completions in Huntingdonshire compared to Local Plan target



HDT Result for Huntingdonshire

4.5 At the time of publication in February 2019, the Housing Delivery Test confirmed that Huntingdonshire achieved 92% of its housing requirement over the past 3 years. This meant that an action plan was required as it falls just short of the 95% threshold. Table 1 sets out Huntingdonshire's result.

Table 1 HDT result for Huntingdonshire from February 2019

Number of homes required			Total number of homes required	Number of homes delivered			Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2018 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2018 consequence
2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18			
722	707	784	2,213	574	719	746	2,039	92%	Action Plan

4.6 The Government used a standard method to set housing targets. They used the 2012 household projections for year 1 (2015/16) and the 2014 household projections for years 2 and 3 (2016/17 and 2017/18). They also applied an element of student and communal accommodation (C2) by applying a multiplier to the housing completions, this explains why there are slightly differing completions figures between Table 1 and Figure 4.1. The idea of including C2 into these delivery figures is that they can release C3 dwelling houses when people make the move from their own home to a care facility for example thus reducing the need for new build market houses.

4.7 As part of the transitional arrangements, the affordability ratio was not included in this year's results as stated in footnote 18 of [MHCLG's Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book \(July 2018\)](#). The affordability ratio is calculated by dividing house prices by gross annual workplace-based earnings (based on the median and lower quartiles of house prices and earnings). For Huntingdonshire, the affordability ratio would increase the required number of homes to be delivered. The Rule book clarifies that the affordability ratio will be introduced gradually year by year for future requirements so by 2021, household projections will cease to form any part of the Housing Delivery Test.

4.8 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan had not yet been adopted at the time the results were published and the Core Strategy target was over 5 years old, the methodology on pages 3 and 4 of the [Technical Note](#) required that the completions were compared against household projections. Huntingdonshire adopted the Local Plan, which included an annual housing delivery target of 804. As this target is higher than the household projections, there is no change to the HDT result of 92% as explained in paragraph 12 of the [Measurement Rule Book](#). After the adoption of a Local Plan, LPAs do have an option to re-calculate their HDT result, however using the methodology set out in the HDT Rulebook, the result would be the same due to the transitional arrangements of using the lower of either the household projections or the local plan target.

4 Housing Delivery in Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire District Council | Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2019

Monitoring 2018/2019

- 4.9** Research including site visits have been undertaken to determine how many housing completions and starts have taken place over the last year. Initial results indicate that completions will be higher than the 804 target and nearer to 1,000. This will be confirmed in August once final data checking has been carried out between Cambridgeshire County Council's Business Intelligence Research Group and HDC. With this in mind, subject to no government changes in how the HDT results are calculated next time, HDC is likely to pass next year's HDT and will not be required to produce an action plan no matter which target is used (housing projections or local plan target).
- 4.10** This supports the trajectory that was produced as part of the [Annual Monitoring Report \(AMR\)](#) (published in December 2018). This anticipates above annual average target rates of completions, particularly over the next 5 years following Local Plan adoption, see Table 2 (for the full table see Appendix 1). This includes a capped trajectory based on the comments made by the Local Plan Inspector about concerns over market absorption and build out rates surrounding two main clusters of sites where the Council's two strategic sites are located:
- one being a cap of 300 completions a year from SEL1.1 and SEL1.2 (Alconbury Weald) and HU1 in the Alconbury Weald and north-western Huntingdon area;
 - the second being a cap of 200 completions a year from SEL2 (St Neots East including Wintringham Park).
- 4.11** Therefore, it can be concluded that housing under delivery is a short term issue for the district and that housing delivery is increasing.

Table 2 Post examination capped trajectory for the next 5 years against Local Plan requirements as published in the AMR 2018 (page 63)

	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Dwellings Completed	846	412	686	514	534	680	746					
Identified for completion								1,034	1,496	1,428	1,290	1,218
Cumulative Completions	846	1,258	1,944	2,458	2,992	3,672	4,418	5,452	6,948	8,376	9,666	10,884
Target	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804
Cumulative Target	804	1,608	2,412	3,216	4,020	4,824	5,628	6,432	7,236	8,040	8,844	9,648
Monitor - No. dwellings above or below cumulative development plan target	42	-350	-468	-758	-1,028	-1,152	-1,210	-980	-288	336	822	1,236

- 4.12** It should be noted the cap is only to calculate the housing trajectory and 5 year housing land supply figure. There is no actual cap on delivery on any of these sites and the developers/housebuilders involved anticipate housing completions in excess of the capped figures.

5 Key Issues Affecting Delivery

- 5.1** Huntingdonshire has identified a number of key issues that have affected the past delivery of new housing. These have been grouped into 4 key categories:
- Site constraints;
 - Supply issues;
 - Planning process; and
 - Infrastructure and services.
- 5.2** The trajectory questionnaires sent out as part of the 2018 AMR to developers/agents/landowners of permitted or allocated sites have helped to identify these issues. Developers/agents/landowners were asked to identify any issues that were impacting their sites coming forward sooner and affecting delivery rates. The survey also asked what actions could be undertaken by the Council to help reduce these issues. The responses received have helped to inform the key actions and the Council's responses to these stated later in this action plan.
- 5.3** In addition, discussions with planning officers and members of the wider Development team have given insight into other issues which have impacted delivery and identified actions that are already in the process of being implemented or are planned.
- 5.4** The Local Plan examination has helped identify some issues. The hearing sessions held in July and September 2018 allowed the Council and developers/agents to discuss delivery rates and the issues that are preventing proposed allocations in coming forward sooner. This process identified site specific issues but also wider strategic issues. While identifying these, it also allowed for a discussion on the projects that are already underway or are planned which will positively increase housing delivery.

Issue 1

Site Constraints

- Land values and viability
- Land contamination issues
- Flooding
- Heritage

Issue 2

Supply issues

- Lack of skills and labour availability
- Availability of materials
- Availability of house builders and Registered Social Landlords
- Market absorption
- Uncertainty over Brexit

5 Key Issues Affecting Delivery

Huntingdonshire District Council | Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2019

Issue 3

Planning process

- Time to determine planning applications, respond to pre-application enquiries and discharge conditions
- Time to agree planning obligations and S106 agreements
- Status of the Development Plan

Issue 4

Infrastructure and services

- Timelines of wider transport projects such as the A14
- Existing transport network and service provision

- 5.5** As a result of recognising these key issues, HDC have identified a number of actions to help resolve or mitigate these issues. Some of these actions are already being undertaken and will be carried forward, other actions are those that will be started going forward to address the shortfall of housing delivery and boost housing supply.
- 5.6** It must be recognised that some of the issues identified cannot be resolved in the short term and some are outside of HDC's direct control. However, a number of these issues can be addressed by HDC working with its delivery partners.

6 Key Actions and Responses

- 6.1** Following the identification of the key issues that have affected housing delivery, a number of actions and responses have been identified for each of these, several of which closely relate to the strategic priorities and actions in the Council's [Corporate Plan \(2018-2022\)](#).
- 6.2** Some of these actions are new; other actions are already in progress and are being implemented by either Huntingdonshire District Council or its working partners; and some actions have already been implemented, the results of which need time to be assessed, such as the newly adopted Local Plan and implications its policies are having.
- 6.3** By recognising all of these actions, Huntingdonshire is demonstrably being proactive in the delivery of housing.

Issue 1 - Actions and Responses

Site constraints

- **Land values and viability** - Huntingdonshire District Council in their newly adopted Local Plan to 2036 have policies which allow for viability assessments to be taken into account when relevant to reduce the impact of this constraint and not affect housing delivery.
- **Land contamination issues** - continue working relations with Environmental Health in assessing risk and potential mitigation so that land contamination does not affect housing delivery. Making the relevant information and documentation available to Environment Health and any other relevant bodies is key to assisting with this.
- **Flooding** - an SFRA was produced as part of the Local Plan evidence base to inform the selection of site allocations and also support the determination of planning applications. This document and the continuation of our working relationship with the Environment Agency will be important actions to sustain when assessing schemes for new housing in areas of flood risk. In addition, the use of the sequential test in the planning process has enabled housing delivery to be maximised in areas of low flood risk.
- **Heritage** - Local Plan policies require schemes to be well designed so that they do not have a detrimental impact on heritage assets; this is considered to be reasonable given the level of protection afforded to heritage assets in law.

Issue 2 - Actions and Responses

Supply issues

- **Skills and labour availability** - the housing and mixed-use allocations in the new Local Plan promotes growth up to 2036, thus facilitating an increase in the working age population in the District. Huntingdonshire's Economic Development team are working closely with Alconbury Weald and the designated Enterprise Zone including their IMET training facility as well as working to rejuvenate market towns and key service centres to bring about economic growth and greater opportunities for employment. These were identified as key areas for attention in the [Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan 2013-2023](#) which can continue the delivery of this vision now the Huntingdonshire Local Plan has been adopted.
- **Materials** - HDC have no control over this issue.

6 Key Actions and Responses

Huntingdonshire District Council | Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2019

- **Availability of house builders and Registered Social Landlords** - HDC have no control over this issue.
- **Market absorption** - Huntingdonshire's Local Plan supports a broad mix of tenures and dwellings sizes to avoid over supply of certain dwelling sizes and tenures in the housing market. In addition, HDC has been cautious in its approach to market absorption in the AMR. The 2018 AMR housing trajectory reflects comments made by the Planning Inspector during the Local Plan examination in regard to market absorption and build out rates of two main clusters of sites. A cap of 300 dwellings a year has been recorded for sites SEL1.1, SEL1.2 and HU1 in the Alconbury Weald and north-western area of Huntingdon and a cap of 200 dwellings a year from site SEL2 in St Neots. It should be noted the cap is only to calculate the housing trajectory and 5 year housing land supply figure. There is no actual cap on delivery on any of these sites and the developers/housebuilders involved anticipate housing completions in excess of the capped figures. Further reviews of this position will be undertaken in subsequent AMRs.

The Local Plans Team work with Neighbourhood Planning Groups including those who wish to undertake a housing needs assessment. The housing needs assessment allows for more detailed housing mix policies specifically targeted at the housing mix and housing need of the existing Neighbourhood Plan Area. This allows for greater diversity of housing supply to enhance market absorption.

In addition, Huntingdonshire is keen to promote Self and Custom Build housing as demonstrated in Local Plan policy LP25. Huntingdonshire has a Self and Custom Build Register open whereby people can register their interest for a plot. Monitoring of the Self and Custom Build Register shows that there is growing demand for this type of housing, so to help meet this growing need in the District, work between Planning/Housing teams and Parish Councils to promote suitable sites is underway.

- **Uncertainty over Brexit** - HDC have no control over this issue.

Issue 3 - Actions and Responses

Planning process

- **Time to determine planning applications, respond to pre-application enquiries and discharge conditions** - multiple actions are being undertaken across the Development Service. Firstly, a LEAN review is underway across the planning teams with the overall aim to maximise efficiency. This review has seen various actions completed including: a publication of a new [Planning Guide](#) for applicants and agents; revised validation checklists to minimise the time applications are invalid and to ensure consistency; agent forums; and training for staff, members and Parish Councils on the planning process and requirements. Secondly, a revision to the scheme of delegation has been put in place whereby applications for single dwellings no longer need to go to Development Management Committee. Thirdly, a review of conditions is underway making them more flexible in terms of triggers.

An update of the [Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document \(2007\)](#) will start in Summer 2019. This will allow for applicants and agents to have up to date guidance on landscape issues. This has the potential to help speed up the planning process by reducing the need for amended proposals, saving officer and planning agents' time.

Finally, agreements are in place on our two strategic site allocations (Alconbury Weald and Wintringham Park) whereby dedicated officers are assigned to these sites to ensure that officer knowledge of the site is retained and that good working relationships are sustained throughout the life of both of these long-term developments. In addition, to identify any delivery problems rapidly, quarterly monitoring statistics are expected from both strategic sites.

- **Time to agree planning obligations and S106 Agreements** - monitoring of the timescales taken in the preparation and conclusion of S106 Agreements will continue.
- **Status of the Development Plan** - before the adoption of the current Local Plan, the development plan for Huntingdonshire was complex with a number of saved policies and plans in place (see 3 'Huntingdonshire Policy Context'), this resulted in a period of complex decision making. Also, the creation of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) in 2012 saw the introduction of the tilted balance. Huntingdonshire had the tilted balance engaged as a result of persistent under delivery, in part as a result of not allocating land for housing since 2002 and for not having an up to date development plan.

Issue 4 - Actions and Responses

Infrastructure and services

- **Timelines of wider transport projects such as the A14** - works by Highways England on the improved [A14](#) are expected to be completed and open to the public in 2020. These works have removed the need for schemes to provide a nil detrimental impact on the A14 and have created additional capacity for future housing allocations to be delivered.
- **Existing transport network and service provision** - work with Highways England on the A428 and East-West Rail projects to remove future constraints to the southern part of the District will continue. In addition, Huntingdonshire continues to work in partnership with the Combined Authority on their [10 key projects](#) to further minimise the lack of appropriate transport infrastructure as a constraint to housing delivery and boost the connectivity of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.

What are we doing to implement the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036?

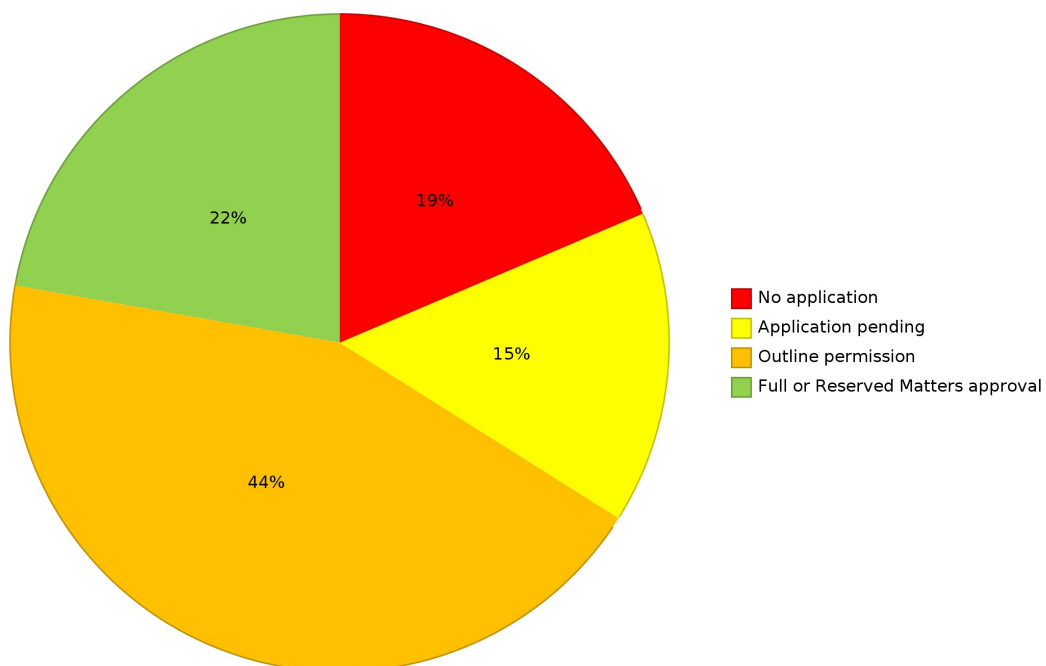
- 6.4 The Council's [Housing Strategy \(2017-2020\)](#) and [Corporate Plan \(2018-2022\)](#) detailed several actions for the Council, including the adoption of the Local Plan. This was achieved on 15 May 2019 and underpins many of the above actions. Post adoption, it is important to monitor the implications each policy is having, this will be done as with previous development plans, in the Council's AMR.
- 6.5 The Local Plan allocates 50 sites for new housing on a range of locations within the District of varying sizes, tenure, associated infrastructure and complementary uses. Monitoring the progress of site allocations in terms of planning permissions and housing completions will also continue in collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council's Business Intelligence Research Group. Discussions with developers will continue when compiling the housing trajectory in the AMR so that a revised 5 year housing land supply position can be produced and stalled sites can be identified.
- 6.6 Research into housing delivery and the time taken from pre-application discussions through to planning approval and then to the first dwelling being completed on the site has been started and will be an ongoing task as new sites are permitted. The data collected will be used to further inform rates of delivery and the

6 Key Actions and Responses

time it takes for sites of varying sizes and complexities to come forward and build out. This will be used to help inform the housing trajectory each year in the AMR alongside the trajectory responses received from developers/agents so that realistic rates of completions can be recorded for each site.

- 6.7** At the time of publication, 35 of the 50 housing allocations (equating to 70%) either have an application on the site pending consideration, have outline permission and/or reserved matters approval or full planning permission. The following chart illustrates the proportion of dwellings this equates to:

Figure 6.1 Progress of Local Plan Sites (% in terms of dwelling numbers) June 2019



- 6.8** As part of the Local Plan evidence base, a [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment \(HELAA\)](#) was published in December 2017. This identified land that was suitable and unsuitable for development across the District. By using this and working with the Strategic Housing Team, potential Rural Exception sites can be identified to bring forward much needed affordable housing to support policy LP28 of the new Local Plan to 2036. To support this further, the Local Plans team will continue to work with Neighbourhood Planning groups and support those who wish to allocate small pieces of land for housing, particularly rural exception and self/custom build housing in their Plans.

- 6.9** Also, the Local Plans team and Implementation team are working towards a review of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule. These will take account of up to date viability information and inputs from the development industry to ensure that these do not place undue constraints on the future delivery of development.

7 Monitoring

- 7.1** The key actions identified in this action plan will be monitored in the Council's AMR. The AMR monitors policy objectives, adopted policies, housing, business and renewable commitments and completions. It also provides a housing trajectory that details the 5 year housing land supply and expected completions throughout the Local Plan period.
- 7.2** The AMR is published by 31 December each year. For 2019, it was decided that the housing element of the AMR and the housing trajectory detailing the 5 year housing supply, will be published by the end of September 2019 rather than 31 December. This is 3 months earlier than in previous years so to provide a more up to date picture in relation to the 31 March baseline that is required in the AMR.
- 7.3** The remaining elements of the AMR (policy monitoring, business and renewable data, CIL and neighbourhood plans) will be published in a separate element by 31 December to meet legislative deadlines. In the 2019 edition, the AMR will also include a section monitoring the progress of the key actions detailed in this action plan as well as future Housing Delivery Test results. This will be included in the second half of the AMR published in December to tie in with the publication of the HDT results in November by MHCLG.

8 Appendix 1 - Anticipated housing delivery throughout the Plan period

Huntingdonshire District Council | Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2019

8 Appendix 1 - Anticipated housing delivery throughout the Plan period

Table 3 Post examination capped trajectory for the Plan period against Local Plan requirements as published in the AMR 2018 (page 63)

	2014/12	2013/13	2014/14	2015/15	2016/16	2017/17	2018/18	2019/19	2020/20	2021/21	2022/22	2023/23	2024/24	2025/25	2026/26	2027/27	2028/28	2029/29	2030/30	2031/31	2032/32	2033/33	2034/34	2035/35	2036/36
Dwellings Completed	846	412	686	514	534	680	746																		
Identified for completion								1,034	1,465	1,629	1,220	1,218	1,330	1,432	1,193	805	704	635	635	650	650	635	635	635	635
Cumulative Completions	846	1,258	1,944	2,458	2,992	3,672	4,418	5,452	6,948	8,376	9,696	10,884	12,214	13,646	14,839	15,644	16,348	16,983	17,618	18,253	18,903	19,553	20,188	20,823	21,458
Target	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804	804
Cumulative Target	804	1,608	2,412	3,216	4,020	4,824	5,628	6,432	7,236	8,040	8,844	9,648	10,452	11,256	12,060	12,864	13,668	14,472	15,276	16,080	16,884	17,688	18,492	19,296	20,100
Monitor - No. dwellings above or below cumulative development plan target	42	-350	-468	-758	-408	-1,152	-420	-960	-288	336	822	1,236	1,762	2,390	2,779	2,760	2,680	2,511	2,342	2,173	2,019	1,865	1,696	1,527	1,358

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Community Infrastructure Levy Spend Allocation

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) –
9th July

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic
Development – Councillor Ryan Fuller

Report by: Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager

Wards affected: All

Recommendation(s):

The Panel is invited to comment on the proposed projects identified for support,

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Community Infrastructure Levy Spend Allocation
Meeting/Date:	Cabinet – 18th July
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development – Councillor Ryan Fuller
Report by:	Clara Kerr, Planning Services Manager
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of the area. It came into force on 6 April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Huntingdonshire District Council became a CIL charging authority in May 2012.

Local authorities must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area. This helps to deliver across a number of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities for 2018 – 2022 but specifically:

- Support development of infrastructure to enable growth
- Improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need

To date CIL monies have only been allocated to deliver Huntingdon West Link Road (now called Edison Bell Way). A consideration of the potential next infrastructure projects to be funded in whole or in part by an amount of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies received to date needs to be made.

Following liaison with partners through the Growth & Infrastructure Group, bids were invited. These have been assessed to reach a recommendation.

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet:

Commits funding as detailed in 9.2 and invites the proposers of the projects detailed in 9.3 to resubmit with additional information when bids are next invited.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider the potential next infrastructure projects to be funded in whole or in part by an amount of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies received to date.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was first referred to in the Planning Act 2008 and was formally introduced through the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). The CIL spreads the burden of paying for infrastructure to all developments, not just major ones, as it is a requirement across all developments. Prior to the introduction of CIL, Councils were 'missing' collecting a significant proportion of obligations as S106 agreements only tended to be negotiated on larger scale sites.
- 2.2 The first Huntingdonshire Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in December 2011 with the CIL Charging Schedule being approved in April 2012 by full Council and implemented with effect from 1st May 2012.
- 2.3 CIL is triggered on commencement of development and payable in line with the Council's CIL Instalment Policy. This allows between 120 days and 720 days in which to pay the full chargeable amount. This policy is to aid viability and deliverability on site. Sites with approved phasing enable each phase to be considered as a separate chargeable development and so the instalment policy applies to each phase individually too, assisting viability further.
- 2.4 CIL receipts were slow for the first few years due to development commencing that had been approved prior to the introduction of the Charging Schedule. Receipts have nearly doubled each year reaching circa £10m. It should be noted that the last year or so has seen a peak in CIL receipts due to the timing of instalment payments of strategic site phases but this should not be seen as the likely future average.
- 2.5 CIL legislation has gone through a continual period of development and change. The proposals recommended in the CIL review and the current amendment regulations laid before parliament in June 2019 look to address the outcome of many of those changes and provide the LPA with more flexibility on delivery of infrastructure.
- 2.6 It is important to note that whilst CIL has been a target for some in the development industry, there is no evidence to suggest that CIL is stalling development and, indeed, the evidence on figures suggests to the contrary. The requirement for infrastructure to support new development remains and CIL continues to be implemented across the country with government enabling and directing local authorities to obtain contributions by charging a Community Infrastructure Levy on new development, and by negotiating section 106 planning obligations with a developer.
- 2.7 Up to 5% of CIL receipts each financial year may be retained for administration costs. 15% - 25% of CIL receipts – the "meaningful proportion" – are passed to Parish/Town Councils in line with the amended CIL Regulations and the Localism Act 2011 and the total amount transferred to Parish/Town Councils has increased each year in line with receipt increases.

- 2.8 It has been estimated that the Local Plan to 2036 could result in CIL receipts of between £79.2m and £108.4m – the range is due to the development already permitted. This equates to an average of just under £4m a year. This has taken account of provision of 40% affordable housing, which does not pay CIL if relief is applied for, but does not taken account of any other reliefs or exemptions that could be applied for or reductions in charge due to offsetting in accordance with Regulation 40. This is a very simplified calculation and should be treated with caution but helps to provide an indication of the infrastructure delivery that could be supported.
- 2.9 Members have only approved spend of CIL on the Huntingdon West Link Road (HWLR) (now called Edison Bell Way) to date. The CIL expenditure to date on this project is just over £3m. This now covers the element of road costs outstanding. Any further payments required will relate to Compulsory Purchase Order compensation.
- 2.10 The delivery of Edison Bell Way has been a key project for the Council to unlock circa 6.35 hectares of land west of Huntingdon's town centre at a key entrance to the town by Huntingdon Railway Station. In order to open up this area of redundant and under-used industrial land and reduce traffic flows on a section of the ring road, the Council worked with Cambridgeshire County Council to deliver the new link road to stimulate regeneration and unlock land for housing and retail development that will complement and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre and the town as a whole. As a result the site is now under construction and permission or approvals pending will result in a mixed use development comprising circa 400 dwellings in a mix of houses and apartments, a Care Home, Sheltered Retirement apartments, a food store and flexible commercial units with associated open space, landscaping and parking.
- 2.11 There is approximately £15m of CIL receipts now currently available for spend on further infrastructure projects. However, it should be noted that there is a planned review of the Developer Contributions SPD underway and it is anticipated there will be further Government announcements in relation to CIL. Both of these factors could see CIL receipts for the Council decrease in coming years.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 As part of the work of the Growth and Infrastructure Group, infrastructure project bids were invited from stakeholders. The cost of the projects submitted is significantly higher than the available CIL receipts.
- 3.2 Projects submitted were therefore assessed against four criteria in order to produce a ranking score. The categories were strategic fit (how it supports growth), deliverability and risks, benefits and outputs, and extent of match funding being provided.
- 3.3 The scoring was intended to allow comparison of the schemes submitted but there was recognition that other factors would be considered in any discussion of the projects that would inform the final decision, including those linked to the HDC corporate priorities, capital spend programme, Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and supporting the needs of future growth and its locality.
- 3.4 The levy is intended to focus on the provision of new infrastructure and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies in infrastructure provision

unless those deficiencies will be made more severe by new development. It can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support development.

3.5 In assessing spend, the potential support a number of strategic infrastructure projects may need in the near future should be noted i.e. if all the money received to date is allocated to other projects, it may not be possible to provide these strategic projects with the funding they may need over the next few years to be delivered. These include:

- A14 Legacy Highways England Huntingdon Masterplan
- A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvements
- A141 Huntingdon
- St Ives Transport Studies
- East West Rail Bedford to Cambridge opportunities
- Huntingdon Third River Crossing
- Prospectus for Growth for each market town
- St Ives and Huntingdon Bus Station Quarters Redevelopment Proposals
- Great Fen Visitor Centre - NB: on HDC prospectus for CA
- Edison Bell Way (outstanding CPO claims)

3.6 Information on the bids submitted can be seen in Appendix 1

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be included in this section prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

5. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

5.1 The key impact from not considering the CIL spend will be the potential for certain infrastructure projects not being delivered and match funding lost.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Projects bids submitted will be notified of the outcome of the decision made and next steps as appropriate.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

7.1 This helps to deliver across a number of the Council's priorities for 2018 -2022 but specifically:

- Support development of infrastructure to enable growth
- Improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Regulation 59 (1) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) require a charging authority to apply CIL to funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area. It may also, under Regulation 59 (3)

support infrastructure outside its area where to do so would support the development of its area.

8.2 Passing CIL to another person for that person to apply to funding the provision, improvement, replace, operation and maintenance of infrastructure is also permitted under Regulation 59 (4).

8.3 Section 216 (2) of the Planning Act 2008 as amended by Regulation 63 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended) stated that infrastructure” includes[and is therefore not limited to]:

- (a) roads and other transport facilities,
- (b) flood defences,
- (c) schools and other educational facilities,
- (d) medical facilities,
- (e) sporting and recreational facilities,
- (f) open spaces

8.4 The levy may not be used to fund affordable housing.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

9.1 The projects identified have been considered in terms of how they support growth), deliverability and risks, benefits and outputs and extent of match funding being provided. The current stage of development the project has also been considered. Detail of key issues is noted in Appendix 1.

9.2 The following projects are considered to have submitted detailed projects, including details of funding (including match funding where necessary) and are recommended to receive CIL funding:

Project	CIL funding
• Godmanchester Doctor’s Surgery Expansion	£107,341
• Godmanchester Mill Weir area green space improvements	£200,000
• Little Paxton Zebra crossing at Mill Lane near Marble White Court	£26,000
• Ramsey 3G pitch	£120,000
• St Ives Outdoor Centre gym	£50,000
• St Ives Park extension	£80,000
• St Neots Improvements to path/cycle route at Riverside Park	£445,000
• St Neots Market Square Bicycle parking facilities	£10,000
• Warboys Village hall	£200,000

- 9.3 Of the other bids submitted, the following are recommended to be invited to resubmit when bids are invited next with more project detail, supporting evidence and match funding, including from the local Town/Parish Council. While these schemes are potentially worthy of CIL support, in their current format they lack crucial evidence and have not been suitably developed to provide the necessary level of detail to warrant support at this time.

Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckden LCWIP early stage action plan work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alconbury Special School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Ives Harrison Way Road Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Neots Secondary School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warboys Additional play equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warboys Additional sports pitch and MUGA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warboys Sports ground drainage equipment

Where Projects demonstrate and provide evidence that they have a significant role to play in addressing key infrastructure requirements to meet the needs of future growth the Cabinet may consider a further round of CIL spend within the financial year

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Project Bids

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2694/infrastructure-delivery-plan.pdf>

Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Infrastructure Schedule

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2693/infrastructure-schedule.pdf>

Huntingdonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan Addendum

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2861/infrastructure-delivery-plan-addendum.pdf>

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Project Name	Location	Bid submitted by	Project Cost	CIL Request	Comments	Key Issues
LCWIP early stage action plan work	Buckden	Buckden Parish Council	£177,950	£90,950	The proposal covers a series of initiatives some of which have started and some of which are for initial feasibility work. They have been identified by Buckden Parish Council as part of their developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). These plans, as set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a new, strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10 year period, and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle.	Key Issues: the settlement has and continues to receive significant development in proportion to its scale and such initiatives will be of benefit to new and existing communities and support healthy living and sustainable transport. The proposals are, though, at an early stage. Although match funding is identified some of this has already been spent and delivered on. If the concept and proposals are supported, it may be considered appropriate to invite the Parish Council to bid again in a future funding round individually on projects when their detail is known and other match funding has been secured.
Alconbury Special School	District Wide	CCC	£15m	Up to £15m	No match funding identified. 110 place school but provision is likely to be for pupils not only from Huntingdonshire but also from other districts in Cambridgeshire and beyond. The land required is already supplied via developer. Sponsor section process for school complete and approved by DfE. Planned to open 2020.	Key issue: Need for a new Special School accepted due to the requirements from growth. However available funding from CCC or other areas that would benefit from the school has not been provided. If the project is supported an in principle contribution towards the cost may be considered appropriate along with a request for the CCC to make a formal

						request to all other LPAs in the area on the contribution they can make. A requirement for a timescale for delivery by 2021 is suggested.
Oak Tree Health Centre Redevelopment / Refurbishment	District wide	HDC	Refurb. £2.5m Development £8-10m	See key issues	This project is for the refurbishment (structural and fire safety) and consideration of future expansion of the Oak Tree Health Centre. This would improve the spatial and functional needs of the Cambs Community Services NHS Trust to support current and planning growth in district. It could also support part of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy. Delivery 2020/21.	Key Issue: If the project was supported a capital contribution could be made. Alternatively support of a loan could be agreed whereby the total cost from a £10m loan would be £11,689,500. Of this CIL could pay principle loan of £10m and council the interest of £1.689m over 15 year period ie £666,667k CIL payment per year.
Police HC secondary building refurb.	District wide	Cambs Constabulary	£920k		Adaptation of secondary to building to relocate staff from main project location in order to provide key service centre, emergency and non-emergency call handling. Level of CIL funding supporting not identified.	Key issue: Emergency services provide a key infrastructure requirement. Although funding request was unclear, the project has now been delivered.
Transport initiatives	District wide	CCC	Circa £8m		This bid covers a number of transport schemes for investment identified through transport strategies and transport assessments for new development are managed in the County's Transport Investment Plan (TIP). They have been identified by CCC to be possible for short-term	Key Issues: the TIP is a key transport plan which is reviewed annually. Some of the projects identified already have funding secured from S106 contributions, Combined Authority funding and other sources. No key project detail is provided, specific CIL funding request made or detail on match funding noted in many cases. It

					delivery although not necessarily in the current financial year. Projects from the St Neots Masterplan have also been completed (a copy of the all the projects referenced is available on request).	may be considered more appropriate to ask for Combined Authority funding and Local Transport Plan / Initiatives funding to be the main support and individual projects resubmitted in the future if still required.
Doctors Surgery Expansion	Godmanchester	Roman Gate Surgery	£1,126,394	£107,341	The proposal is for the expansion of Roman Gate surgery. The land is provided by the surgery. S106 funding has been negotiated by HDC. The maximum grant has been awarded by NHS England.	Key Issue: Godmanchester has had and continues to have significant development to meet the needs of the Local Plan. The project addresses an essential infrastructure requirement. If funding is not secured for the shortfall, the S106 funding could have to be repaid and the project will fall. If the project is supported, it may be felt to be appropriate to recommend a legal agreement is required to be clear on what the money is spent on and repayment requirements should the site be sold in the future.
Guided bus stop / crossing	Houghton & Wyton	Houghton and Wyton Parish Council	£159,250	£29000	Match funding of £31k provided by the Parish Council as well as a loan for a further £30k and CCC funding stated £50k. It has been stated CCC also underwriting £20k if required (unclear if this has been approved formally). It is noted that the bid details indicate this is cost option 3 but unsure what options 1 & 2 were and if better. Also note UKPN cost connection of £5k which is approx. at this stage and could be higher following further	Key Issue: it should be noted that due to the ongoing A141 and St Ives Studies, it may be considered appropriate to ask the Parish Council to resubmit their application once the outcome and next steps from the studies is known, if still felt relevant.

					investigations.	
Godmanchester Mill Weir Improvements / repair	Huntingdon SPA +	HDC	£470k	Up to £200k	Match funding of £270k from A14 Legacy, EA, GMTTC. Other funding sought from HDC capital fund. Project to repair structures necessary for health & Safety and flood alleviation and redevelop area, including establishing a fish pass environmental improvement in the location. The CIL funding would focus on refurbishing the Mill Steps Area to providing additional green leisure and recreation space, Delivery to be complete by 2020/21.	Key issue: The project would address outstanding safety issues and look to improve the 'offer' to residents and visitors to the area. Over 50% match funding has been secured resulting in good value for money. The impact on the ability for future housing growth delivery is minimal.
Huntingdon Pool plant renewal	Huntingdon	HDC	£40k	£10k	This swimming pool is a key facility for the town and surrounding area enable residents to exercise and keep fit. The majority of funding was covered with a request for 25% of match funding from CIL.	Key issue: due to timing and urgency for the plant renewal, the project has now been undertaken and is complete.
Little Paxton Primary education	Little Paxton	CCC	£3.5m	£2 - £2.3m due to growth	Little Paxton primary school noted as having a PAN of 45 which increased in September 2017 giving a capacity of 315 children. There were 53 children in reception in 2017/2018 and a total of 326 children in the school. The numbers are forecast to increase to 336 children in the school by 2021/22. The school could not accommodate the expected	Key Issue: the project is to support the delivery of essential education infrastructure. Due to the timing of bids, the project has progressed and was completed in September 2017.

					additional 63 -73 (top range) children so there is a need to improve the primary school to increase the PAN to 60 with a total capacity to 420. The cost of the project to increase to 2 FE is £3,513,000 of which £2.3m is as a result of growth.	
Zebra crossing at Mill Lane near Marble White Court	Little Paxton	Little Paxton Parish Council	Circa £45k	Up to £26k	High level of match funding secured from the Parish Council CIL 'meaningful proportion' and the CCC Local Highway Improvement (LHI) Initiative funding. Project to install a zebra crossing in a busy area of the parish for benefit of local residents and schools, increasing road safety and access to facilities	Key issue: the project will deliver an important means of safely access community needs in the parish. There is significant support shown from the parish through the work already undertaken and over 40% match funding supplied. There is minimal funding required and could be a 'quick' win. There has been noted growth in the area.
Ramsey 3G pitch	Ramsey SPA +	One Leisure	£600k submitted Update £700 – 740k	£120k	High level of match funding is secured through Football Foundation of up to £320k. Up to £300k HDC capital fund agreed. Project to build a full sized 3G artificial turf pitch on land adjacent to Centre. Land to be donated by Abbey Foundation to enhance educational offer. Outside of school enhanced offer to football clubs achieved. Delivery for 2019/20 financial year.	Key issue: project will provide greater all year round level of sporting facility in a geographical area where difficult to access other opportunities. Significant match funding secured.
Ramsey pool re-	Ramsey SPA +	HDC	£40k	£10k	This is a key facility for the town and surrounding area to enable	Key issue: due to timing and urgency for pool relining, the project has now

lining					residents to exercise and keep fit. The majority of funding was covered with a request for 25% of match funding from CIL.	been undertaken and is complete.
Sawtry Primary Education	Sawtry KSC +	CCC	£6.59m	Up to £2.3m	Current application 18/0458/OUT now for 300 units. Using mid point of multiplier would be 90 places required. CCC stated 3 infant and 4 junior classrooms would cost with 25fte EY places (ie 1FE) £6.59m at £25160 per place. This would equate to £2.26m from proposal leaving approx. £4.3m remaining of which CIL could pay a contribution. Application 17/00077/OUT has a contribution of £1.997m for education at existing school which could be agreed by DofV to be spent at new school resulting in a gap of approximately £2.3m.	Key Issue: Sawtry has and continues to have significant growth in relation to the scale of the settlement to support the development of the district. If the project is supported a consideration of the level of contribution would need to be given. Planning application 18/0452/OUT is not an allocation within the HLP2036.
Harrison Way Road Improvements	St Ives SPA +	St Ives Town Council	£380k		The proposal is to increase capacity and reduce delays at road junctions along the A1123 and Harrison Way. No detail on the project is provided. No match funding is stated.	Key Issue: It should be noted that due to the ongoing A141 and St Ives Studies, it may be considered appropriate to ask the Parish Council to resubmit their application once the outcome and next steps from the studies is known, if still felt relevant.
Park extension	St Ives SPA +	HDC	£50 - £80 k plus land	Up to £80k	Project to deliver a new park for the town. Land negotiated by HDC as part of planning permission.	Key Issue: The project is to be delivered ahead of schedule. The land is available as match funding. If the

					Land to be provided on long term lease to the Council. The project is to cover the early maintenance of the park (above that agreed from Operations future growth bid) along with the provision of Benches/Interpretation, a feasibility study on the commercial opportunities through the park when fully available (given it is being released in three phases – two of which are long lease and one of which is a community transfer). First phase delivery likely 2019.	project is supported it would be provide a quick 'win' enabling the provision of a new strategic green space for the town and widening the leisure and tourism offer.
St Ives outdoor gym	St Ives SPA +	One Leisure	£250k	£50k	Match funding for remainder of project from HDC capital fund. Project to develop outdoor functional trainings or cross –fit style facilities on underutilised squash courts. Delivery 2019/20.	Key issue: There have been community responses questioning the removal of the squash courts and the impact on the squash club. If there is support for this project, it may be considered appropriate to wait until the aforementioned points are fully understood.
St Neots Secondary School	St Neots SPA +	CCC	£22m	Up to £22m	No match funding specified although there may be some. Project to expand the existing secondary schools in town. Current capacity in town as noted in IDP. Education Organisational Plan refers to 2FE expansions at each school. With existing capacity it is anticipated this will cover requirements but funding for	Key Issue: Full project detail not yet known as outwaiting outcome of feasibility study. No other funding identified. If there is support rather than funding at this early stage it may be felt to be appropriate to invite the CCC to submit again in the future when more detail is known and match funding identified.

					the 2FE expansions is unknown. No timings submitted with bid.	
Additional play equipment	Warboys	Warboys Parish Council	£75k plus £10k per annum renewal		The project is for the provision of additional and replacement play equipment and ongoing fund. The settlement has and is due to receive further development to support the growth of the district. No 'meaningful proportion' CIL funding is available as it has been allocated to the village hall replacement project (see project below). No match funding is secured.	Key Issue: The project would support development but also includes a level of cost towards ongoing maintenance matters. No other funding from Parish Council reserves /precept has been identified. If the project is supported it may be appropriate to invite the Parish Council to bid again in a future funding round when more project detail is known and other match funding has been secured including the security of ongoing maintenance.
Additional sports pitch and MUGA	Warboys	Warboys Parish Council	Circa £250k plus land		The project is to purchase land for the extension of Warboys Sports Ground in order to provide additional grass pitches and a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). No match funding is identified. The project would address an identified gap in provision in Warboys for additional outdoor sports pitches (high priority) and a MUGA/Training ATP (medium priority), as identified in the Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-2021. The existing Sports Ground in Warboys provides the only outdoor sports facilities in Warboys and is bordered on three sides by development. Land to both the west and east has been allocated	Key Issue: The only direction in which expansion can take place is to the south. The land is in the ownership of the person who owns the sites to the west and east of the Sports Ground allocated for development in the Plan. Progress is dependent on the purchase of land from the current owner but previous enquiries to the owner for the purchase of land to the south of the Sports Ground have been unsuccessful. No other funding identified although FA funding could be applied for. If the project is supported it may be appropriate to invite the Parish Council to bid again in a future funding round when more project detail is known, other match funding has been secured and the land / land price is known.

					for development in the Local Plan.	
Sports ground drainage equipment	Warboys	Warboys Sports Ground Trust Committee	Circa £25k		The current sports ground needs continual maintenance to ensure it is fit for purpose throughout the year. The sports ground has drainage pipes in some parts of the ground but still has areas where water congregates. A verti-drain machine is required to improve this. Whilst this can be hired, a more sustainable route would be to purchase a machine. No match funding is secured.	Key Issue: The settlement has and is receiving considerable growth and the project would ensure the availability of pitches for longer each year. The bid acknowledges the early stage of this project. If it is supported it may be appropriate to invite the Sports Ground Trust Committee to bid again in a future funding round when more project detail is known and other match funding has been secured.
Warboy's Village hall	Warboys	Warboys Parish Council	£1.25m		Match funding £200k from 'meaningful proportion' CIL receipts to date plus other reserves. Facility required due to poor and small size of existing breeze block facility with asbestos sheeting. The project has some match funding but detail of project not yet known or additional funding bids made. Specific CIL amount not requested. The area has had and is due to have considerable growth in relation to the size of the settlement.	Key Issue: The project would address a key infrastructure need. It may be considered appropriate to offer some funding now; or to provide an in principle offer subject to remaining funding being secured in the next 18 months and delivery commenced; or the Parish Council could be invited to resubmit when they have further project detail and funding to support any CIL funding bid.

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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2019/2020

O&S (Customers and Partnerships) – Active

O&S (Customers and Partnerships)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress
<p>Lifelong Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways in which the Council can improve the lifelong health of residents. Identify the benefits of a whole system approach for the Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what the main health issues facing the residents of Huntingdonshire are (and if there are any problem areas). To discover what leisure activities/provision residents enjoy and/or want. Identify what leisure provision/facilities are most effective. (Investment shouldn't be made in a particular facility if the benefits are minimal.) Discuss with the CCG in order to establish if collaboration between the Council and the CCG is worthwhile. 	<p>CCG CCC Public Health Jayne Wisely Cllr J Palmer Cllr Jill Tavener</p>	<p>10th January 2019 – The Task and Finish Group met and reviewed the scoping document. Based on the Group's discussion the scoping document is being revised. The revised scoping document will be presented to the Group at their next meeting for approval.</p> <p>7th February 2019 – The Task and Finish Group met and agreed the scoping document. Members planned out the next steps of work and agreed to focus on collaboration with Parish Councils.</p> <p>20th March 2019 – Members visited Little Paxton Parish Council to view their physical activity equipment and learn how they engage with the community. Members had a further meeting on 4th April to discuss key learning points of the visit.</p> <p>8th July 2019 – The Group is due to visit Yaxley Parish Council to discover what leisure facilities there are and how they engage with the community.</p>
<p>Tree Strategy Working Group</p> <p>Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Mrs J Tavener (Lead) Cllr B Banks Cllr J W Davies 	<p>At the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Environment) meeting in September 2017, Members agreed to establish a working group with the aim of refreshing the Tree Strategy and scrutinising the Action Plan.</p>	<p>Andy Moffat Tamsin Miles Adrian Sargeant</p>	<p>5th September 2017 – Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Environment) established the Tree Strategy Working Group.</p> <p>6th February 2018 – Councillor Mrs J Tavener updated Members on the progress of the Working Group.</p> <p>12th July 2018 – The Panel received an update from Councillor Mrs J Tavener.</p> <p>February 2019 – The Arboricultural Officer (Planning) and the Arboricultural Officer (Operations) began liaising with the Working Group in order to review and update the Council's Tree Strategy.</p> <p>4th July 2019 – Councillor Mrs J Tavener will present an update report.</p>

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Agenda Item 10

O&S (Customers and Partnerships) – Inactive

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O&S (Customers and Partnerships) idea	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
<p>Health – What are the issues facing the young and elderly populations of Huntingdonshire. How can HDC, either with partners or on its own initiative, assist with the health and well-being of residents in the District.</p>	<p>1. Reducing isolation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reducing age-specific dependency rates by 1 per cent per year would reduce public expenditure by £940m per year by 2031 - reducing the rate of institutionalisation by 1 per cent a year could save £3.8bn. <p>2. Improving mental health</p> <p>Contributes to addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worklessness - Homelessness - Poor health outcomes - Self-reliance <p>3. Reducing hospital admissions in over 65's</p>	<p>Age UK</p> <p>CCG</p> <p>Sports England/Active Lifestyles/CCG</p>	<p>Identifying opportunities (particularly technology) to deliver key activities identified by Age UK, to address isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating a new social link - Developing wider social networks - Meeting like-minded people through clubs and groups - Meeting people with similar needs and supporting each other - Using local services and facilities - Changing social attitudes so that users become accepted and valued as full members of the community in their own right. - Quantifying the cost and impacts of isolation - Recommendations for our services to address - Designing communities for the future <p>Identifying non health interventions that can support mental health – e.g. social referral, links to community activities, volunteering activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities to improve impact of DFG's? - Assisted collections. Investigate if having an assisted collection is an indicator that a resident may require a DFG. - Closer partnership working with health - Establishing greater community resilience 	<p>Dependent upon outcome of bid for inclusion in CCC digital services programme – Spring 2018</p>
<p>Homelessness – Investigating</p>	<p>1. Increase supply of</p>	<p>Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement with Places for People/Luminus 	

<p>the links between homelessness and housing supply. Finding triggers for homelessness. Discovering options and opportunities to reduce homelessness in Huntingdonshire.</p>	<p>affordable property.</p> <p>2. Reduce number of homelessness presentations.</p> <p>3. Increase number of homelessness preventions – solutions that prevent people losing their home</p> <p>4. Increase number of empty properties brought back into use</p>	<p>Advisor</p> <p>Jon Collen / Helen Brown</p> <p>Jon Collen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with Private Sector landlords to understand reasons behind end of AST and incentives to address - Looking to develop options to incentivise Private landlords to take social tenants. - Strategies around use of HMOs - Testing effectiveness of Trailblazer - Testing Homelessness pilot work - Looking at opportunities for partners to signpost and intervene - Taking evidence from best practice providers elsewhere - Working with Registered Providers to maximise housing stock utilisation and fit
<p>Environment – What are the environmental (and lifestyle) quality issues facing Huntingdonshire,</p>	<p>1. Reducing air pollution</p> <p>2. Reducing long term flood issues</p> <p>3. The community role in grounds maintenance and cleansing</p>	<p>Chris Stopford</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>Neil Sloper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport options - Natural environment – exploring opportunities to enhance HDC country parks (Hinchbrook / Paxton Pits) - Role of Great Fen as a regionally significant habitat / tourism destination - A14 and Cam Ox corridor – actively influencing Govt and key transport agencies on investment pipeline and funding options - Exploring the options and Council/communities appetite for scalable growth linked to new infrastructure and ‘healthy places’ with sustainable living choices

**4. Definition of 'Place' and
'People' vision for
Huntingdonshire**

- Role of Neighbourhood Plans and Market Town Master Plans in promoting and directing employment and housing growth
- Influencing long term utility provision – water/power

O&S (Performance and Growth) – Active

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Summary of Scope	Advisors	Progress
<p>Delivery of Affordable Housing <i>(Accelerating the delivery of Affordable Housing across Huntingdonshire communities primarily through Rural Exception Site mechanisms)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in the number of affordable houses built in the District – positively impacting on the quality of developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore methods that maximise the effectiveness of the Council’s approach to achieving additional affordable housing provision beyond allocated sites. To advise on a strategic programme and range of mechanisms to promote and secure rural exception sites (RES) appropriate to settlement scale and need across the District. To explore how RES sites can best be promoted locally, including the role of Ward Members and Parish /Town Councils. 	<p>Andy Moffat Cllr Corney (a builder by trade)/Developers</p>	<p>8th January 2019 – The Panel reviewed and agreed the scoping document.</p> <p>12th February 2019 – The Task and Finish Group met and reminded themselves of the scoping document. Members also discussed the documents presented to them and considered them when planning future work.</p> <p>12th March 2019 – Mark Deas, Cambridgeshire ACRE, was in attendance to discuss the work of the organisation and the mechanism of Rural Exception Sites (RES). Members are keen to discuss with Housing Associations their development plans for Huntingdonshire.</p> <p>23rd April 2019 – Mark Hanson, Cross Keys Homes and Ian Jackson, Longhurst were in attendance to discuss RES and opportunities to accelerate the supply of affordable housing.</p> <p>30th April 2019 – Nigel Finney and John Walton of Luminus were in attendance to discuss ways that HDC and Luminus could accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in Huntingdonshire.</p> <p>A final report has been drafted. The report is currently being reviewed by Members and will be presented at a future meeting.</p>

<p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in educational attainment, and achievement of key skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined Authority strategy impacts, particularly advancing recommendations from CPIER. Alignment to future skills and sectoral demand identified through EMSI study. Role of EDGE programme and wider Combined Authority skills and business support advisory services. Relationship to CPBS 'Grand Challenges' outcomes. 	<p>Andy Moffat John T Hill - CPCA CA Business Board / Company CEOs – reasons for locations choices and future workforce aspiration</p>	<p>Once the Combined Authority has published their skills strategy, Mr John T Hill will be invited to discuss the strategy with Members. To be confirmed</p>
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2020 O&S (Performance and Growth) – Inactive

O&S (Performance and Growth)	Objective test ideas	Advisor potential	Suggested Scope	Progress
<p>Housing – Increasing quality of housing developments and increasing supply of Affordable/Social housing – specifically in the villages.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in the number of affordable houses built in the District – positively impacting on the quality of developments Reduce voids of all types, inc empty homes and RP turnaround times Increase the availability of social housing Reduce Council spend on Homelessness 	<p>Andy Moffat Cllr Corney (a builder by trade)/Developers Homes England Registered Providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the effectiveness of rural exception sites and 60/40 policy Explore viability assessment mechanisms to ensure proper value is created form development sites Review of CIL charging regime and utilisation of funds Relationships with RPs (Registered Providers) and options to increase pace and tenure type of supply plans Utilisation of HDC non-operational land assets to increase supply and generate system savings (eg reduction in B&B spend. Improving infrastructure on developments to enhance liveability, including digital, environmental 	

				– flooding etc, energy use, health land and space for wildlife. Supporting positive transport choices, and community self-reliance.
<p>Wider Economic Environment – How to best position Huntingdonshire as an attractive place to do business</p>	<p>5. Enhanced infrastructure and liveability on developments</p>			
	<p>1. A Local Industrial Strategy for Cambridgeshire within which Huntingdonshire is prominent</p> <p>2. GVA (Gross Value Added) net increase</p> <p>3. Increase in business rates receipts and invest to accumulate utilisation thereof (subject to Govt regs)</p> <p>4. Increase average earnings and percentage earnings derived in Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire</p> <p>5. Opportunities to enhance the Councils industrial portfolio and Corporate Investment Strategy in facilitating, retaining and securing new business opportunities</p> <p>A package of ‘Deals’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HDC & Govt/CA - HDC and Local Councils - HDC and communities 	<p>Andy Moffat / Clive Mason</p> <p>CA Business Board / Company CEOs – reasons for locations choices and future workforce aspirations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of an Investment prospectus for Huntingdonshire - Input into a Local Industrial Strategy - Digital infrastructure and Connected Cambridgeshire roll-out across market towns - Better Business for All pilot initiative matching regulatory services to advice and promotion - Roads and rail infrastructure investment deal with Govt / CA - Business rates retention and utilisation of AW Enterprise Zone NNRD receipts - Role of strategic sites such as Alconbury Weald in delivering floor space and clusters - Sector analysis - what are the indicators of existing success and productivity. Sectors to nurture and attract. - Understanding locational advantages of Huntingdonshire and investment decisions of business leaders to stay/relocate here. - Scope and mechanisms for HDC interventions in infrastructure/redevelopment programmes 	

Ideas

Health – What are the issues facing the young and elderly populations of Huntingdonshire. How can HDC, either with partners or on its own initiative, assist with the health and well-being of residents in the District.

Evidence

Local Authority Health Profile 2018 published by Public Health England. We have three key indicators where we perform significantly worse than the national average:

- Killed and seriously injured on roads
- Alcohol-specific hospital stays (under 18s)
- Excess weight in adults (aged 18+)

Not significantly worse, but underperforming national average

- Hip fractures in older people (aged 65+)

We have a number of projects already underway or receiving support which are directly contributing to these outcomes (Ramsey Think Healthy / Live Healthy project).

Support for activity through our leisure centres and for community initiatives such as Park Run. With a new run supported to start in St Neots this year. One Leisure Active Lifestyles Team creating opportunities for social engagement, particularly ageing population, through its class programmes, particularly 'Right Start'

Homelessness – Investigating the links between homelessness and housing supply.

Finding triggers for homelessness. Discovering options and opportunities to reduce homelessness in Huntingdonshire.

A large amount of work is happening in this space already, as a key corporate priority. Our own net spend on Homelessness is has more than doubled since 2015/16. This is in line with national figures. Housing affordability is an issue locally. With private rentals being very limited within the rates that national benefits pay. Huntingdonshire's average house price increased by **36%** in four years from April 2014 and the average household would now need to borrow **7.1** times its income to purchase the average house based on median values.

Environment – What are the environmental (and lifestyle) quality issues facing Huntingdonshire,

Evidence

2036 Local Plan and associated studies, particularly Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Combined Authority strategies and CPIER report

Affordable Housing – Increasing quality of housing developments and increasing supply of Affordable/Social housing – specifically in the villages.

Wider Economic Environment – How to best position Huntingdonshire as an attractive place to do business