

## Further Issues and Options 2024

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## 1 Executive Summary

The purpose of a Local Plan is to set out a vision and policy framework for the future development of the district. It is expected to provide for enough new development to meet the needs of the district and to provide policies to guide that development. It will be used to judge planning applications against. Public engagement is a strong part of the process to make sure that the Local Plan reflects the needs and aspirations of local people and businesses.

### **This Further Issues and Options Engagement paper**

This document sets out options for a series of issues that are key to the future planning of Huntingdonshire. There are 11 topics with each chapter structured as:

- Introduction - to briefly explain the issue
- What you told us - a summary of what people told us on the 2023' consultation about the issue
- What is this about? - this gives context to the issue explaining our adopted policies, changes in national policy and guidance since they were agreed in 2019 and what any evidence we have so far is telling us. Some suggest potential pros and cons of an option
- What should we do? - this sets out the options that we think might be possible, and asks you to select an option or options from a list of choices on how we can address the issue through the Local Plan. Many also give you the chance to suggest other approaches if you think they could work well here too. Some contain a series of sub-issues where detailed opinions would be valuable to us. Some also have additional questions relating to the issue.

You don't have to read the whole document, please feel free to use the links below to jump straight to the bits you're interested in.

2 'Introduction' - this covers what we have to do, what we have done so far, explains this Further Issues and Options consultation, explains other parts of this consultation phase, lets you know how to respond to the consultation and tells you what we think the end date of the Local Plan Update should be.

3 'Local Plan Vision and Objectives' - this is about setting a vision which aims to achieve sustainable development by outlining what sort of place we want Huntingdonshire to be in the future. This will help set a clear direction for the Local Plan, and to ensure the vision is delivered it is supported by a series of objectives.

4 'A Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire' - this looks at how we can group our towns and villages into certain categories based on levels of services, size and function to create a hierarchy which can then be used to determine and develop planning policies in an area and helps to decide where new growth should be distributed.

5 'Approach to Employment and Economy' - this asks about the sort of businesses and jobs we should be looking to attract in Huntingdonshire, and how and where we should try to grow our local economy.

6 'Housing Figures and Requirement' - this looks a key role of the Local Plan which is to ensure it supports provision of enough homes to meet needs as having safe, secure and affordable homes is a basic necessity and providing enough homes is an important factor in creating sustainable communities and ensuring people have a high quality of life.

7 'Achieving Well Designed Places' - creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. This chapter has questions on design aspirations for the district and what to do about national development management policies if they are introduced.

8 'Growth Strategy Options' - this shows a series of different ways we could look to distribute growth around the district showing the broad development location, potential pros and cons and a visual representation (map) of the strategy.

# 1 Executive Summary

9 'Our Green and Blue Infrastructure' - balancing growth with nature and open space is important to support biodiversity, recreation, and landscape enhancement. Green infrastructure refers to areas such as parks, green space, and woodland. Blue infrastructure includes watercourses, rivers, ponds and lakes.

10 'The Approach to Climate Change' - this asks for opinions on how we can contribute to national objectives to reduce our carbon emissions and how ambitious we should be looking at aspects such as decarbonisation ambitions, renewable energy and energy efficiency of new buildings.

11 'Tackling Flooding and Water' - Huntingdonshire sits within the driest region in the country, the Rivers Great Ouse, Nene and Kym run through the district and Grafham Water Reservoir plays an important role in the supply of water to our district and the surrounding areas. Some areas of Huntingdonshire located in the Fens are below sea level. With these key issues and the effects of climate change it is important that we understand the impact of flooding, water supply, water quality and wastewater treatment in our district.

12 'Housing Tenures and Housing Mix' - housing is about more than just numbers - this chapter looks at the choices around homes for sale and rent and how we meet the needs of particular groups within our community including older people and Gypsies and Travellers.

13 'Transport and Connectivity' - the Council has a limited role in planning for transport and travel infrastructure as most is done by higher level organisations but this explores how we can contribute to achieving higher level ambitions such as reducing the need to travel and promoting access to active travel infrastructure.

14 'Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives' - this sets out lists of some the detailed suggestions for possible objectives to help you decide your choices for the Local Plan Vision and Objectives

## Site Assessments

Sitting alongside this consultation document are others which give you the chance to look at our assessments of all the sites that have been put forward to us for possible allocation in the Local Plan Update.

The Call for Sites 2023 along with our research on other known potential development sites generated around 400 sites to consider. An Ongoing Call for Sites followed on from this to ensure people continued to have the opportunity to promote sites throughout early preparation of the Local Plan Update to reduce the number of sites being submitted late on in the process.

All the sites are assessed through a 2 stage approach:

1. Land Availability Assessment - which contains individual assessments of each site
2. Sustainability Appraisal - the appendices contain detailed assessment of each site against the sustainability objectives

Outcomes of both assessments are combined in the Land Availability Assessment. These provide a summary of whether the site is considered potentially appropriate for development, and if so for what uses and how much development the site could take.

## 2 Introduction

### What we have to do

The purpose of a Local Plan is to set out a vision and policy framework for the future development of the district. It is expected to provide for enough new development to meet the needs of the district and to provide policies to guide that development and be used to judge planning applications against. Public engagement is a strong part of the process to make sure that the Local Plan reflects the needs and aspirations of local people and businesses.

The Local Plan process is heavily shaped by national legislation and government policy. We have to follow set processes when preparing a Local Plan and all the policies we put in it must be consistent with national planning rules. There is a legal requirement for the Council to prepare a Local Plan for Huntingdonshire and to review it every 5 years.

We have to think about the wider area beyond Huntingdonshire to make sure that what we do here works well with the surrounding area in economic, social and environmental terms. We work with neighbouring local authorities, infrastructure and service providers and other partners to make sure that the growth and environmental aspirations of our Local Plan and be achieved. We have to meet a legal test known as the Duty to Cooperate. This means we have to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with our neighbouring authorities over matters which affect the wider area such as strategic infrastructure, healthcare and development proposals that are near authority boundaries.

Before any local plan is finalised it goes through an 'examination in public' where an independent Planning Inspector tests it in accordance with paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to see if it is:

- Positively prepared - it provides a strategy which meets the area's needs such as for housing and employment
- Justified - it contains an appropriate strategy after looking at reasonable alternatives and is based on proportionate evidence

- Effective - the policies and site allocations are deliverable over the lifetime of the plan
- Consistent with national policy - it will enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and other relevant statements of national planning policy

Significant changes to the plan-making system are proposed but the details of what these will be and when they will be brought in are uncertain. The aim of these is to make preparation of local plans significantly quicker while giving local people control over what is built and where. Alongside this the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) allows for change and introduced the prospect of national policies being brought in for Development Management to influence decisions on planning applications. These would be prepared at national government level to cover nationally important issues and operate alongside the Local Plan. Local plan policies will focus just on locally important issues. The nature and level of detail in the national Development Management policies is as yet unknown, or even if they will now be introduced. If they are not, we will review the adopted Development Management policies against the latest NPPF and other legislation and amend those that are no longer aligned. Consequently, this phase of engagement focuses more on key strategic policy aspects with some more detailed elements that will help feed into the more locally specific elements of Development Management policies.



## 2 Introduction

Key elements of the NPPF (December 2023 version) which will shape the Local Plan Update are set out in boxes below.

### NPPF paragraph 11

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas

### NPPF paragraph 16

Plans should:

- a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
- b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;
- c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;

### NPPF paragraph 20

Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places (to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking), and make sufficient provision for:

- a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

### NPPF paragraph 22

Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure.

There are many opportunities to get involved in preparation of the Local Plan update. Our intention is to use the outcomes of this phase of public engagement to shape our preferred policies and site allocations. These will then be published for public engagement again as a full draft of our next Local Plan. After the 'Preferred

Options Local Plan' we will again look at all the comments made and prepare an updated Local Plan that we will ask for formal representations on that will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate for formal consideration by an independent Planning Inspector through a public examination process.

### What we have done so far

After a review of the policies and site allocations in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 the decision was made at the Council's Cabinet meeting on 24/01/2024 to start work on an update to ensure our local plan reflects up-to-date issues and approaches and is compliant with the latest national policy. During the spring of 2023 we consulted on the following:

- **Statement of Community Involvement 2023** - which set out how the Council will engage on planning related matters.
- **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2023** - which gives baseline information for Huntingdonshire to inform the development of sustainability objectives to test the Local Plan against.
- **Draft Settlement Hierarchy Methodology** - which set out how we will assess the sustainability of settlements and will aid in the decision-making on their suitability for future growth in the next Local Plan
- **Draft Land Availability Assessment Methodology** - which set out how we will consider potential sites that have been put forward for potential allocation in the Local Plan
- A **Call for Sites** - which asked for details of sites that people wanted to have considered for allocation for residential, commercial, infrastructure and open space uses
- **Issues Engagement Paper** - this highlighted known issues in the district and asked for opinions on topics including responding to the climate crisis, enhancing the natural environment, supporting places, meeting housing needs for all, promoting a prosperous economy, developing high quality sustainable communities with supporting infrastructure, and distributing new growth.

- **Issues Engagement Paper Summary** - this gave a summary of the Issues Engagement Paper which highlighted known issues in the district and asked for opinions on topics including responding to the climate crisis, enhancing the natural environment, supporting places, meeting housing needs for all, promoting a prosperous economy, developing high quality sustainable communities with supporting infrastructure, and distributing new growth.
- **Issues Easy Read Version** - this explained what the next Local Plan could do in a very short form. The survey form asked 12 questions. The questions aimed to find out what is most important to respondents about planning for Huntingdonshire's future.

A report called Statement of Consultation for the Local Plan Update accompanies this public consultation. It provides summaries of the issues raised and how the responses have been taken into account in preparation of this Further Issues and Options document. The Statement of Consultation is an ongoing document and will be updated at each stage of the Local Plan Update's preparation.

### This Further Issues and Options Consultation

This document sets out options for a series of issues that are key to the future planning of Huntingdonshire. Before we write a full draft of the Local Plan Update which will include detailed policy wording and proposed site allocations, we would like your views on the options we are suggesting or any other options that you would like to put forward.

The main issues are structured as:

- Introduction - to briefly explain the issue
- What you told us - a summary of the points raised in 2023's Issues Engagement Papers

## 2 Introduction

- What is this about? - a discussion of our adopted policies, changes in national policy and guidance since they were agreed in 2019 and what any evidence we have so far is telling us
- What should we do? - this sets out the options that we think might be possible and asks for your opinions on them and gives you the chance to suggest other approaches if you think they could work well here too. Some contain a series of sub-issues where detailed opinions would be valuable to us.

If you think we have missed a key issue please let us know.

### Other parts of this consultation

This Further Issues and Options paper is only one part of this current consultation. Please take the time to look at and respond to other elements where they are of interest to you.

### Site Assessments

The Local Plan sets out a strategy for development in the district over certain period, including housing and job growth figures. To ensure the growth targets are met, new land for employment, housing and other uses needs to be supplied. The Local Plan can allocate sites for development from available land, stating the use, criteria required for the site to be successful and other important considerations.

The Call for Sites 2023 along with our research on other known potential development sites generated around 400 sites to consider. An Ongoing Call for Sites followed on from this to ensure people continued to have the opportunity to promote sites throughout early preparation of the Local Plan Update to reduce the number of sites being submitted late on in the process.

All the sites are assessed through a 2 stage approach:

1. Land Availability Assessment - which contains individual assessments of each site
2. Sustainability Appraisal - the appendices contain detailed assessment of each site against the sustainability objectives

### Land Availability Assessment

**2.1** Land Availability Assessments follow a five stage process to assess a site:

- Fundamental constraints such as being on a flood plain or being grade 1 best and most versatile agricultural land
- Looking at the context, constraints and potential suitability
- Checking a site is available for development without legal or ownership constraints
- Considering the achievability in terms of issues that may impact on costs, layout, capacity and certainty of delivering development
- Thinking about whether development of a site could be delivered and if so when

### Sustainability Appraisal

The Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process for assessing the extent to which the emerging plan will help to achieve sustainable development. It is an opportunity to consider ways by which the plan can contribute to improvements in economic, environmental and social conditions, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the plan might otherwise have. Hence, the Sustainability Appraisal has 16 'Sustainability Objectives' including for example, achieving the districts target of zero carbon emissions by 2040. The site is scored based on how it might contribute to this overall objective using decision aiding questions. The purpose of this stage is to appraise the plan objectives and options to propose measures for alleviating adverse effects and maximise potential benefits.



## Evidence documents

We need evidence to help us shape many of the technical parts of the Local Plan Update. Some of these we prepare within the Council, others we commission technical specialists and for some we draw on strategies and documents prepared by other organisations. Not all evidence documents are available at this stage as some are dependent on outcomes from this engagement phase and all need to be as up-to-date as possible when we submit the Local Plan Update to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent Planning Inspector. All evidence documents that are available can be seen on our consultation portal on the supporting documents section.

Newly prepared evidence includes:

- Sustainability of Settlements - this scores all towns and villages in Huntingdonshire against a series of services and facilities to judge how sustainable they are. Its main purpose is to help develop a settlement hierarchy to shape the future growth strategy for the district.
- Integrated Water Management Strategy - this contains two reports comprising the level 1 strategic flood risk assessment and the stage 1 water cycle study which will help focus development away from areas of flood risk, minimise the impact of development on flooding and support the management of water supplies and disposal.
- Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople, Boat dwellers and other Caravan dwellers Accommodation Assessment - this assesses the level and types of need for new pitches, plots and moorings for people seeking these types of accommodation.
- Climate change - this is addressed in a series of 6 documents which cover:
  - The role of the Local Plan Update in responding to climate change
  - Position statement and analysis of baseline and forecast future emissions

- The contribution of sustainable design to achieving net zero carbon
- Assessment of spatial strategy options
- Infrastructure and renewable energy
- Offsetting and sequestering emissions

## How to respond to this consultation

**We strongly encourage residents, businesses, local organisations and interest groups to get involved now rather than wait for a planning application to come in for development and then object to it when the principle of the proposal has already been agreed through the Local Plan and there are only the details left to influence.**

The Consultation Paper was assessed by Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) Panel on **XXX 2024 before being approved for consultation at Cabinet on XXX 2024**. Engagement opportunities on the Consultation Paper are available from: **XXX 2024 to XXX 2024**.

Comments can be made via the Council's online consultation portal at: <https://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/kse> There is a set of 'FAQs' which explain how to register if you are new to the system and how to reset your password if you need a reminder of it.

Each document being consulted on is shown in a box which gives the start and finish dates for the public engagement period. These are followed by two green buttons to help you get to the right part of the consultation portal:

**LEARN MORE**

**RESPOND**

1) The '**Learn more**' button takes you to a page showing the following choices:

## 2 Introduction

### About This Consultation

PROPOSAL

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

- Selecting 'About this consultation' will take you to a page with information about the consultation and links to any supporting documents.
- Selecting 'Proposal' will allow you to scroll through and read the consultation document.
- Selecting 'What people say' will allow you to see the comments that people have made on each section, option or question.

2) The '**Respond**' button takes you a page asking you to either login or, if you haven't used the system before, to register as a user. You can then navigate the document using the chapter list down the left hand side to take you to the section you are interested in. Then you will be able to enter your comment on that section/ option/ question.

### Where to see a paper copy

Printed copies are available to view at: Customer Services Centre, Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. Opening hours are: Monday to Thursday 8:45 to 17:00 and Friday 8:45 to 16:30 (excluding Bank Holidays). Printed copies will also be available to view in all [libraries](#) in Huntingdonshire and on the mobile library; details of the dates and times of routes can be found at [mobile library stops](#)

Queries can be directed to Planning Policy by:

- **Email:** [local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
- **Telephone:** 01480 388424
- **Post:** Planning Policy, Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN
- **Social media:** [Huntingdonshire DC](#) | [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) | [Linktree](#)

Following the close of consultation we will look at all the responses use them to help write the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan Update. This will include complete draft policies and site specific proposed development allocations.

## End date of the Local Plan Update

A key element of preparing a Local Plan update is deciding how long it should run for. The current Local Plan has a plan period of 2011 to 2036. It is proposed to use 2021 as the base date for this Local Plan as this will coincide with the Census 2021 which forms a robust source of evidence on many aspects of population, housing, health and employment.

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you how far into the future the plan period should be for the updated Local Plan, the responses have been summarised as follows:

- Approximately 12% of respondents said the end date of the local plan should be 2043 - the shortest time likely to be possible and still retain 15 years lifespan after adoption
- Approximately 51% of respondents said the end date of the local plan should be 2046 - retaining 15 years lifespan after adoption and allowing flexibility to respond to national changes in the planning system
- Approximately 16% of respondents said the end date of the local plan should be 2050 - aligning the Local Plan update with the national target date for achieving net zero
- Other dates ranged between 2052 to 2060
- Many noted that a 30 year plan would help to encompass the delivery of new settlements or strategic sites
- Some encouraged the vision of the local plan to look 30 years ahead regardless of the end date

### Question 1

#### End date of the Local Plan Update

An end date of 2046 was the most popular choice last year. Do you agree with this?  
If you would prefer a different date please tell us what you think it should be.

## 3 Local Plan Vision and Objectives

### 3 Local Plan Vision and Objectives

#### Introduction

The fundamental basis for planning policy is set out in the National Planning Framework (December 2023) which states in paragraph 7:

'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations –including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.'

To contribute towards truly sustainable development in Huntingdonshire the Local Plan Update's Vision needs to send a clear message on the sort of place we want Huntingdonshire to be in the future.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked for your thoughts on what the vision and objectives should be. Suggestions were for:

##### The vision to include reference to:

- The delivery of housing and affordable housing, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain, employment land, health services and other community needs, infrastructure, high quality development and sustainable transport
- Reflect the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy
- A positive vision for the future of each area, consideration of the four market towns.
- Supporting development (homes and businesses) in locations which will deliver benefits that will enhance the sustainability of existing communities
- Provision of homes that meet everyone's needs
- Becoming a leader in high quality, affordable housing within integrated communities
- Protecting, preserving, providing and enhancing existing green spaces, landscape and countryside for the public and wildlife to enjoy in harmony
- Working towards achieving net carbon zero by 2050, mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting sustainable living
- Facilitating opportunities for people to pursue a healthy lifestyle and have a high quality of life
- Taking advantage of new strategic infrastructure
- Ensuring the natural environment is well looked after

## Local Plan Vision and Objectives 3

### The objectives to include:

- Objectives from Huntingdonshire Corporate Plan 2023- 2028 (March 2023) and Place Strategy
- Delivering sufficient new homes / meeting housing need
- Delivering a balanced housing mix and affordable housing
- Supporting minor developments
- Sustainability
- Protecting small settlements and rural character
- Addressing climate change – mitigation and adaption / net carbon zero by 2050
- Prioritising education
- Locating growth along public transport corridors e.g. the busway / promoting sustainable movement and travel
- Investing in appropriate infrastructure and services to support growth
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Protecting local green spaces and enhancing green and blue spaces enhancing and providing new areas for biodiversity
- Current local plan objectives
- Water related objectives around land drainage, water level and flood risk management, water resources/water neutrality, environmental conservation and enhancement, navigation water quality/nutrient neutrality.
- Providing solutions for farming
- Promoting healthy living and wellbeing

### What is this about?

The Local Plan's Vision statement is a key element of a Local Plan. Its role is to set a clear direction for the Local Plan to provide a framework on which all the policies and proposals are built such that collectively they will help to deliver the vision for Huntingdonshire. It will be supported by a series of strategic objectives which are intended to help with the delivery of the Vision.

Together the Vision and Strategic Objectives will need to try to balance out the inherent conflicts that arise from new development: the Council's ambitions for growth, challenging net zero carbon aspirations and environmental improvements and improving people's quality of life and well-being. They will need to be complementary to each other rather than considered in isolation. Collectively the Vision, all the Strategic Objectives and the Local Plan policies that follow on from them will need to deliver new development that achieves environmental, social and economic benefits for Huntingdonshire.

### Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 vision:

By 2036 Huntingdonshire's physical environment will support the health and wellbeing of all its residents, by:			
Supporting a diverse, thriving economy	Providing sufficient infrastructure to support healthy communities	Meeting the needs of a changing population	Working with our climate, landscape and heritage

This vision is supported by 25 objectives based on the 4 categories in the second row. These are set out in Appendix 1 for reference with a few examples below.

To maintain a good supply of suitable land for growth in sustainable locations and focusing on previously developed land, offering sites of a variety of sizes and types to meet a range of market demands.

### 3 Local Plan Vision and Objectives

To enhance the role of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey's town centres helping them to adapt to modern retail trends and focusing commercial developments towards the most accessible locations.

To promote attractive, safe and distinctive residential neighbourhoods in which people can meet their day-to-day social, health, educational, recreational and convenience shopping requirements with access to sustainable transport to meet other needs.

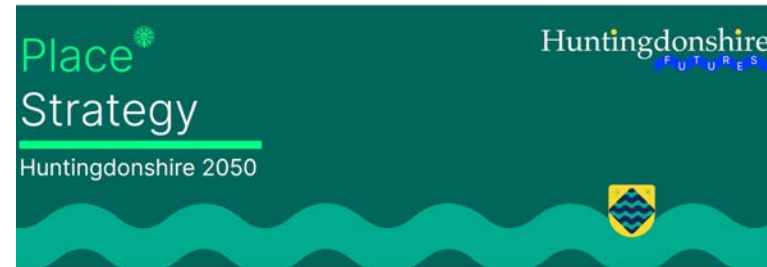
To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's historic environment, characteristic landscapes, natural habitats and biodiversity.

#### Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy

One of the main roles of the Local Plan Update is to help deliver the aspirations of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy. This was prepared through 2022 and early 2023 based on extensive engagement with local residents, organisations and community service providers. Firstly it sought to establish understanding of local people's aspirations for the future of Huntingdonshire, on the themes of people, place, economy, and the environment, then it explored priorities for change and what actions could be taken to deliver it. The Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy (2023) sets out a shared vision for Huntingdonshire in 2050 which seeks to shape bold, long term plans and priorities for the district. It is structured around 5 core elements, referred to as journeys:

- Pride in place
- Inclusive economy
- Health embedded
- Environmental innovation
- Travel transformed

The Local Plan Update is one of many delivery mechanisms that will help to achieve these. The aspirations of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and the Corporate Plan to 2028 can work in tandem to help shape the Vision and Objectives of the Local Plan update so that in turn it can contribute to delivery of these high level aspirations.



Each of these is supported by 5 'pathways' setting out more detailed priorities which will need different actions to achieve their aspirations and involve a wide range of people and organisations in their delivery. Many aspects that are raised in the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy will involve land use planning in their achievement and the Local Plan Update's vision, objectives and the supporting policies may assist in their delivery. All based on the question 'What if?', the most clearly related pathways include:

- Our homes responded to our needs
- We built up the resilience of our communities
- Our high streets were the centre of social and cultural life
- We created a place where our businesses could flourish
- It was easier to live healthily
- This was a vibrant place for children and young people
- Zero carbon became the norm
- Our natural assets inspired a new infrastructure
- All our energy was produced within the district
- The car wasn't the first choice of transport

The Local Plan Update's strategy, allocations and policies will make a significant contribution to delivering the ambitions of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy.

## Local Plan Vision and Objectives 3

Our Corporate Plan to 2028 aims to make sure Huntingdonshire is a place where people can thrive. It is made up of three key priorities.



### What should we do?

We have listened to what you said both in shaping the Huntingdonshire Future's Place Strategy and in response to the Issues engagement papers of 2023. We are now asking you to help us to shape the Vision and Objectives for Huntingdonshire for the next few decades building on the priorities that you have already told us about. We have set out some options below and would like to know what you think.

#### The Vision

##### Options - The Vision

##### **Should we...**

*(Please pick one option.)*

##### **Option A: Have a Vision based strongly on the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and the Corporate Plan to 2028:**

'By 2046 Huntingdonshire will be a place which people take pride in, where the economy is inclusive of everyone, health and happiness are highly valued, our local landscapes are protected and enhanced with environmental innovation welcomed, and travel is transformed to focus on transitioning away from cars.'

##### **Option B: Have a Vision of a better future achieved through ambitious climate action and a just transition<sup>(1)</sup> towards more social and economic equity.**

'By 2046 Huntingdonshire will be a place where our decisions about land use and planning have helped enable lasting benefits for nature and climate, enhanced the well-being of our residents and have facilitated a just transition towards a more sustainable economy.'

### 3 Local Plan Vision and Objectives

**Option C: Retain the current Vision with minor amendments:**

By 2046 Huntingdonshire's physical environment will support the health and wellbeing of all its residents, by:				
Supporting a diverse and thriving economy	Providing sufficient infrastructure to support vibrant, inclusive communities	Accelerating our climate change response actions	Meeting our changing population's needs	Protecting and enhancing our landscape and heritage

**Option D: Have a Vision describing how Huntingdonshire intends to evolve focused on the three strands of economic, social and environmental sustainability:**

'Huntingdonshire to be a place where high quality growth enhances our communities and supports sustainable living and a high quality of life, balanced with protecting and enhancing our landscape and open spaces for the benefit of people and nature.'

**Option E: Consider an alternative Vision.**

Please let us know what it should be.

**The Objectives**

Suggested lists of detailed objectives are set out in Appendix 1 due to their length. Options are presented for different sets of objectives to support each Vision option. Please choose whether there is a particular group of objectives which you prefer or pick any individual suggested objectives that you support.

**Options - The Objectives**

**Should we...**

(Please choose whether there is a particular group of objectives which you prefer or pick any individual suggested objectives that you support)

**Option A** - The objectives build on Vision Option A and are **shaped by the key 'pathways'** that support the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy journeys:

**Option B** - The objectives build on Vision Option B and **aim to help achieve a better future through a just transition towards ambitious climate action.**

**Option C** - **Minor amendments to the current list** of 25 objectives

**Option D** - The objectives build on Vision Option D and are **focused on the three strands of economic, social and environmental sustainability:**

**Option E** - **Consider alternative objectives** - Please suggest any that you think would be appropriate.



## A Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire

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### 4 A Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire

#### Introduction

A settlement hierarchy is a way of grouping settlements into certain categories, for example a hierarchy may include cities, towns, villages and hamlets, each of which will be of differing size, have different levels of services and facilities and different functions. This hierarchy of settlements can then be used to determine and develop planning policies which can set out what is and is not acceptable in planning terms for an area and provide a guide for acceptable locations for the distribution of new growth. The policies included in the local plan can then be used to assess planning applications.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you where in Huntingdonshire future growth should be focussed. Suggestions were for:

- Proportionate growth of existing settlements/ sustainable villages / small to medium sites to help protect and enhance existing facilities and services
- Densification of/ focus around existing market towns where existing infrastructure and employment is located
- Densification/expansion of existing urban areas / urban extensions
- Putting development in locations that are near/along public transport corridors to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health
- Continuing with the current local plan approach
- A combination of the identified development scenarios in the [Issues consultation document](#) (chapter 9)
- Focussing on areas with good services and facilities or where growth could help retain services.
- Avoid developing in small rural villages/hamlets and the countryside especially where there are no services and facilities to support growth

#### What is this about?

In 2023 we consulted on a methodology to assess the sustainability of our settlements. After amending the methodology from comments received we used this to identify what services and facilities were available in our towns, villages and hamlets and how sustainable they are in terms of meeting the needs of our communities. You can find the full details and outcomes for each place in our [Sustainability of Settlements](#) document.

## 4 A Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire

We looked at all places in Huntingdonshire with 30 or more homes using the detailed methodology. We also did a basic assessment of each named settlement with fewer than 30 homes. The Sustainability of Settlements 2023 showed that our top 12 most sustainable settlements were: Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Yaxley, Godmanchester, Brampton, Ramsey, Little Paxton, Sawtry, Fenstanton, Houghton and Wyton and Farcet.

The methodology produced scores for all the indicators shown in the table below. These were weighted to show whether they are used by most of the population or some of the population and whether they are used occasionally or frequently.

Indicator	Usage	Frequency
H1 - Time taken to an accident and emergency department from settlement by car	Most of the population	Occasionally
H2 - Access to and capacity of GP surgeries for settlement	Most of the population	Occasionally
E1 - Access to and capacity of catchment primary school(s) for settlement	Some of the population	Frequently
E2 - Access to and capacity of catchment secondary school(s) for settlement	Some of the population	Frequently
RS1 - Presence of foodstore by type	Most of the population	Frequently
RS2 - Number of other shops and services in settlement	Most of the population	Occasionally
CF1 - Cultural and community meeting places	Some of the population	Occasionally
CF2 - Small-scale social meeting places	Some of the population	Occasionally
CF3 - Diversity of formal indoor and outdoor sports facilities	Some of the population	Frequently
PT1 - Frequency of Bus Service	Some of the population	Frequently
PT 2 - Presence of Railway Station	Most of the population	Occasionally
C1 - Coverage of broadband service across a settlement	Most of the population	Frequently
C2 - Number of service providers that provide 'good' indoor 4G voice coverage in settlement	Most of the population	Frequently
EM 1 - Access to employment	Most of the population	Frequently

## A Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire

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This work can help us to identify the most sustainable places to locate new homes and jobs and will be one part of the evidence influencing the growth strategy option that we take along with technical evidence on issues such as flood risk, transport infrastructure, environmental constraints and your comments on this document.

In [Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036](#) the current settlement hierarchy is set out in policy 'LP2 Strategy for Development'. It groups Huntingdonshire's settlements as follows.

- **Spatial Planning Areas:** Huntingdon including Brampton and Godmanchester, St Neots including Little Paxton, St Ives including parts of surrounding parishes in the contiguous built-up area, Ramsey including Bury
- **Key Service Centres:** Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys, and Yaxley
- **Small Settlements:** all other villages containing 30 or more homes
- **The Countryside:** All land outside of these is considered to be the countryside including hamlets of less than 30 homes, small clusters and individual properties

The majority of housing and employment growth (75%) is focussed within the Spatial Planning Areas as these were considered the most sustainable locations. Approximately 25% is directed to Key Service Centres and Small Settlements. Specific sites for new development were allocated in the Spatial Planning Areas and Key Services. Development in Small Settlements was supported through policy criteria if the amount and location of growth proposed was considered sustainable. Development in the Countryside was limited to specific opportunities such as supporting the rural economy so as to protect the best agricultural land and the landscape.

### What should we do?

We are now asking you to input into the settlement hierarchy which will be included in the next local plan. The settlement hierarchy will help to determine which locations growth may be directed to and how much. We will also use the settlement hierarchy to outline what may or may not be acceptable in these areas. We have set some options below and would like to know what you think.

**Note:** The Sustainability of Settlements outcomes can be found [here](#).

#### Options - Settlement Hierarchy

##### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

*Options A to D relate to the whole Settlement Hierarchy.*

**Option A** - Keep the existing settlement hierarchy of Spatial Planning Areas, Key Service Centres, Small Settlements and Countryside with the same list of settlements in each

**Option B** - Keep the current categories in the existing settlement hierarchy but update the settlements included in the categories based on their current sustainability (informed by the Sustainability of Settlements outcomes)

**Option C** - Strictly reflect the Sustainability of Settlements scoring outcomes of individual settlements and apply a categorisation based on a preferred number of groupings

**Option D** - Remove the category of Spatial Planning Areas and group each settlement based on its individual merits

## 4 A Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire

*Options E to I relate to specific elements of the Settlement Hierarchy.*

**Option E** - Put Huntingdon and St Neots in a higher category on their own, reflecting their higher level of services (with or without their associated other SPA settlements)

**Option F** - Have the four market towns of Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey as the highest category in the settlement hierarchy so as to direct most growth to these areas.

**Option G** - Replace the Key Service Centres and Small Settlements categories with 3 categories to reflect the significant variation in levels of services and facilities (informed by the Sustainability of Settlements outcomes)

**Option H** - Recognise clusters of villages which benefit from shared services or facilities and group them together as one 'settlement'.

**Option I** - Move less or unsustainable small settlements into a hamlets and/or countryside category

**Option J** - Consider an alternative option. Please let us know.



## 5 Approach to Employment and Economy

### Introduction

We need to think about our approach to employment and the economy, how much employment growth is needed and what we want the district to look like in the future. Our Issues Engagement consultation held between April and July 2023 raised a number of issues relating to retail and town centres, the rural economy, logistics and distribution and the green economy. We have taken these comments on board and will be gathering evidence and investigating our approach to these issues. This chapter therefore focuses on more of our strategic economic priorities and asks for your opinions on these options moving forward.



### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked for your thoughts on employment and the economy. Suggestions were for:

- Requiring new business to be sustainable contributing towards net zero
- Allowing space for businesses to grow
- Understanding the impact and influence of Cambridge and Peterborough on the local economy.
- Supporting for the green economy, jobs and logistics
- More sites for logistics and distribution especially along major roads such as the A1 and A14.
- Logistics and distribution will have a negative impact on transport infrastructure and pollution (especially in villages) and will produce minimal jobs with little opportunity for upskilling.
- Support small businesses and start-ups.
- Protection and enhancement of town centres, independent shops and retail sector, provide policies that are flexible, adapt to market conditions and increase employment opportunities
- Ensure appropriate infrastructure to support increased working from home and opportunities for co-working facilities.
- Support for the rural economy, farm diversification and rural business hubs.
- Protection of agricultural land to ensure food security.
- Encourage and promote the small scale rural tourist economy focussed on nature and heritage assets.
- Create employment sites locations which meet the emerging sectors' demands easily accessible by road, active travel and public transport.
- Support and encourage specific sectors including advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, hi-tech, life sciences, health, construction/ housebuilding, creative industry, leisure

## 5 Approach to Employment and Economy

### What is this about?

The Local Plan can influence the local economy and employment in the district number of ways, it can allocate sites for development, set requirements for new developments and buildings and establish what type of development is considered acceptable or unacceptable and in what locations. Local Plans can identify the type and use class of business that they would like to see in the district, they can encourage specific sectors in specific locations. These requirements would need to be supported by identifying the use class proposed and the criteria that planning applications will be assessed on, robust evidence would be required to justify these decisions. An example of this from our current is Local Plan Policy *LP18 Established Employment Areas* which supports class 'B uses' (employment uses) within our Established Employment Areas (EEA) unless it can be demonstrated that other specific criteria are met such as being compatible with the existing employment use. These [B uses](#) included general industrial uses (B2), storage or distribution (B8), offices (B1a), research and development of products or processes (B1b) and industrial processes (B1c). In 2020 the categorisation of these uses were amended and the B1 uses were moved into a new [Category E - Commercial, Business and Service](#) it includes but is not limited to uses such as retail, professional services, sport, recreation and fitness, medical and health services, nurseries and creches.

The NPPF identifies that planning policies should help create the environment *"in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt."*, this means an element of flexibility within the policies may be required to meet changing market conditions. Local Plans should also look at and assess local business needs and wider opportunities for development to help the district to *"build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future."*

Our current local plan includes policies on the number of jobs the plan makes provision for, preferred locations for business development and the identification, protection and expansion of Established Employment Areas, including appropriate uses. There are 37 [EEAs](#) dispersed across 20 settlements around the district. It also includes a policy to promote a vibrant rural economy in the countryside and

identifies acceptable uses. Alconbury Enterprise Zone also provides opportunities for investment and the economy with a potential for at least 290,000sqm of business floorspace.

The NPPF says that planning policies should have regard to Local Industrial Strategies, other local policies for economic development and regeneration. This means that we will need to understand the ambitions of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Industrial Strategy, aims of the Oxford to Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership, Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and our own future Economic Growth Strategies. We will need to assess and test what this means for us and how and if these ambitions can be achieved through evidence.

The [Oxford to Cambridge pan-Regional Partnership](#) is working to draw investment opportunities along the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, with a key focus on knowledge intensive businesses, research and development and collaboration networks. The East West rail proposal connects Oxford, Cambridge and areas in the region with the potential to facilitate growth and productivity gains.

The [Local Industrial Strategy](#) identifies 3 sub-economies within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough focussed on Peterborough, Greater Cambridge and the Fens, Huntingdonshire is located within all three sub-economies meaning it has the potential to support and benefit from all three. The key priority sectors were identified as life sciences, digital and information technologies (including artificial intelligence), advanced manufacturing and materials and agri-tech. These are complimented by supporting sectors such as logistics, health and social care, education, visitor economy and business tourism, and construction.

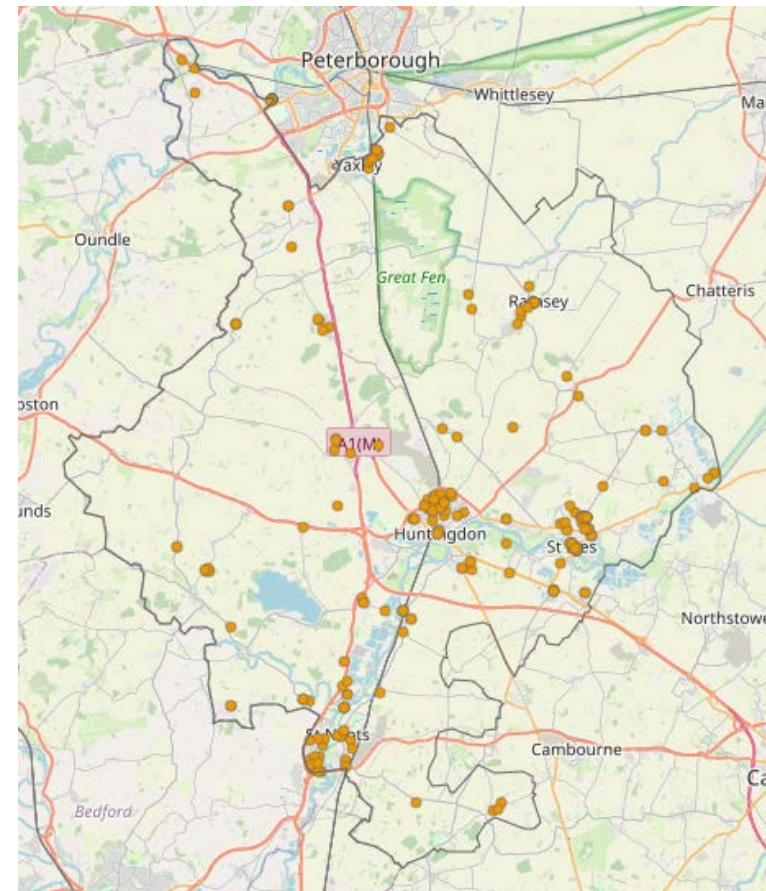
The [Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy](#) created a shared vision on what Huntingdonshire should be like by 2050 with a clear path or 'journeys' relating to inclusive economy, and environmental innovation including the aim to create an environment where businesses can prosper including start ups and established industries. It looks towards securing the right workspaces to respond to business needs including flexible workspaces, circular economy principles for new developments, clusters, hybrid working, innovative green R&D and energy, warehousing and production facilities with easy distribution access, accessible by public transport and situated at strategic locations.

A refresh of our economic growth strategy will look towards building on these principles and target sectors to establish local growth and priority areas to complement and unlock our economic potential within the district.

Industry cluster mapping undertaken by our economic development team looked at the location of businesses in our district based on sector such as advanced manufacturing, life science, knowledge intensive industries, wholesale/retail distribution, business services, construction and utilities, I.T., transport and travel.

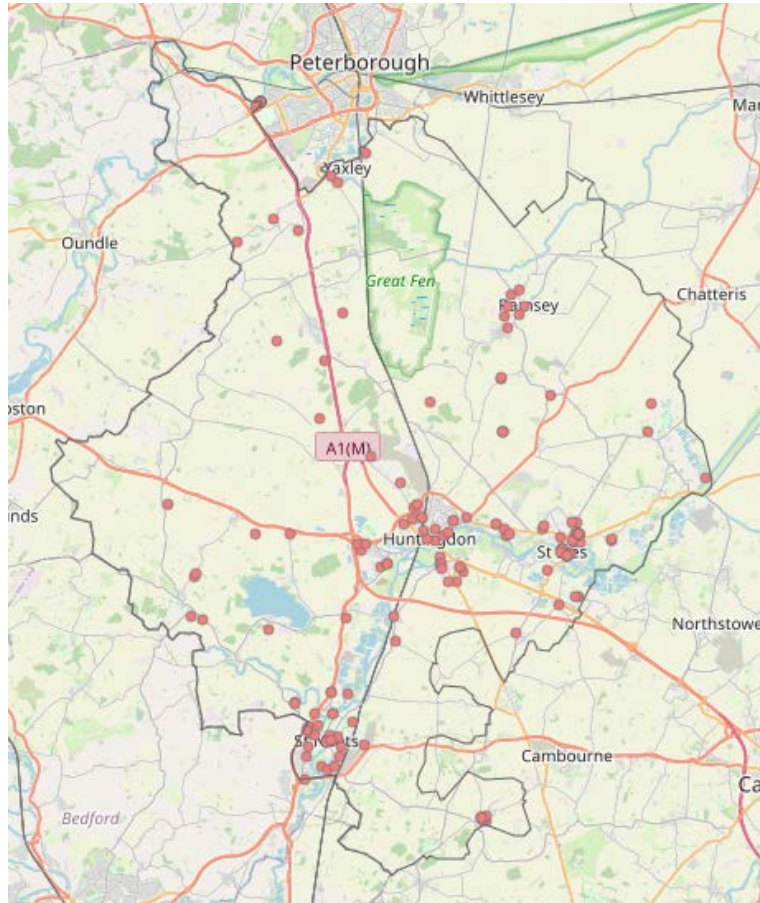
The sector mapping shows that a large proportion of business activity occurs in the main economic centres in the district, namely Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots and key service centres/ larger settlements. Advanced manufacturing/ manufacturing is clustered within Established Employment Areas and town centres, and strategically located along major roads such as the A1. In addition, relative to scale/ population size, the density of manufacturing businesses in the north of the district is greater, particularly in Yaxley, which could be due to its relationship with Peterborough and the A1. The knowledge intensive sector shows a higher density of businesses in southern/ central Huntingdonshire and a similar trend is demonstrated within the life science sector, particularly St Ives where there is clustering within and surrounding Compass Business Park potentially benefiting from being in proximity to Cambridge. <sup>(2)</sup>

### Advanced Manufacturing Industries

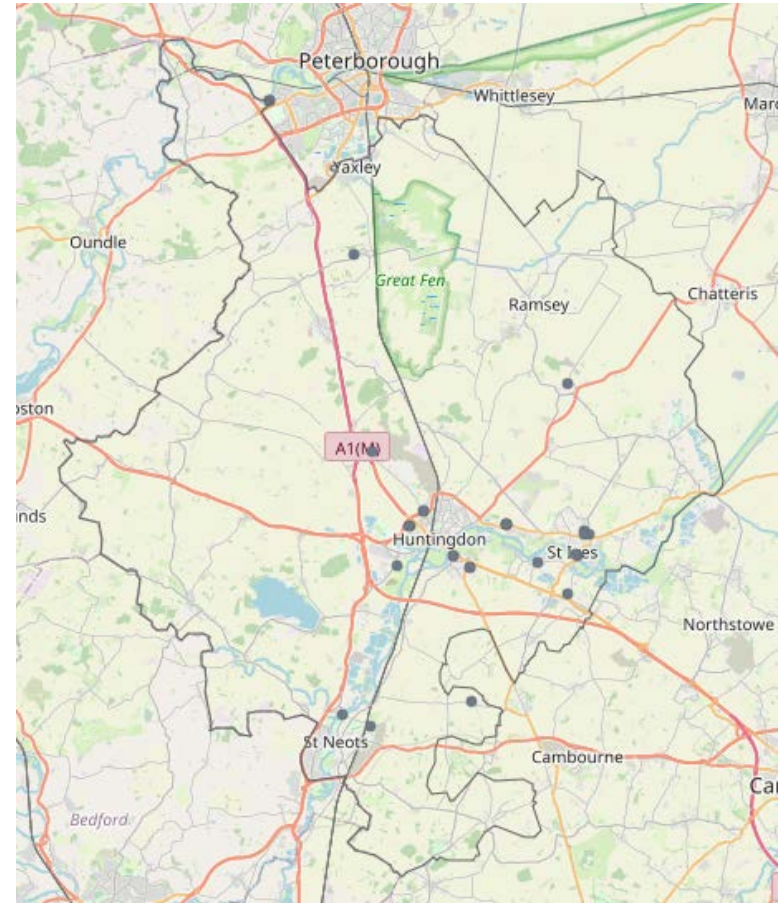


# 5 Approach to Employment and Economy

**Knowledge Intensive Industries**



**Life Science Industries**








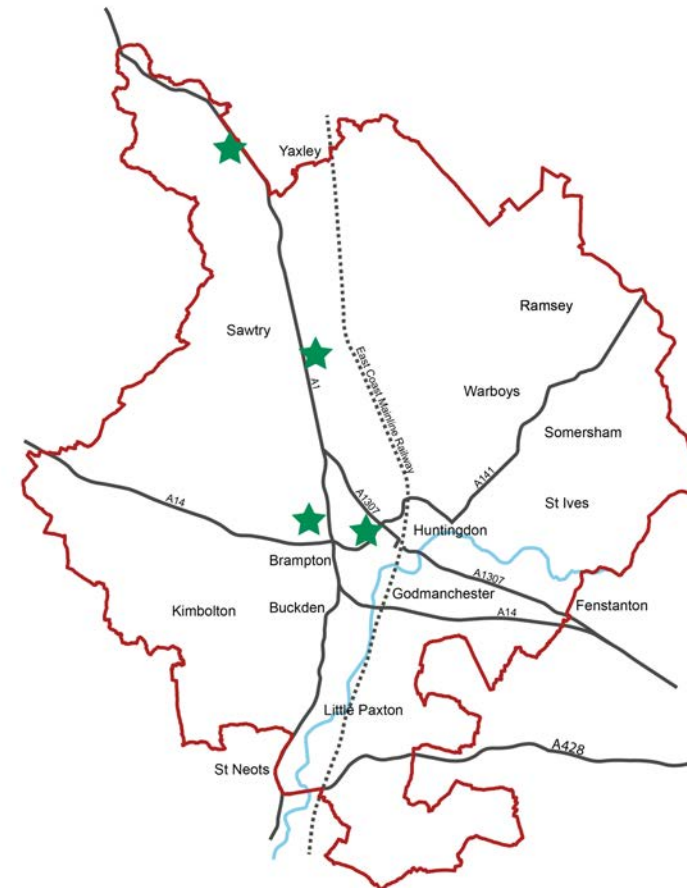


## Approach to Employment and Economy 5

Comparing business completions and commitments data with the location of Established Employment Areas indicates the policies in the current Local Plan are broadly functioning with a significant amount of employment land activity occurring within and adjoining EEA. There may be an emerging trend whereby a combination of retail and employment are becoming more popular within some EEAs, however, this will be investigated further through an evidence base for confirmation. There has been some development and approved applications outside of EEAs in new locations, most notable of which is a commitment for a mixed-use development including employment uses north of Ramsey Tesco.

During our [Call for Sites consultation](#) in 2023 a number of large scale (strategic) sites and clusters of employment sites were put forward for consideration as new employment locations which could be included in the next Local Plan as employment allocations. These sites include locations in the north of the district and west of the A1, south east of Sawtry, at Brampton Cross (west of the A1 and north of the A14) and north west of Huntingdon (north of the A141). Most of these sites have the potential to provide 120,000sqm or more of employment focussed development as a standalone site or as part of a cluster of sites.

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  Large Scale Employment Sites



## 5 Approach to Employment and Economy

Our Economic Development team has looked at a cross section of businesses and sectors across Huntingdonshire to help us to gain an understanding of the number of jobs that could be created per 100sqm of new business floorspace. Sectors such as advanced manufacturing in general see between 2 to 3 jobs per 100sqm and logistics and distribution 1 to 2 jobs. Knowledge intensive services within Huntingdonshire produce a higher number of jobs per square metre demonstrating 3 to 4 jobs per 100sqm, whilst I.T. and Telecoms sees a greater concentration of employment at 8 to 10 jobs. This information could enable us to understand what an increase in business floorspace would mean in the district in terms of job creation and the need for new homes. A strong focus towards economic growth could see the requirement for additional housing provision above the standard method to reduce travel distances enabling a more sustainable strategy.

To help inform future policies and develop our strategy for economic growth an evidence base will be produced. We will draw on strategic documents and a future economic growth strategy for Huntingdonshire, establish a baseline for the current supply and demand of employment land and properties in the market, the status and functioning of EEAs and growth forecasts. This will help to identify any failures within the market, adapting to increased premises demand for growing sectors and business whilst responding to a changing market which may include aspects such as sector decline. Landowners and developers have submitted potential sites for consideration as new employment allocations, these will assist in identifying potential suitable land.

The evidence will help us to understand what policies are working, what target sectors we should focus on, whether new land is required for protection or allocation, how much business space is needed and the most appropriate locations for this. We will also investigate where we can benefit from existing and adjoining economies.

### What should we do?

We are now asking you to input into how the next Local Plan can support, enhance and respond to the local economy

#### Strategy ambitions

##### Options - Strategy Ambitions

###### **Should we...**

*(Please pick one option.)*

**Option A: Plan for limited (low) employment growth** to support Huntingdonshire's existing businesses. Growth guided exclusively by criteria based policies.

**Option B: Plan for sustainable (medium) growth** by supplying a sufficient amount of employment land/ allocations to allow for some business expansion and investment and to provide a flexible approach to changing market conditions.

**Option C: Plan for ambitious (high) growth** capitalising on key priority sectors of the wider economy and creating business clusters.

**Option D: Consider an alternative strategy ambition.** Please let us know what it should be.

## Location of development

### Options - Location of Development

**Should we (subject to an Employment Land Study)...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A: Focus employment growth within and adjacent to Established Employment Areas.**

**Option B: Focus employment growth strategically along major highways** such as the A1.

**Option C: Focus employment growth next to or within large scale housing sites** promoting mixed use development aligning employment growth with housing growth.

**Option D: Focus employment growth in sustainable locations** such as allocating sites that are accessible by public transport and active travel.

**Option E: Focus employment growth in existing economic centres** which are located in market towns and larger settlements.

**Option F: Consider an alternative strategy ambition.** Please let us know what it should be.

## Established Employment Areas

### Options - Established Employment Areas

**Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A:** Remove the designation of EEA that protects and encourages use class B (general industrial, storage and distribution uses) being located within these areas.

**Option B:** Continue with safeguarding and enhancement of EEA accounting for changes to national policy and regulations.

**Option C:** Continue with safeguarding and enhancement of EEA but review the type of uses that are acceptable within them and the criteria used to assess their suitability.

**Option D:** Create additional and / or extended employment areas by reviewing existing employment sites or allocating new employment sites.

**Option E:** Consider an alternative option. Please let us know.



## 6 Housing Figures and Requirement

### 6 Housing Figures and Requirement

#### Introduction

Having a safe, secure and affordable home is a basic necessity that provides shelter and supports a person's health, well-being and independence. Collectively, homes that meet people's needs help to build thriving sustainable communities where residents can experience a high quality of life.

A key role of the Local Plan is to provide a strategy for meeting Huntingdonshire's housing needs in terms of the quantity, size, type and tenure of new homes. It will aim to ensure that the housing needs of all types of households are provided for. Housing is often seen as the crux of a Local Plan as proposals for new housing growth can have direct impacts on existing communities. However, housing is just one element of many that go towards making up sustainable communities and assisting people in having a high quality of life.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked for your thoughts on what the housing requirement should be. Suggestions were for:

- The standard methodology for housing need to form the baseline but the Housing Needs of Specific Groups evidence should be updated to advise the level of additional uplift justified
- More than the standard methodology number should be provided to give flexibility, this could be between 10-20% to respond to changes in delivery rates, changes in national policy and unexpected circumstances
- An uplift is required as the anticipated decline in average household size will necessitate additional housing to accommodate the existing population before allowing for extra population growth
- An uplift in overall housing and hence market housing supply is needed to be able to support adequate affordable housing to meet needs while being viable to deliver
- A higher housing requirement above the standard method to meet the economic aspirations of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and support the commitment of economic growth along the Oxford to Cambridge corridor
- Additional housing to maximise the value of significant strategic infrastructure investment in the area
- The Local Plan could over-allocate where there is evidence of suitable, available and sustainable sites to contribute to national aspirations to significantly boost housing supply
- Potential for taking on additional homes where there is an unmet needs from neighbouring authorities
- Prioritising delivery of smaller new homes for local people to a maximum 5% growth in rural area residential properties in any plan period

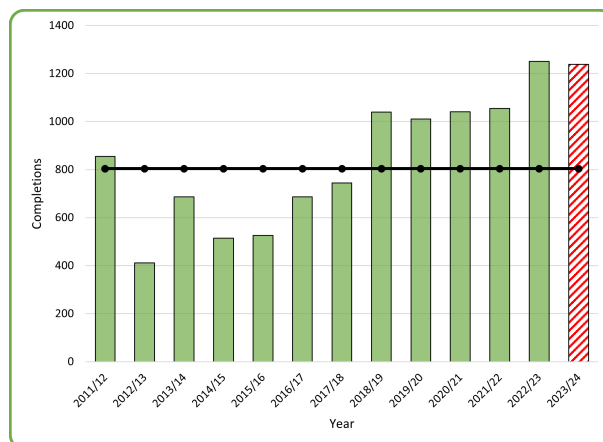
## Housing Figures and Requirement

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### What is this about?

The government is committed to significantly increasing the supply of new homes with the ambition to deliver 370,000 new homes a year across England during the lifetime of this parliament as part of a growth focused approach to the planning system. Their aim is for us to meet the area's identified housing need including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 has an annual housing target of 804 new homes per year, based on an overall target of 20,100 new homes across its 25 year lifespan. This is set out in policy 'LP1 Amount of Development'. By 31st March 2023, 9,821 new homes had been completed since 1 April 2011, the equivalent of 818 per year. 1,115 new homes were under construction and 10,638 homes had planning permission that hadn't been started. For context, over the last 5 years under the strategy adopted in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 on average 1,079 homes have been built a year. In the longer term of 10 years, on average 855 homes have been built a year. In 2022/23 1,250 new homes were completed. The following graph shows how many homes have been delivered in relation to our current target (completions for 2023/24 are shown in red as these are yet to be finalised but initial data shows it will be at this level):



The Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy recognised the importance of having homes in the district that meet our needs. People valued high quality, accessible homes that are affordable to all who need them and located in inclusive, well serviced communities.

The starting point for the number of homes that we have to plan for comes from a nationally set formula known as the government's 'standard method' number. A revised standard methodology approach was published for consultation on 30 July 2024. The government have announced their intention is for the revised housing targets to be mandatory. However, until the revised methodology is finalised we cannot be certain what the minimum target number will be. Until then we cannot be sure what level of housing growth we should plan for.

The current approved standard method is based on the 2014 household projections and makes allowance for any historic under-supply. It also aims to address housing affordability problems by applying an adjustment factor based on local median workplace based affordability ratios which are updated in March each year. The uplift to account for affordability is currently around 30% with the maximum required being capped at 40%. In the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), paragraph 67 advises that the housing requirement 'may be higher than the identified housing need if, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas, or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment'.

A proposed revised method has been issued for public consultation from 30 July to 24 September 2024. This is set out within a revised draft of the National Planning Policy framework. The proposed revised standard method is based on the housing stock as at 2023 and includes a greater adjustment to address the relative affordability of homes in the district. The expectation is that this will be a mandatory target to provide the basis for plan making, not the final housing requirement. The draft National Planning Policy Framework states that the government are absolutely clear that authorities may justify planning for a lower number only where they can evidence hard constraints to the Planning Inspectorate. Given the annual nature of the updates to the standard method housing number it will be fixed at a point when the Local Plan is nearing completion.

## 6 Housing Figures and Requirement

The box below shows what the approved standard method calculation was at the start of the Plan period (2021), what it is now in 2024 and what it would be using the draft revised methodology to allow a comparison of the figures.

2021 standard method figure	2024 standard method figure	Proposed revised standard method figure
Number of households in 2021 = 77,962	Number of households in 2024 = 80,282	Housing stock estimates 2023 = 82,155
Number of households projected in 2031 = 85,146	Number of households projected in 2034 = 87,022	0.8% of dwelling stock as baseline starting point = 657.24
Total projected household growth = 7,184	Total projected household growth = 6,740	Average house price to workplace based earnings affordability ratio over the last 3 years = 9.53
Annual projected growth = 718.4	Annual projected growth = 674	Adjustment factor = $\frac{((9.53-4)/4) \times 0.6}{1} + 1 = 1.83$
Local median workplace based affordability ratio = 9.97	Local median workplace based affordability ratio = 8.75	Draft proposed standard method outcome = $657.24 \times 1.83 = 1,203$ new homes per year
Adjustment factor = $\frac{(((9.97-4)/4) \times 0.25)}{1} + 1 = 1.373$	Adjustment factor = $\frac{(((8.75-4)/4) \times 0.25)}{1} + 1 = 1.297$	

2021 standard method figure	2024 standard method figure	Proposed revised standard method figure
Standard method outcome = 718.4 x 1.373 = 987 new homes per year	Standard method outcome = 674 x 1.297 = 874 new homes per year	<b>Over the period 2021-2046 (25 years) = 30,069 new homes</b>
Over the period 2021-2046 (25 years) = <b>24,675 new homes</b>	Over the period 2021-2046 (25 years) = <b>21,850 new homes</b>	

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough devolution deal (2017) committed to delivering substantial economic growth across the area with the ambition of virtually doubling the area's economic output over 25 years to over £40billion. The aspiration is to evolve into an area which is internationally renowned for its low carbon, knowledge based economy and has further developed key sectors of life sciences, information and communications technologies, creative and digital industries, clean tech, high value engineering and agri-business. In March 2024 the former government issued an update to 'The Case for Cambridge' which sought to grow Greater Cambridge by 150,000 new homes and associated employment and other uses estimated to add around £6.4billion to the economy. The future for this is now uncertain in the light of the proposed revised standard method which would lead to a 56% uplift in Cambridge's housing target over the current figure anyway. The government promotes effective strategic planning across local planning authority boundaries to support sustainable growth including meeting housing needs. Given the proximity of Huntingdonshire to Greater Cambridge and the existing and potential transport and connectivity levels we may continue to play an important role in supporting the economic and housing needs of the wider area.

## Housing Figures and Requirement

The [Housing Needs of Specific Groups for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk \(2021\)](#) provides evidence on the level of housing need in Huntingdonshire and details of needs for specific groups within our community. It is recognised that this needs to be updated now that the relevant Census 2021 data has been published. Updated evidence will provide detail on the nature of the housing that is required as is explained more in chapter 11 'Housing Tenures and Housing mix'.

NPPF paragraph 67 states a requirement that within the overall housing requirement of the Local Plan, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.

We have looked at what you suggested and provided four main options to ensure that they are significantly different from each other. These are identified below with a brief assessment of the pros and cons that the option may have.



**Option A - Plan for the standard method number (approved current methodology = 874 new homes a year and draft proposed methodology =1,203 new homes a year)**

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets the minimum requirements of the NPPF</li> <li>• Minimises the amount of land needed for development</li> <li>• Allows for selection of the most sustainable sites only</li> <li>• Minimises the delivery targets measured at the national level which minimises the risk of the application of the 'tilted balance' where the bar to refuse planning applications for new homes is much higher</li> <li>• Higher delivery rates could be supported through policies, additional to allocations, without the risk of being measured at the national level against higher targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would not align with the growth aspirations of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy</li> <li>• Does not provide any flexibility should the standard method number increase</li> <li>• Could leave the Local Plan Update vulnerable to inclusion of additional sites through the examination process with less local input to decision making if proposed allocations prove unachievable</li> <li>• Liable to challenge at examination that it does not address the exceptional circumstances of the wider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area</li> </ul>

## 6 Housing Figures and Requirement

**Option B - A 5% uplift on the standard method number to allow a small amount of flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected (approved current methodology = 918 new homes a year and draft proposed methodology =1,263 new homes a year)**

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slightly more allocations gives some resilience against housing market changes and enhanced demand for housing or speeding up of housing delivery rates</li> <li>• Would help support the growth aspirations of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy</li> <li>• A greater overall amount of housing could help with the viability of delivering affordable housing</li> <li>• Could help to support and sustain local services and facilities</li> <li>• Would enhance market choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited flexibility if some proposed site allocations prove unacceptable through the Local Plan examination and the numbers are not fully made up on alternative allocations</li> <li>• Housing delivery is monitored from the base date of the plan; delivery may be in deficit for the early years unless easy to deliver allocations come through to completion very quickly; some risk of application of the national presumption in favour of sustainable development where the bar to refuse planning applications for new homes is much higher resulting in probable approvals of schemes which are not compliant with the Local Plan Update's policies.</li> <li>• Could increase the pressure for development on less sustainable sites</li> </ul>

**Option C - A 10% uplift on the standard method number to allow a some flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected or affordability ratios worsen (approved current methodology = 961 new homes a year and draft proposed methodology =1,323 new homes a year)**

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a clear statement of support for aspirations for enhanced economic growth</li> <li>• Could help to meet needs from Greater Cambridge to support the wider economy and facilitate timely housing growth</li> <li>• Increased housebuilding would stimulate economic growth and support mobility of employees</li> <li>• Could help meet housing needs throughout the district including in smaller villages</li> <li>• Could help to support and sustain local services and facilities</li> <li>• Would maximise market choice</li> <li>• A greater overall amount of housing would help with the viability of delivering affordable housing</li> <li>• A phased housing target could be included in to account for the lead-in time for delivery of strategic scale sites but this would result in even higher annual housing targets later in the plan's lifetime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the proposed revised standard method number the annual housing target would be higher than the number of new homes completed in any year since 2000/01.</li> <li>• Housing delivery is monitored from the base date of the plan; delivery is likely to be in deficit for the early years giving high risk of the national presumption in favour of sustainable development where the bar to refuse planning applications for new homes is much higher resulting in probable approvals of schemes which are not compliant with the Local Plan Update's policies unless a phased target is included.</li> <li>• Would increase development pressure throughout the district and increase the amount of land needed</li> <li>• Could give rise to market absorption challenges in locations of highly concentrated growth</li> </ul>



Pros	Cons
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional housing would give rise to increased carbon emissions, and increased travel and transport demands</li> <li>• Achieving the housing target would be vulnerable to market fluctuations from non-planning related impacts such as recession or national/ international political instability.</li> </ul>



**What should we do?**

We are now asking you to input how what the housing requirement should be for the updated Local Plan.

**Options - Housing Requirement**

**Should we....**

*(Please pick one option.)*

**Option A - Plan for the standard method number** (approved current methodology = 874 new homes a year and draft proposed methodology =1,203 new homes a year)

**Option B - A 5% uplift** on the standard method number to allow a small amount of flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected (approved current methodology = 918 new homes a year and draft proposed methodology =1,263 new homes a year)

**Option C - A 10% uplift** on the standard method number to allow a some flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected or affordability ratios worsen (approved current methodology = 961 new homes a year and draft proposed methodology =1,323 new homes a year)

**Option D - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

## 7 Achieving Well Designed Places

### 7 Achieving Well Designed Places

#### Introduction

Creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Building design is an aspect of this with other aspects relating to context, identity, movement around places, public and open spaces, land uses, and green infrastructure.

Settlement character is hugely influenced by the design of buildings. This character is continually evolving with the types, variety, materials, construction methods and age of buildings playing an important role. Development proposals need to respond to their context. Building design is a key way in which developments can be sustainably integrated into towns and villages as part of wider placemaking principles.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you how the updated Local Plan can deliver high quality places reflective of settlement character. Suggestions were for:

- The updated Local Plan to give consideration to national policy and guidance as well as local guidance within Huntingdonshire's Design Guide and Landscape and Townscape SPD.
- Development to be net carbon zero, energy efficient and climate resilient
- Be of high quality and reflective of local character and design and where appropriate draw on opportunities offered by the historic environment and reflect local character and distinctiveness
- Integrated walkable neighbourhoods containing local facilities
- Provide a wide range of housing to suit all needs in terms of household composition, affordability, demographics and specialist needs, and doing so in a manner that promotes mixed communities
- Prioritising active travel and public transport and supporting the public rights of way network
- Supporting social inclusion and interaction by creating a sense of place
- Ensuring places are designed to feel safe
- The provision of new infrastructure, new facilities and new services in strengthening the sense of identity of places and supporting the creation of healthy communities
- A variety of open spaces should be utilised including informal green space, orchards, parks, community gardens, children's play areas, amenity spaces, MUGAs, sports pitches and local nature habitats across both residential and other development sites
- Ensuring that settlements which are distinctive and different from each other, are both perceived to be and remain physically separated

## What is this about?

The NPPF explains that local plans should set clear design visions and expectations.

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 has several design policies that strive to create and shape high quality places and building design, these are policies 'LP11 Design Context', 'LP12 Design Implementation', 'LP13 Placemaking' and 'LP14 Amenity'. These policies require development proposals to utilise the [Huntingdonshire Design Guide \(2017\)](#) as well as [conservation area character statements](#) and the [Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD \(2022\)](#) to shape proposals.

These policies alongside 'LP4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery' and 'LP32 Protection of Open Space' require developers to provide or financially contribute to the provision of open spaces, guide the design of new developments and also protect against the loss of open space, outdoor recreation facilities, allotments and areas of garden land that provide amenity value. The Design Guide provides guidance on the design and layout of public and open spaces and the [Developer Contributions SPD \(2011\)](#) provides more detailed information on the requirements for new developments including the quantity of required for parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space, children's play space, allotments and community gardens etc.

Two 'journeys' of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy are particularly relevant to the issues of achieving well-designed and beautiful places:

- Pride in Place
- Environmental Innovation

Engagement for the Pride in Place journey showed that local people strongly value the district's rich heritage and landscapes; the market towns and villages, the wide open fens and parklands, rolling claylands, and the Ouse Valley all contribute to Huntingdonshire being thought of as a beautiful place. Raising our ambition for better design was promoted by many people as important through local guidance and standards, particularly for new homes. There is now a much greater awareness

of the importance of open space and the benefits it can provide not only to the physical and mental well being of people but to wildlife and to mitigating the impacts of climate change. The Council produced in 2020 a [Healthy Open Spaces Strategy](#) to ensure that Huntingdonshire's open spaces continue to be used and valued by communities and to explore how they can support wider positive change.

Rewilding and nature based infrastructure schemes were advocated through the Environmental Innovation journey. Our varied natural landscape, with river valleys, woodlands, meadows and fenlands were highlighted as being greatly valued. Achieving well-designed and beautiful places is an essential way of maintaining and enhancing aspects of our landscape that people value. Projects can vary from the landscape scale of the Great Fen rewetting of peatland and establishment of a 3,700 ha wildlife haven to sustainable drainage systems within new developments which are a feature that can provide both a technical solution to drainage issues and aid rainwater in infiltrating soils and slow the rate of surface water run off as mentioned in 11 'Tackling Flooding and Water'. Other possible design features reflected in the Environmental Innovation journey which we might explore include rainwater harvesting which is the process of collecting and filtering rainfall from the roofs of residential and commercial buildings.

Since the adoption of the Local Plan, there is now greater emphasis on development that is beautiful with this requirement found throughout the NPPF. In 2021, the [National Model Design Guide](#) and [National Model Design Code](#) were published which illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice and form part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance. The NPPF highlights that local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in these documents. To ensure that the Huntingdonshire's Design Guide SPD 2017 meets the new criteria set out in the NPPF 2021, we undertook a [compatibility check](#) of the SPD against the requirements set out in the National Model Design Guide and National Model Design Code's, both of which incorporate 10 characteristics for a well-designed place. The compatibility check confirms that our Design Guide meet the requirements of both these documents.

## 7 Achieving Well Designed Places



*The ten characteristics of well-designed places*

Sport England have also developed 10 principles of active design that can apply to our built and natural environments to encourage people to be active through their daily lives. It recognises that well designed places can have a positive impact on people's health and well-being, both physical and mental. Active design has a wide range of other potential benefits too including being socially inclusive, generating lower carbon emissions, supporting better air quality and promoting economic productivity. The following illustrations show the 10 principles of active design.

### FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE



#### Principle 1 – Activity for all

All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours. This is essential for the delivery of all the principles of Active Design and is its foundational principle.

### SUPPORTING ACTIVE TRAVEL



#### Principle 2 – Walkable communities

Facilities for daily essentials and recreation should be within easy reach of each other by active travel means, making it more likely that people will make the journey by using active travel modes (defined in Theme 1). Good active travel connections should be provided to extend the range of services that are accessible while remaining physically active.



#### Principle 3 – Providing connected active travel routes

Encourage active travel for all ages and abilities by creating a continuous network of routes connecting places safely and directly. Networks should be easy to use, supported by signage and landmarks to help people find their way.



#### Principle 4 – Mixing uses and co-locating facilities

People are more likely to combine trips and use active travel to get to destinations with multiple reasons to visit. Places with more variety, higher densities, and a mix of uses also reduce the perception of distance when travelling through spaces. They also generate the critical mass of travel demand to better support public transport services.

## Achieving Well Designed Places 7

### ACTIVE HIGH-QUALITY PLACES AND SPACES



#### Principle 5 – Network of multi-functional open spaces

Accessible and high quality open space should be promoted across cities, towns and villages to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity, as well as active travel connections and natural or civic space for people to congregate in and enjoy.



#### Principle 6 – High-quality streets and spaces

Streets and outdoor public spaces should be Active Environments in their own right. They should be safe, attractive, functional, prioritise people and able to host a mix of uses, with durable, high quality materials, street furniture in the right places and easy-to-use signage. High quality streets and spaces encourage activity, whereas poor quality streets and spaces are much less likely to be used to the same degree.



#### Principle 7 – Providing activity infrastructure

Infrastructure to enable sport, recreation and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate activity for all.



#### Principle 8 – Active buildings, inside and out

Buildings we occupy shape our everyday lives, both when users are inside and outside. Buildings should be designed with providing opportunities for physical activity at the forefront, considering the arrival experience, internal circulation, opportunities to get up and move about, and making the building an active destination.

### CREATING AND MAINTAINING ACTIVITY



#### Principle 9 – Maintaining high-quality flexible spaces

Spaces and facilities should be effectively maintained and managed to support physical activity. These places should be monitored to understand how they are used, and flexible so that they can be adapted as needed.



#### Principle 10 – Activating spaces

The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.

These options focus on higher level design issues rather than detailed policies such as those set out in Section C of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. This is because there is a strong likelihood of national development management policies being introduced. Once there is more certainty on these we will look to develop locally based policies to complement them if necessary. If they do not come forward we will look to update and revise our current development management policies to reflect changes in national policy and in local priorities since they were approved in 2019.

### What should we do?

We are now asking you to input how the updated Local Plan can plan well-designed and beautiful places across the district.

## 7 Achieving Well Designed Places

### Question - Design Characteristics

We will be using the [National Design Code](#) to shape what aspects of design we will include in our future design policies. Are there any specific design characteristics that are important to you and that you think we should include in the Local Plan Update?

### Question - Active Design

Would you support use of the 10 principles of active design through future Local Plan policies? Are there any in particular that you think are more important than others?

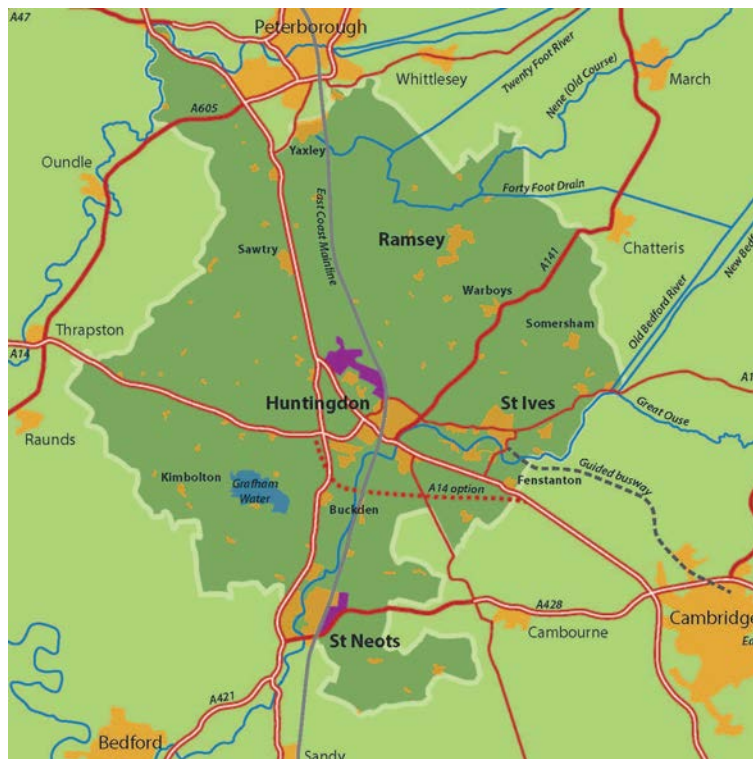
### Question - Updating current Development Management Policies

If national development management policies do not come forward while we are preparing this Local Plan Update do you have any suggestions for changes that you would wish to see to any of our current development management policies? If so, please specify the current policy number.

## 8 Growth Strategy Options

### Introduction

In this section we will be looking at how and where our district may grow to meet our housing and employment needs in the future. The Local Plan is not just concerned with delivering housing. The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (paragraph 20) requires that Local Plans must set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for housing, employment, retail, leisure, other commercial development.



### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked for your thoughts on where growth should be focussed. Suggestions were for:

- Proportionate growth of existing settlements/ sustainable villages / providing small to medium sites.
- Densification of and focus around existing market towns.
- In sustainable locations which have lots of services and facilities, and existing infrastructure to support growth.
- Densification or expansion of existing urban areas and urban extensions where there is more employment.
- Putting development near or along public transport corridors.
- Continuation of current development strategy in our Local Plan.
- A combination of the identified development scenarios in the [Issues Engagement Paper](#) (chapter 9).
- Providing proportionate growth of Key Service Centres or places where growth could help retain services.
- Regenerating existing sites and previously developed land outside of settlement boundaries.
- Providing new settlements.
- Allocating specific locations put forward in the Call for Sites.
- No new settlements, no satellite settlements without adequate facilities, and no over-reliance on large settlements.
- Avoiding unsustainable locations or settlements in rural areas and avoiding overwhelming small villages and the countryside (even if near major roads).
- Avoid scenarios that increase congestion, noise, air and pollution impacts and put pressure on local infrastructure.
- Not promoting dispersed development regardless of the sustainability.
- Not continuing or providing more growth focussed on Alconbury Weald and St Neots East.

## 8 Growth Strategy Options

### What is this about?

We have listened to what you suggested and provided a set of growth options which broadly indicate where new development could be focussed. Six options are shown below as alternative approaches to shape our future growth strategy. Each represents a slight extreme to highlight the focus of the approach. You may like part of one option and part of another and think that a combination of several would actually be your preferred choice. If this is so, please tell us what combination of options you think would be best.

The number of new homes, amount of employment land and quantity of development for other uses could be delivered in each growth strategy option depending on the outcomes of the options in chapter '5 'Approach to Employment and Economy' and chapter '6 'Housing Figures and Requirement'. It should also be noted that paragraph 70 of the NPPF (December 2023) states that 10% of the housing requirement be identified on sites no larger than one hectare. Using the 2024 standard method calculation as a minimum figure this would mean that 2,185 homes will need to be found on sites of this size and using the proposed revised standard method would mean 3,007 new homes will need to be found on sites of this size. To not do this, national policy states that we would require robust evidence to demonstrate that this cannot be achieved.

Each growth strategy option is shown as an image followed by some of the pros and cons that the option may have.

The growth options are:

**Option A - *Continue with the existing growth strategy*** set out in our current Local Plan (Policy LP2 Strategy for Development). This currently focusses on 75% growth in Spatial Planning Areas and 25% elsewhere e.g. Key Service Centres and Small Settlements.

**Option B - Focus on *strategic expansions to existing towns***

**Option C - Focus growth on *public transport corridors*.** This corridors would be located around the A428/A421, the guided bus route and future ambitions to provide East West Rail, the proposal to reroute the A141, a public transport corridor from Cambridge to Alconbury Weald and a possible railway station at Alconbury Weald.

**Option D - Concentrate development around the *strategic road network*** i.e. the A1, A14 and A428

**Option E - Distribute growth across many settlements in Huntingdonshire and limit growth in our towns creating *dispersed growth*.**

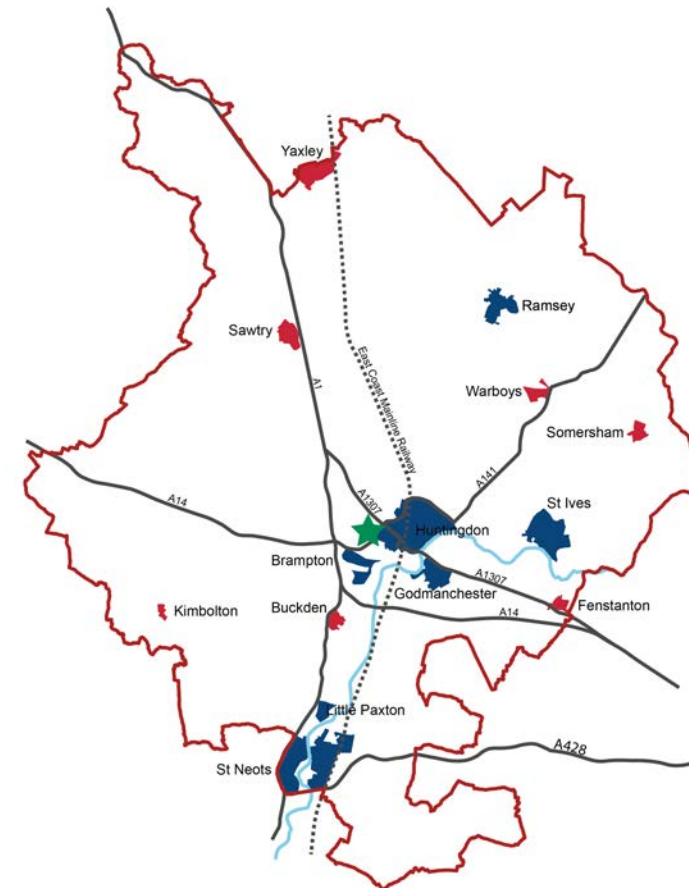
**Option F - Provide 1 *one or more new community/ies plus some dispersed growth*.**



### Option A - Continue with the existing growth strategy

This strategy would mean that we continue to use the same approach as in our current Local Plan (Policy LP2 Strategy for Development). This would mean 75% growth would be focussed in our Spatial Planning Areas and 25% elsewhere e.g. Key Service Centres and Small Settlements.

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  Spatial Planning Areas
-  Key Service Centres
-  Large Scale Employment Sites









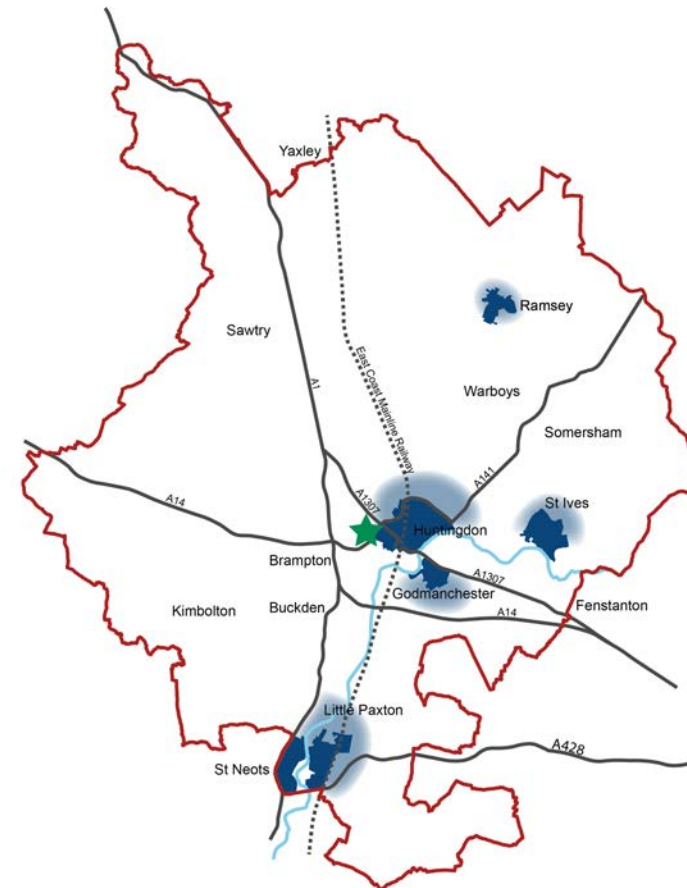
## 8 Growth Strategy Options

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sustainably located development, reducing the need to travel.</li> <li>● Existing infrastructure in place.</li> <li>● Close to employment opportunities.</li> <li>● Protects rural locations and the countryside / sense of identity of the district.</li> <li>● Provides consistent growth patterns proving ongoing certainty for investment.</li> <li>● Could provide opportunities for higher and lower density development.</li> <li>● Could increase opportunities for active travel and public transport usage.</li> <li>● Supports existing town centres through greater catchment population.</li> <li>● Could help maintain existing services and facilities in Key Service Centres.</li> <li>● Opportunities for brownfield development in existing centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some existing areas may now not be able to support future growth.</li> <li>● Relies on existing settlement hierarchy, there may be some other settlements that may now be more sustainable that could provide opportunities for sustainable growth.</li> <li>● Spatial Planning Areas may be at capacity already and require more infrastructure and services.</li> <li>● Population of smaller villages will decline over time potentially putting existing services and facilities at risk.</li> <li>● Developments in larger settlements may be focussed on peripheries with longer distances to reach services and facilities.</li> <li>● Over development in existing locations could impact on congestion, pollution and demand for services.</li> <li>● Would limit provision of affordable housing in villages.</li> </ul>

### Option B - Strategic expansions to existing towns

This strategy would focus on providing new growth predominantly around our existing towns, Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey.

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  Expansion of Existing Towns
-  Large Scale Employment Sites



## 8 Growth Strategy Options

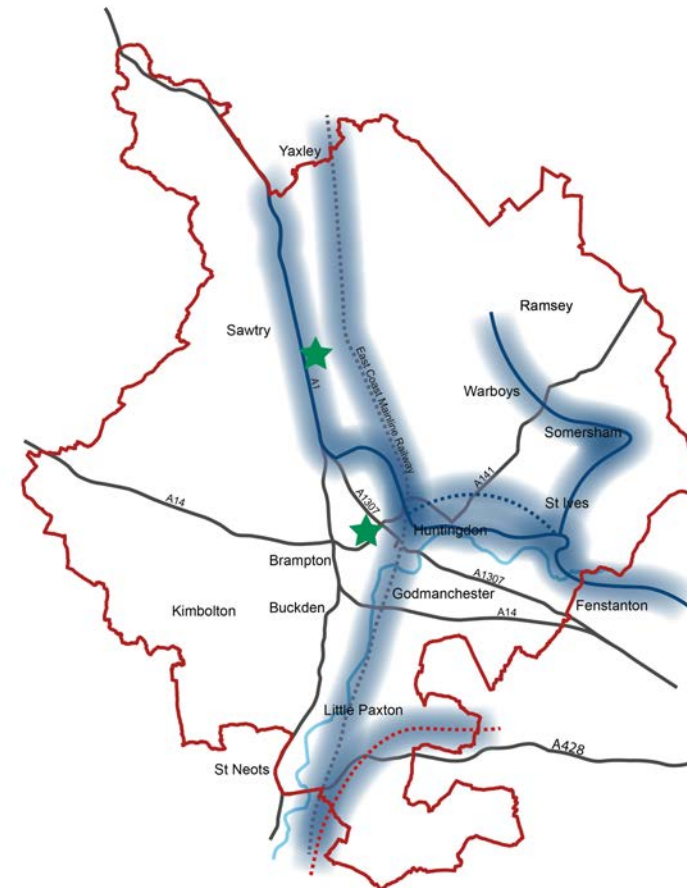
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainably located development, reducing the need to travel.</li> <li>• Existing infrastructure in place.</li> <li>• Close to employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Concentration of future employees for new employment developments.</li> <li>• Opportunities for networking and local supply chain inputs for business development.</li> <li>• Protects rural locations and the countryside sense of identity of the district.</li> <li>• Could provide opportunities for higher density development meaning less land required.</li> <li>• Could increase opportunities for active travel and public transport usage.</li> <li>• Could support a very diverse range of housing types and tenures.</li> <li>• Supports existing town centres through greater catchment population.</li> <li>• Opportunities for brownfield development in existing centres.</li> <li>• All infrastructure and services e.g. primary school, local shops,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May lead to pressure on existing infrastructure and services.</li> <li>• Developments in larger settlements may be focussed on peripheries with longer distances to reach services and facilities.</li> <li>• Over development in existing locations could impact on congestion, pollution and demand for services.</li> <li>• Potential for deterioration all villages through loss of services and facilities due to population decline/stagnation.</li> <li>• Lack of choice and availability of new homes in villages.</li> <li>• Potential increase in house prices in all villages due to lack of supply.</li> <li>• Large scale sites can be slow to deliver and may require phasing and infrastructure.</li> <li>• May limit opportunities for small scale housebuilders.</li> <li>• Could create a lack of local distinctiveness and character / 'anywhere development'.</li> <li>• Some towns have physical constraints to where growth may</li> </ul>

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• services could be provided as part of the scheme.</li> <li>• Could provide enhanced green infrastructure and comprehensive masterplan for development.</li> <li>• Creates new communities and social opportunities.</li> <li>• Could protect the character of existing villages and their settings.</li> <li>• Concentrated development has greater potential to bid for funding for largescale supporting infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• go for example, strategic road barriers and flood risk.</li> <li>• Potential for some coalescence with neighbouring villages.</li> <li>• No support for the rural economy and expansion of rural businesses.</li> </ul>

### Option C - Public transport corridors.

This strategy would look to focus new growth around public transport corridors. These would be located around the A428/A421 and the guided bus route. They could also focus on future ambitions to provide East West Rail, the proposal to reroute the A141, a public transport corridor from Cambridge to Alconbury Weald (Guided Busway extension) and a possible railway station at Alconbury Weald.

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  East - West Rail
-  Existing Bus Routes
-  Proposed Bus Routes
-  Large Scale Employment Sites
-  Expansion along Public Transport Corridor











## 8 Growth Strategy Options

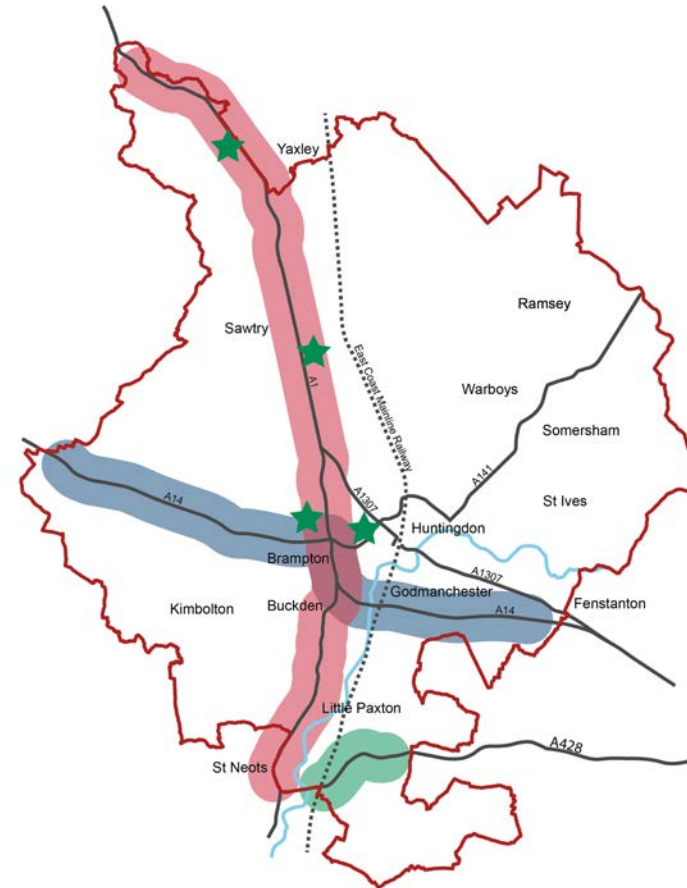
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for sustainable travel options to employment locations offering wider employment opportunities (inclusive economy).</li> <li>• Wider access for employers to potential employees.</li> <li>• Sustainably located development, reducing the need to travel.</li> <li>• Would contribute to reaching net zero.</li> <li>• Has the potential to minimise increases in pollution and congestion.</li> <li>• Could encourage and sustain a shift towards increase public transport availability and use.</li> <li>• Could support the case for investment in a new station at Alconbury Weald.</li> <li>• Opportunities for distributing growth to a mixture of towns and villages.</li> <li>• Could support a diverse range of site types and sizes.</li> <li>• Opportunities to support public transport nodes and facilitate longer distance connections.</li> <li>• Could help maintain or enhance existing services and facilities in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed future public transport corridors such as Guided Busway extensions and East West Rail are currently uncertain.</li> <li>• Timings of proposed future public transport corridors such as Guided Busway extensions and East West Rail dependant on external organisations which may impact delivery of homes in related locations.</li> <li>• Inhibits growth in the west of Huntingdonshire.</li> <li>• Potential for deterioration villages not associated with public transport corridors through loss of services and facilities due to population decline/stagnation.</li> <li>• Cannot guarantee continued frequency and availability of public transport and use.</li> <li>• Would require behavioural change.</li> </ul>

Pros	Cons
<p>towns and villages along public transport corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could support behavioural change in villages creating potential public transport hubs.</li> </ul>	

**Option D - Strategic road network**

This strategy would look to focus growth along the strategic road networks that run through the district, this would include areas along or near to the A1, A14 and A428/A421.

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  A1 Road Corridor
-  A14 Road Corridor
-  A428 Road Corridor
-  Large Scale Employment Sites



## 8 Growth Strategy Options

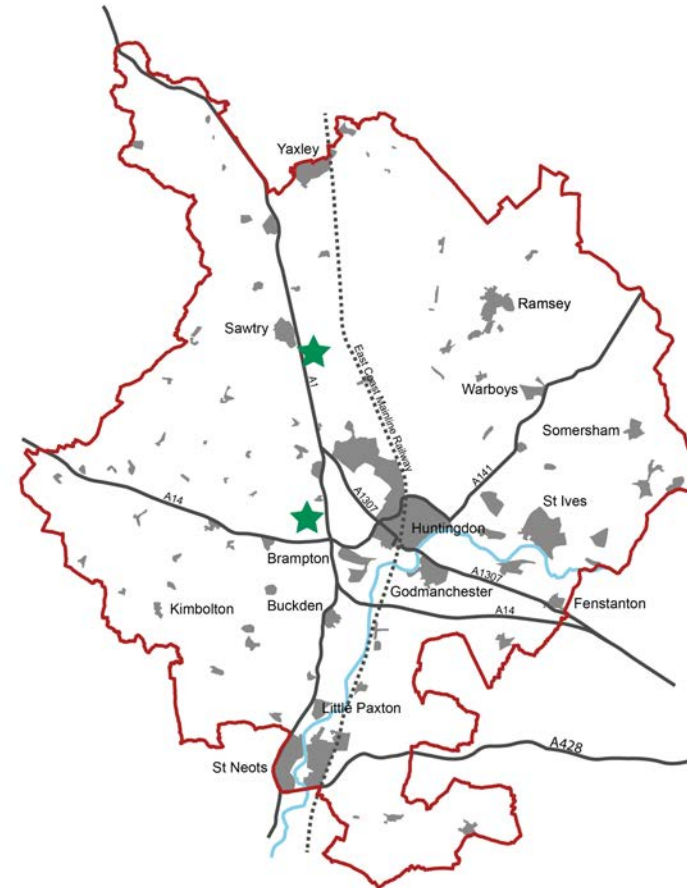
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could benefit from links to the proposed East West Rail.</li> <li>• Disrupts current settlement pattern moving growth away from 3 of the 4 market towns, protecting their character and setting.</li> <li>• Accessible locations for employment and logistics.</li> <li>• Opportunities for co-location of employment and housing.</li> <li>• Opportunity to provide some growth in western Huntingdonshire to help support, provide or maintain local services and facilities.</li> <li>• Takes advantage of existing road infrastructure and proposed improvements to the A428/421.</li> <li>• Presents the opportunity for stand-alone new settlements/communities.</li> <li>• Could contribute towards delivery of the Ox-Cam Arc aspirations for housing employment and green infrastructure.</li> <li>• Has potential to enhance public transport availability along more heavily populated routes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed future East West Rail are currently uncertain.</li> <li>• Disrupts current settlement pattern moving growth away from 3 of the 4 market towns.</li> <li>• Encourages car use with the potential to increase congestion, carbon emissions and pollution.</li> <li>• Increase in local traffic usage of strategic highways and potential congestion of strategic road network.</li> <li>• Limited accessibility to existing services, facilities and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Would impede growth in areas remote from the strategic growth network such as the north east of the district.</li> <li>• Could establish continuous development along the A1 and A14 east of the A1.</li> <li>• Population of towns and villages outside of the strategic road corridors will decline over time potentially putting existing services and facilities at risk.</li> <li>• Would inhibit reaching net zero.</li> </ul>



**Option E - Dispersed Growth**

This option would distribute growth across many settlements in Huntingdonshire and limit growth in our towns

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  Existing Settlements
-  Large Scale Employment Sites



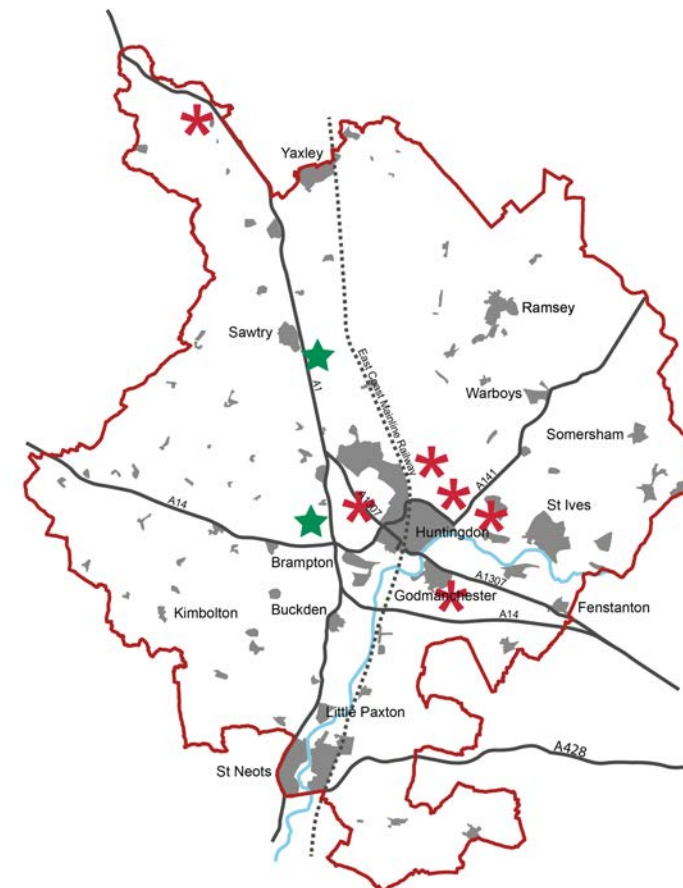
## 8 Growth Strategy Options

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Will allow villages to maintain and potentially enhance the population to support the retention of existing services and facilities.</li> <li>● Would increase the choice and availability of new homes in villages.</li> <li>● Smaller sites may be quicker to deliver allowing a steady flow of homes.</li> <li>● Could maximise our contribution towards government aspirations for 10% of our housing requirement to be on sites no larger than one hectare.</li> <li>● May provide opportunities for small scale housebuilders.</li> <li>● Sites across Huntingdonshire could support more local employment growth.</li> <li>● Potential to deliver affordable housing across a wide range of villages.</li> <li>● Could allow young people and older people to remain in their existing communities.</li> <li>● Benefits of growth are evenly distributed across the district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourages car use with the potential to increase congestion, carbon emissions and pollution.</li> <li>● Could inhibit reaching net zero.</li> <li>● Would be challenging to achieve new infrastructure provision.</li> <li>● Could impact on the character of existing village and their settings.</li> <li>● May take time for developments and their residents to integrate with the existing community.</li> <li>● There may not be enough sites to fulfil the level of housing need required.</li> <li>● May impact on the vitality and viability of our town centres.</li> <li>● Would use higher amount of agricultural land with potential impacts on food security.</li> <li>● Would result in lower density development.</li> <li>● People would be further away from high concentrations of employment and opportunities.</li> <li>● Difficult to provide active travel benefits.</li> <li>● Could increase harm to designated nature conservation and heritage assets.</li> </ul>

### Option F - One or more new communities plus some dispersed growth

This option would involve the allocation of one or two new settlements creating a new community. The remainder of the growth required will then be picked from a range of large and small sites across Huntingdonshire. Due to the size of the new communities each would include a mix of uses including housing, substantial employment, some retail and supporting infrastructure such as schools, community centres or health uses etc.

-  Administrative Boundary
-  Roads
-  River Great Ouse
-  East Coast Mainline Railway
-  Existing Settlements
-  Large Scale Employment Sites
-  Potential New Communities



## 8 Growth Strategy Options

Pros / Advantages	Cons / Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will allow some villages to maintain and potentially enhance the population to support the retention of existing services and facilities.</li> <li>• Opportunities to provide new employment clusters based around new communities.</li> <li>• Delivery of some smaller sites in the short term allow for lead in time to establish the masterplan for the new community/ies.</li> <li>• Allows selection of the most sustainable dispersed sites.</li> <li>• Gives opportunity to design an innovative, resilient, well designed places with the potential to contribute towards enhanced green infrastructure and net zero ambitions through district heat networks and renewable energy generation.</li> <li>• Provides a mix of opportunities for small and medium scale house builders and volume house builders.</li> <li>• Concentrated development in one new community provides a single point of focus for funding towards large scale supporting infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May require significant and costly infrastructure investment which may impact affordable housing delivery.</li> <li>• Limited growth elsewhere restricting market choice.</li> <li>• No support for the rural economy and expansion of rural businesses.</li> <li>• May impact on the vitality and viability of our current town centres shifting demand elsewhere.</li> <li>• Some proposed sites could benefit from further land assembly to provide the best possible settlement layout.</li> <li>• Depending on location it could increase harm to designated nature conservation and heritage assets.</li> <li>• Depending on location it could encourage car use with the potential to increase congestion, carbon emissions and pollution.</li> <li>• Depending on the location some new communities may have limited access to public transport connections.</li> <li>• Risk of delivery failure leaving a part built community with reduced</li> </ul>

Pros / Advantages	Cons / Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could provide employment uses integrated into the new community as well as community services and facilities.</li> <li>• New communities/ settlements can provide a steady stream of housing and flexibility in delivery of housing supply in response to market demand.</li> <li>• Could provide opportunities for higher density development meaning less land required.</li> <li>• Can provide high and low density housing and a diverse range of housing types and tenures.</li> <li>• Sites across Huntingdonshire could support some local employment growth.</li> <li>• Could increase opportunities for active travel and public transport usage in limited locations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• services and facilities to those promised.</li> <li>• Depending on location it could use higher amount of agricultural land with potential impacts on food security.</li> <li>• Employment growth alongside new communities may not respond to market demand depending on the location.</li> <li>• Risk of encouragement of commuting to other employment destinations.</li> </ul>

## What should we do?

We are now asking you to input into our growth strategy for the next local plan. We have set some options below and would like to know what you think.

### Options - Approach to Strategic Growth

#### **Should we....**

*(You may pick a combination of options or parts of options)*

**Option A - Continue with the existing growth strategy** set out in our current Local Plan (Policy LP2 Strategy for Development). This currently focusses on 75% growth in Spatial Planning Areas and 25% elsewhere e.g. Key Service Centres and Small Settlements.

**Option B** - Focus on **strategic expansions to existing towns**

**Option C** - Focus growth on **public transport corridors**. This corridors would be located around the A428/A421, the guided bus route and future ambitions to provide East West Rail, the proposal to reroute the A141, a a public transport corridor from Cambridge to Alconbury Weald and a possible railway station at Alconbury Weald.

**Option D** - Concentrate development around the **strategic road network** i.e. The A1, A14, A428

**Option E** - Distribute growth across many settlements in Huntingdonshire and limit growth in our towns creating **dispersed growth**.

**Option F** - Provide 1 **one or more new community/ies plus some dispersed growth**.

**Option G** - Consider an alternative option. Please let us know.

## 9 Our Green and Blue Infrastructure

### 9 Our Green and Blue Infrastructure

#### Introduction

Green and blue infrastructure is a key land use which serves to balance built development. It supports a range of functions, including recreation and wildlife as well as landscape enhancement. Green infrastructure includes areas such as parks, green space and woodland while blue infrastructure refers to watercourses, rivers, ponds and lakes.

Green infrastructure is essential to enhancing biodiversity by creating and reinforcing habitats and helping to protect against habitat fragmentation. It aids mitigation and adaptation to climate change and provides multiple benefits for human health.

Access to green and blue infrastructure is also important for people's physical and mental health as well as a place for social activity and local tourism.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you how much you valued green and blue infrastructure and how it could be enhanced and planned for within the updated Local Plan. Suggestions were for:

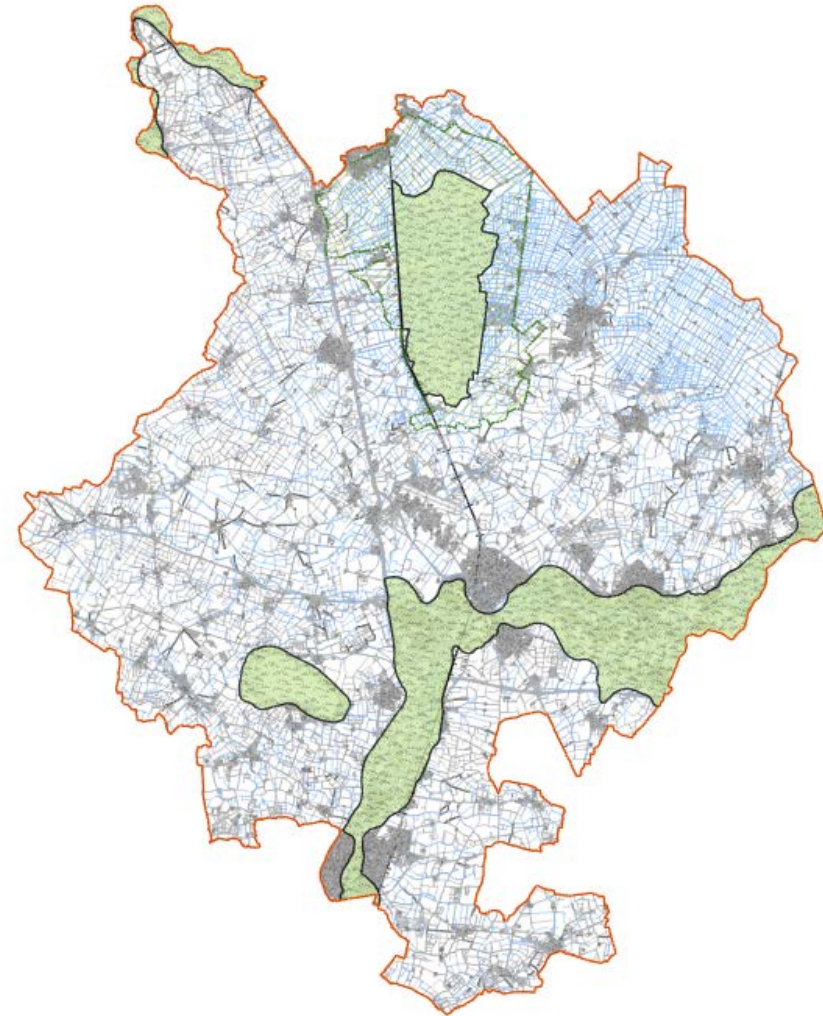
- A clear strategy for the enhancement of existing green infrastructure, creation of new infrastructure and the long-term management of both
- Green and blue infrastructure were considered very important by 75% of respondents to the Easy Read survey
- Green infrastructure to be managed strategically reflecting nature recovery networks and corridors
- A clear green and blue infrastructure framework to inform design across the district with positive opportunities at all scales being encouraged
- Current deficiencies by area be identified along with opportunities where they can be addressed through future development proposals
- The amount of green infrastructure within new developments not to be eroded at the expense of a general approach to biodiversity net gain, sustainable drainage and open space
- Collaboration with neighbouring authorities and partners to deliver cross boundary green infrastructure
- The existing approach in LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 be retained subject to updating to reflect the statutory requirement for biodiversity net gain and also reflect Local Nature Recovery Strategies and Nature Recovery Networks
- Specify a minimum area of green infrastructure for new developments
- The open space standards by Natural England and the Fields Trust be utilised within policies
- The Ouse Valley be designated as a National Landscape (formerly area of outstanding natural beauty), an application was submitted to Natural England in 2013

## What is this about?

Policy '[LP3 Green Infrastructure](#)' of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 designated four Green Infrastructure Priority Areas (GIPAs) and sets out the strategic approach for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. The policy is supported by policy 'LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity'. These GIPAs are the following and shown as green in the next map:

- Great Ouse Valley,
- Great Fen,
- Nene Valley, and
- Grafham Water

These are not only areas of biodiversity and habitat richness but also areas for recreation and enjoyment of the natural environment.



## 9 Our Green and Blue Infrastructure

Huntingdonshire also benefits from a network of nature conservation sites ranging from sites of European significance (Portholme Meadow, Ouse Washes, Woodwalton Fen) to SSSIs, ancient woodland, and then to locally significant sites in the form of County Wildlife Sites. There are also sites that are not designated at any level that still provide benefits. These areas can also face pressure from recreation and with new development this pressure is likely to increase, therefore managing existing areas of green infrastructure and creating new ones is an important planning consideration.

Engagement on the Environmental Innovation and Pride In Place journeys of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy demonstrated the passion local residents have for our landscape and our blue and green infrastructure. Opportunities exist to work with nature rather than against it; to optimise use of nature based solutions to create resilient built and natural environments. Many opportunities crossover between blue and green infrastructure, our approach to climate change and tackling flooding and water.



Green and blue infrastructure should be accessible to all. Natural England promote this through publication of [Access to Natural Greenspace Standards \(ANGSt\) \(revised 2023\)](#) to indicate the scale of space they consider should be available to people within certain distances of their homes. These are:

- Doorstep standard where homes are within 200m of 0.5ha natural greenspace
- Local Standard where homes are within 300m of 2ha natural greenspace
- Neighbourhood Standard where homes are within 1km of 10ha natural greenspace

The public rights of way network is an important way for many people not only to enjoy Huntingdonshire's countryside but also our diverse and extensive green and blue infrastructure by walking, cycling, wheeling or horse-riding. Therefore, maintaining and where possible enhancing access via these networks is also important.

Since our engagement on the Issues Paper, the interim Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network Report (December 2023) was made available. This identifies the following priority areas (also shown in the following map <sup>(3)</sup>):

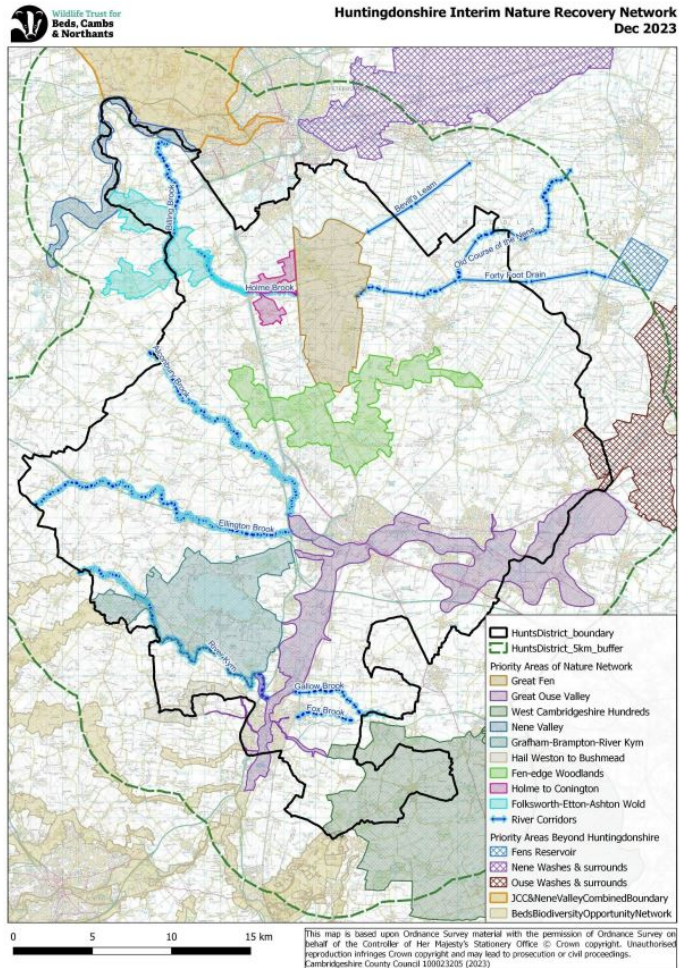
- Fen-edge Woodlands
- Folksworth-Elton-Ashton Wold
- Grafham-Brampton-River Kym
- Great Fen
- Great Ouse Valley
- Hail Weston-Bushmead
- Holme-Conington
- West Cambridgeshire Hundreds
- Nene Valley
- River Corridors (Kym, Alconbury Brook, Ellington Brook & Fen Rivers)

This interim Nature Recovery Network will provide an evidence base to help inform the county-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



## Our Green and Blue Infrastructure

9



### What should we do?

We are now asking you to input how the updated Local Plan can plan for green and blue infrastructure across the district. We have set some options below and would like to know what you think.

#### Options - Green and Blue Infrastructure

**Should we...**  
(You may pick multiple options)

- Option A - Retain the existing four Green Infrastructure Priority Areas**
- Option B - Retain the existing Green Infrastructure Priority Areas and also designate additional areas identified within the Interim Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network**
- Option C - Allocate sites for new green and blue infrastructure and/or additional land for existing green and blue infrastructure to expand**
- Option D - Consider an alternative option. Please let us know.**

## 10 The Approach to Climate Change

### 10 The Approach to Climate Change

#### Introduction

Climate change and responding to the climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges facing our society and is now a much bigger priority than ever before.

The UK government has committed to the target of being net zero carbon by the year 2050 compared to the 1990 baseline. In December 2021, HDC adopted the aspiration of a net carbon zero Huntingdonshire by 2040.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you how the updated Local Plan can help address climate change and reduce carbon emissions. Suggestions were for:

- Working towards a net zero carbon future
- A holistic approach between new development and the retrofitting of the existing building stock, utilising recycled materials and integration of renewable energy
- Flexibility within policies to reflect changing and advancing technology and champion best practices in green technologies
- Locating growth so that communities can live in areas close to employment and daily services via public transport and other more sustainable modes of transport
- The Local Plan be informed by the Climate Strategy and Place Strategy as well as an appropriate technical evidence base
- Maintaining existing carbon sinks by including policies that ensure their protection, conservation and restoration
- Creating new opportunities to store carbon within the natural environment through policies and site allocations
- A flexible approach towards carbon offsetting where there was a clear need and evidence to do so
- Allocating sites for renewable energy and low carbon energy including support for community and/or district heating
- Stipulating policy requirements on the integration of renewable energy and low carbon technologies within developments
- Assessing areas of potential for wind and solar generation which will have the least impact upon communities, the environment and landscape
- Setting higher energy efficiency targets than those set nationally
- Supporting tackling fuel poverty with policies adopting a 'fabric first' approach to ensure that the dwellings are as energy efficient as possible

## What is this about?

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 contains a range of policies aimed at helping to reduce carbon emissions.

Its strategy for development focuses 75% of its housing requirement to spatial planning areas due to their more comprehensive range of services and facilities and access to public and sustainable travel modes. 'LP16 Sustainable Travel' expects new developments to contribute to an enhanced transport network that supports an increasing proportion of journeys being undertaken by sustainable travel modes. 'LP12 Design Implementation' seeks high standards of design including sustainable design and construction methods and is supported by the [Huntingdonshire Design Guide \(2017\)](#). 'LP35 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy' sets out the approach to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and transitioning to a cleaner energy infrastructure network powering Huntingdonshire's homes, businesses and infrastructure. This is supported by the [Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire SPD \(2014\)](#), [Wind Turbine Developments: A Guidance Note for Applicants and Agents](#) and the [Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD \(2022\)](#).

It doesn't have any policies that directly relate to carbon sequestration and offsetting but policies 'LP3 Green Infrastructure', 'LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity' and 'LP31 Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows' recognise the importance of trees, woodlands, hedgerows, and areas of green infrastructure in storing carbon alongside their ecological, recreational and conservation value.

The Climate Change Act (2008) requires us to consider how Local Plan policies can deliver on reducing emissions. Since the adoption of the Local Plan to 2036, there is a much greater emphasis on tackling climate change not just within planning but across all aspects of life. Therefore, the updated Local Plan provides us with an opportunity for Huntingdonshire to play its part. The updated Local Plan can build upon these existing policies and include new policies which require new developments to be as net carbon zero as possible as well as adapting and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

By 2025, the Government plans to introduce the Future Homes and Building Standards which will increase the energy efficiency and reducing the carbon emissions of new homes and non-domestic buildings by between 75-80% on current standards. This will be set through building control regulations. These standards will take a fabric first approach of reducing heating and energy demand to a very low level. By building future buildings to this standard, the Government anticipates that no further energy efficiency retrofit work will be necessary to enable these buildings to become zero-carbon. Therefore, there are changes nationally which development will be required to meet as standard. An option for the Local Plan update is whether we can set higher standards than those set nationally.

Since our Issues Engagement consultation, the NPPF was updated in December 2023 whereby paragraph 164 now requires local authorities, in determining planning applications, to give "significant weight" to the need to support "energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements" through adaptation of buildings. This represents strong in-principle policy support for energy efficiency.

However, also in December 2023 the Government published a Written Ministerial Statement called [Planning – Local Energy Efficiency Standards Update](#). This sets out that any planning policies that propose local energy efficiency standards for buildings that go beyond current or planned buildings regulation should be rejected at examination if they do not have a well-reasoned and robustly costed rationale. It is uncertain whether this statement will be overturned as a legal challenge against it has been made; once an outcome on this challenge has been made we will have a clearer picture on how we should tackle energy efficiency in the local plan.

The implications of the extra costs involved in constructing homes to higher energy efficiency standards and also being supported by appropriate technical assessments relating to the carbon and energy implications of development would be reviewed to assess their impact on the viability of differing scales of development within Huntingdonshire.

## 10 The Approach to Climate Change

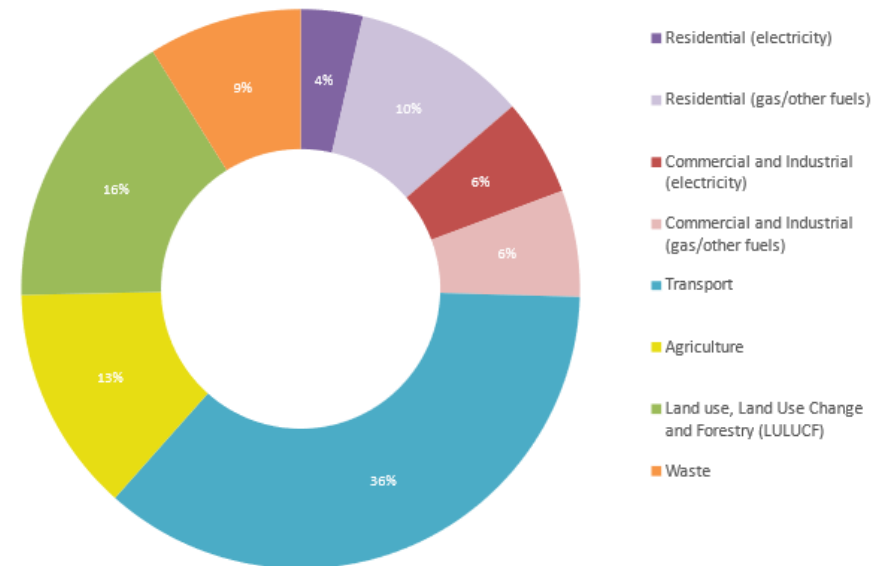
To support the updated Local Plan, we have commissioned climate change evidence. The purpose of this evidence is to shape new development in the district in ways that mitigate and adapt to climate change and will support our transition to a low and eventually net zero carbon future whilst building in local resilience. This evidence will consist of six documents:

- Document A: The role of the Local Plan Update in responding to climate change
- Document B: Position statement and analysis of baseline and forecast future emissions
- Document C: The contribution of sustainable design to achieving net zero carbon
- Document D: Assessment of spatial strategy options
- Document E: Infrastructure and renewable energy
- Document F: Offsetting and sequestering emissions

The aspects considered in this document focus on the more strategic elements of responding to the climate emergency through decarbonisation ambitions and renewable energy generation aspirations. Aspects relating directly to other topics such as green infrastructure are covered in their relevant chapter to avoid duplication. Many of the aspects raised during last year's Issues engagement relate to more detailed approaches to responding to climate change these will be shaped through detailed development management policies, whether these are national or locally prepared.

### Decarbonisation

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Huntingdonshire as of 2021 are estimated to be 1,805 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e (kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent). The breakdown of these emissions is shown in the following chart:



The above chart shows that some 36% of the district's emissions are from transport (1% from buses and rail; 21% from cars, large goods vehicles and motorbikes; and 15% from heavy goods vehicles). This largely as a result from the presence of several strategic road routes that run through the district such as the A1 and A14. Of these emissions, 60% are from A roads, 21% from motorway traffic and 19% from minor roads.

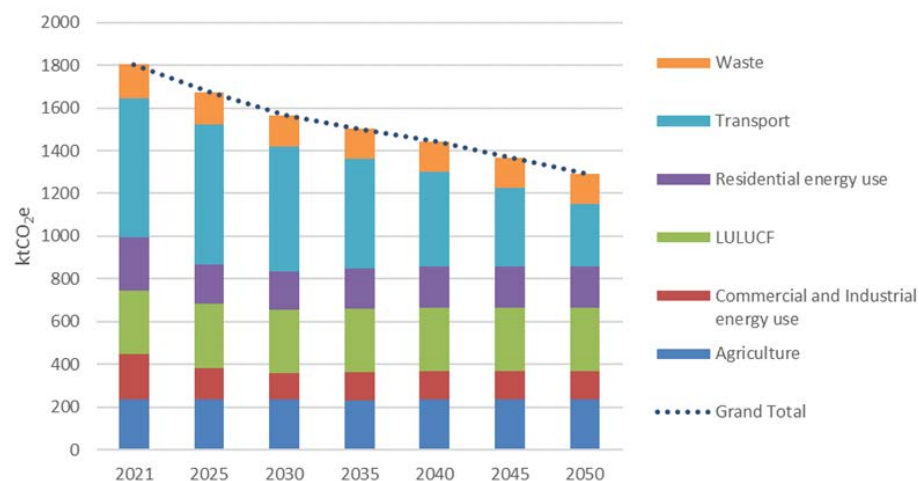
By 2050, if no further changes were made to decrease emissions above those already in the pipeline nationally, our emissions would decrease only by approximately 17%. Therefore, in order to reach net zero carbon more action needs to be taken. Using 2021 as a starting point, district-wide GHG emissions have been projected forward to evaluate potential future pathways towards net zero emissions.

Document B of our climate change evidence sets out three potential decarbonisation scenarios which will help us move more substantially towards a lower carbon future. For all scenarios, it should also be noted that all scenarios assume that grid electricity will be largely decarbonised by the mid-2030s.

**Scenario 1 - Low ambition decarbonisation scenario**

This scenario largely mirrors the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's Energy and Emissions Projections, but assumes that all cars and vans are replaced with electric vehicles by 2050. This reflects the Government's intention to prohibit the sale of petrol and diesel cars and vans after 2035.

In this scenario, GHG emissions would reduce by approximately 28% by 2050. The additional reduction compared with the BAU scenario is entirely attributable to the uptake of electric cars and vans.

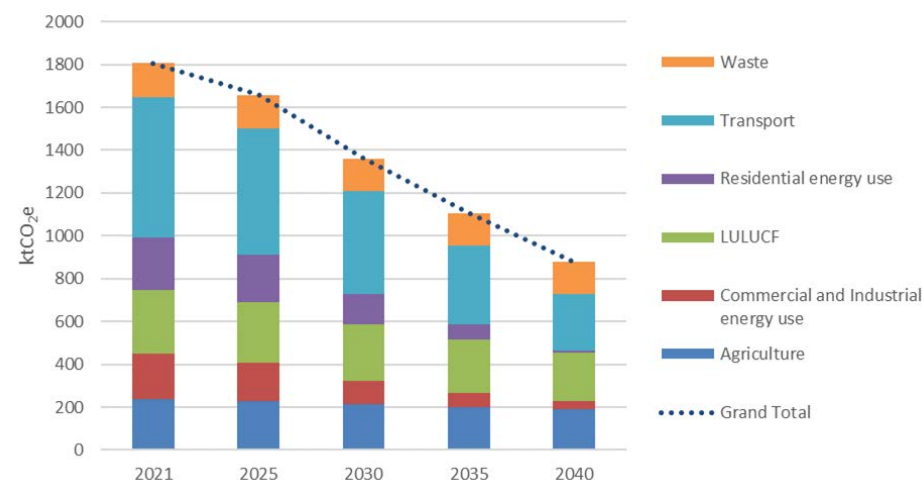


**Scenario 2 - High ambition decarbonisation scenario**

This scenario aims to achieve maximum GHG reductions by 2040 using currently available technologies and practices. Those would need to be adopted quickly to meet a target date 10 years in advance of the national 2050 target, and from that standpoint it is a more ambitious scenario.

This scenario assumes that progress in reducing Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry emissions is slower because this relies on re-wetting a significant amount of peatland that is currently used to grow crops. However, scenario 2 excludes technologies that are not yet commercially available, such as green hydrogen-powered HGVs or carbon capture and storage (CCS). This puts a cap on the scale of reduction that can be achieved.

In this scenario, emissions decrease by roughly 53% by 2040.



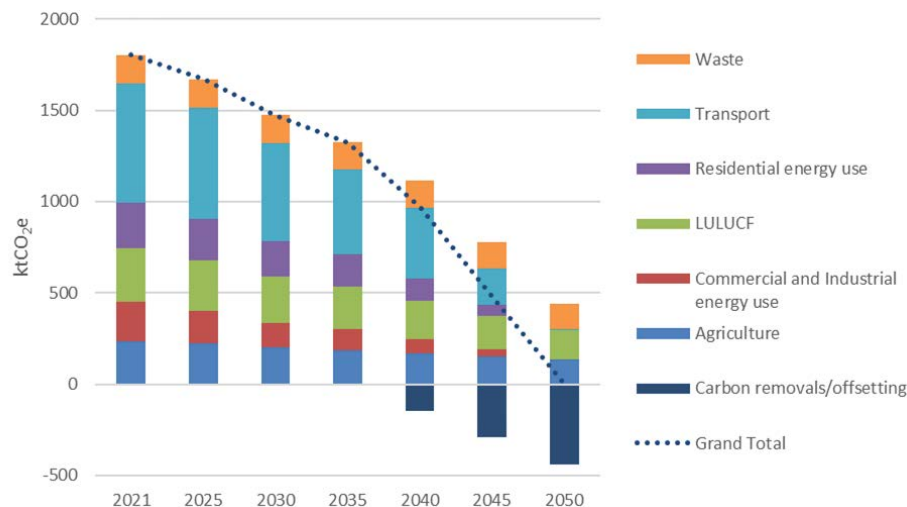
## 10 The Approach to Climate Change

### Scenario 3 - Moderate ambition decarbonisation scenario

This scenario is intended to broadly align with the Climate Change Committee's 'Balanced Pathway' for decarbonisation, both in terms of the measures that are adopted and the timeframes when these take place.

It includes all of the same measures as in Scenario 2, but spreads them out over a longer timeframe (to 2050). It also allows for decarbonising HGVs and use of carbon capture and storage to mitigate residual emissions.

In this scenario, GHG emissions reduce by 76% by 2050 but a net zero is achieved through the use of carbon capture/ removal technologies. As shown in the below these technologies are only factored in after 2040 once they are more established.



### Renewable Energy

Our evidence base looks at the different types of renewable and low carbon energy technologies that may be suitable within the district. Renewable energy comes from sources that are not depleted when used such as wind and solar. Low carbon

energy sources are those which produce power with substantially lower amounts of carbon dioxide emission than are emitted from conventional oil and gas power generation such as heat pumps. Promotion of renewable energy generation is a key way the Local Plan can play a role in responding to climate change and reduce future greenhouse gas emissions.

As of July 2024 operational and consented renewable energy installations in Huntingdonshire are capable of generating almost 325,000 MWh/year of electricity. Within our evidence base Document E: Infrastructure and renewable energy looks at the technical capacity of the district for a range of renewable energy technologies identifying ground-mounted solar PV modules as having the largest technical potential energy output in Huntingdonshire, wind turbines as the second largest potential and roof-mounted solar PV as the third highest potential source. There are significant differences though between the amount of technical capacity and the technology mix that could actually be deployed in the district to deliver renewable and low carbon energy generation. The deployability of wind turbines and ground-mounted solar PV is often affected by complex site specific constraints. Document E looks at two potential deployment scenarios for Huntingdonshire to help us move towards local generation of much of the electricity we will need in the future. Along with the rest of the UK our electricity system will need to undergo significant transformation on the path to net zero and there will be a significant increase in electricity demand. Our evidence suggests that our total energy demand in the district will be 1,549 GWh/year by 2046.

### Scenario 1 - Business as Usual

The anticipated level of deployment of renewable and low carbon energy technologies under this scenario would reflect their recent and existing deployment within Huntingdonshire and the wider UK. This would support renewable and low carbon energy meeting 39% of expected demand by 2046 and 41% by 2050.

# The Approach to Climate Change 10

## Wind Turbines

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Installed capacity	73 MW	133 MW	143 MW
Equivalent scale of technology	29 x 2.5 MW turbines	53 x 2.5 MW turbines	57 x 2.5 MW turbines
Potential CO2 savings	16,940 tonnes/year	31,067 tonnes/year	33,327 tonnes/year
Percentage of identified technical capacity required			2.9%

## Ground-mounted Solar PV

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Installed capacity	143 MW	308 MW	335 MW
Equivalent scale of technology	14 x 10 MW solar farms	31 x 10 MW solar farms	33 x 10 MW solar farms
Potential CO2 savings	16,873 tonnes/year	36,260 tonnes/year	39,362 tonnes/year
Percentage of identified technical capacity required			0.9%

## Roof-mounted Solar PV

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Installed capacity	25 MW	95 MW	106 MW
Equivalent scale of technology	4,879 detached dwelling solar installations	18,223 detached dwelling solar installations	20,334 detached dwelling solar installations
Potential CO2 savings	2,986 tonnes/year	11,151 tonnes/year	12,442 tonnes/year
Percentage of identified technical capacity required			8.5%



## 10 The Approach to Climate Change

### Scenario 2 - Ambitious approach meeting national targets

This scenario is based on achieving a rate of renewable and low carbon energy development that would be needed for Huntingdonshire to meet our share of renewable energy generation in line with the Climate Change Committee's 6th Carbon Budget. This assumes that 80% of Huntingdonshire's energy demand will be met by renewable energy by 2050. This would support renewable and low carbon energy meeting 79% of expected demand by 2046 and 80% by 2050.

#### Wind Turbines

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Installed capacity	73 MW	207 MW	214 MW
Equivalent scale of technology	29 x 2.5 MW turbines	83 x 2.5 MW turbines	86 x 2.5 MW turbines
Potential CO2 savings	16,940 tonnes/year	48,285 tonnes/year	50,072 tonnes/year
Percentage of identified technical capacity required			4.3%

#### Ground-mounted Solar PV

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Installed capacity	143 MW	409 MW	424 MW
Equivalent scale of technology	14 x 10 MW solar farms	41 x 10 MW solar farms	42 x 10 MW solar farms

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Potential CO2 savings	16,873 tonnes/year	48,093 tonnes/year	49,873 tonnes/year
Percentage of identified technical capacity required			1.2%

#### Roof-mounted Solar PV

Electricity generation per year	Existing situation	2046	2050
Installed capacity	25 MW	453 MW	477 MW
Equivalent scale of technology	4,879 detached dwelling solar installations	87,057 detached dwelling solar installations	91,742 detached dwelling solar installations
Potential CO2 savings	2,986 tonnes/year	53,270 tonnes/year	56,137 tonnes/year
Percentage of identified technical capacity required			38.1%



## What should we do?

We are now asking you to input how the updated Local Plan can plan to help reduce Huntingdonshire's carbon emission and plan for low and net zero carbon development across the district. We have set some options below and would like to know what you think.

### Decarbonisation scenarios

Our Climate Change evidence puts forward three possible decarbonisation scenarios that we might take going forward in the Local Plan Update.

#### Options - Decarbonisation Scenarios

##### Should we....

*(Please pick one option.)*

**Option A - Business as usual** with electric vehicle uptake reflecting recent trends

**Option B - Maximise reductions by 2040** using current technologies

**Option C** - Follow the national **Climate Change Commission's 'Balanced pathway'** approach

### Renewable Energy

Our Climate Change evidence puts forward three possible deployable renewable energy (level of renewable energy that could be delivered) scenarios that we might take going forward in the Local Plan Update.

#### Options - Renewable Energy

##### Should we....

*(Please pick one option.)*

**Option A** - Business as usual with renewable and low carbon energy meeting 39% of expected demand by 2046 and 41% by 2050

**Option B** - Ambitious approach meeting national targets with renewable and low carbon energy meeting 79% of expected demand by 2046 and 80% by 2050

## 11 Tackling Flooding and Water

### 11 Tackling Flooding and Water

#### Introduction

Huntingdonshire sits within the driest region in the country, the Rivers Great Ouse, Nene and Kym run through the district and Grafham Water Reservoir plays an important role in the supply of water to our district and the surrounding areas. Some areas of Huntingdonshire located in the Fens are below sea level. With these key issues and the effects of climate change it is important that we understand the impact of flooding, water supply, water quality and wastewater treatment in our district. Some of these issues will be addressed to a certain extent by external organisations such as water companies however the Local Plan can and should also look at what it can do by creating policies to address these issues - where able - which then can then be used to identify suitable locations for growth and be used to assess planning applications.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked for your thoughts on flooding, water supply and water pollution. Suggestions were for:

- Avoiding development in high-risk flood areas, prioritising brownfield development.
- Requiring flood resilient buildings and flood resistant construction.
- Implementing sustainable drainage systems (SUDs), multifunctional greenspace, nature-based strategies and natural filtration to reduce pollutants.
- Avoiding sites that are reliant on flood defences or ensuring that they are sufficiently resilient to remain safe.
- Ensuring developments provide betterment on site and downstream.
- Considering catchment based, up and down-stream impacts and cumulative impacts of development for flooding and water issues.
- Ensuring adequate long-term ownership, funding, management and maintenance of flood risk management systems.
- Requiring rainwater/storm water harvesting, enabling smart water communities and water efficiency measures, promoting water neutrality.
- Using building regulations for water use, efficiency and pollution control.
- Ensuring wastewater treatment capacity, drains, sewerage system and water supply can support new growth without increasing risk.
- Avoiding negative impact on waterbodies and water quality, approaches to surface run-off should be considered.
- Considering the whole water cycle process and integrated water management approach for developments.
- Ensuring policies are flexible to adapt to future changes in technology, identify evidence required for planning applications and programmes that support community resilience.
- Accounting for the impact of climate change and extreme weather events.

## What is this about?

The [Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy 2050](#) sets out two water related objectives (pathways) within their Environmental Innovation chapter (journey). These look specifically at reducing water consumption and retrofitting sustainable drainage systems. These are important actions that can help to support our communities and were developed through public and stakeholder engagement, reflecting what is important to our residents, businesses and the district.

Our current [Local Plan](#) includes specific policies on flooding and water, specifically LP5 Flood Risk, LP6 Waste Water Management and LP 15 Surface Water. These policies look at acceptable locations for development, flood management and mitigation, flood risk assessments, waste water capacity in terms of the sewer network and water treatment and the sustainable management of surface water.

We recently published an update of our [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment \(Level 1\) and Water Cycle Study \(stage 1\)](#) for Huntingdonshire. These documents took an integrated approach to flooding and water issues and took into account the impacts from the wider area. We will be using both of these documents to help us decide what we will ask for in new developments and also where these developments should be.

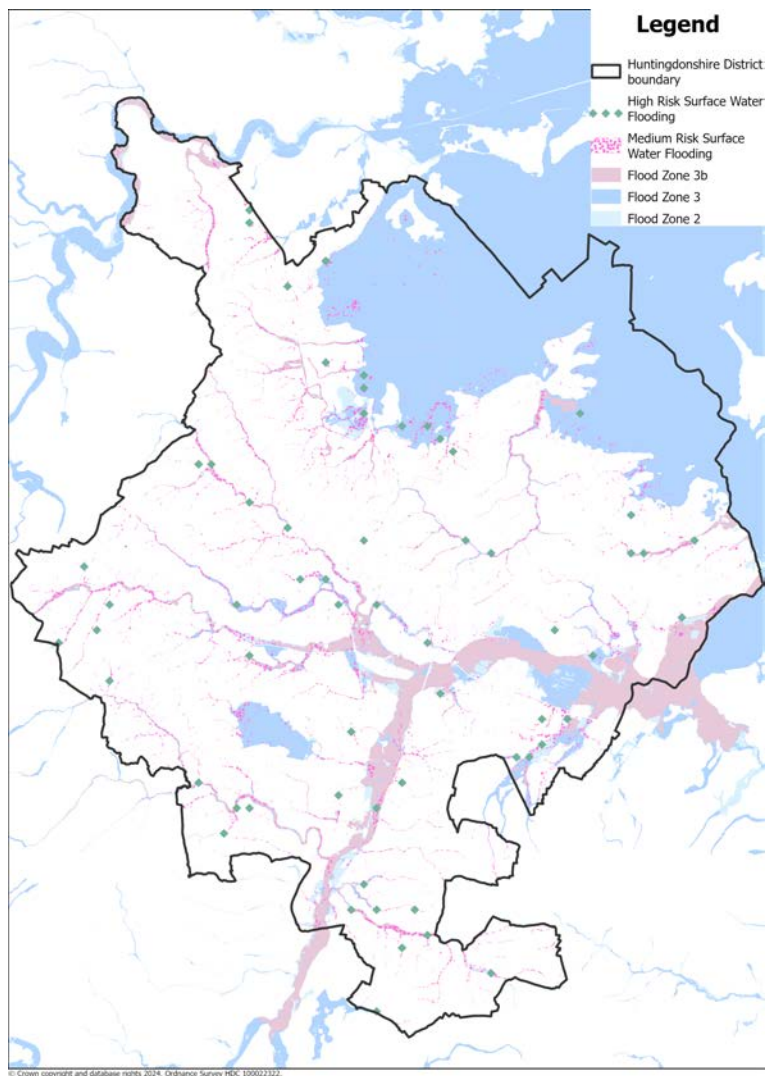
The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) provided a high-level assessment of sites that were submitted to us in the Call for Sites and provided high level screening on their status and relative flood risk. It also provided maps showing flood risk in Huntingdonshire, taking into account all sources of flooding including but not limited to surface water, groundwater, rivers etc. It also made the following recommendations:

- No development within the functional floodplain, unless development is water compatible;
- Surface water flood risk should be considered with equal importance as fluvial risk;
- The sequential approach must be followed in terms of site allocation and site layout;

- Ensure site-specific flood risk assessments are carried out to a suitable standard, where required, with full consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and Cambridge Water;
- Appropriate investigation and use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS);
- Natural flood management techniques must be considered for mitigation;
- Phasing of development must be carried out to avoid possible cumulative impacts; and
- Planning permission for at risk sites can only be granted following an acceptable site-specific flood risk assessments being submitted, in line with the local plan, SFRA and National Planning Policy Framework.

The impact of climate change on our district is an important consideration with numerous reports that the risk to life from flooding could increase significantly, whilst also limiting sustainable locations for growth. The map below shows flood risk from rivers and surface water. With flood zone 2 represents a medium probability of flooding from rivers and the sea, Flood zone 3a a high probability and flood zone 3b is land where water has to be stored in times of flood. More information can be found here on [fluvial](#) (rivers and sea) and [surface water flood risk](#).

## 11 Tackling Flooding and Water



The Water Cycle Study set out a baseline for Huntingdonshire presenting information on the status of water resources, wastewater infrastructure and water quality including the environmental status and water balance/supply. It also provided an analysis of potential integrated water management approaches that could be used and how beneficial they would be. These approaches included: green infrastructure, blue infrastructure, diversifying water resources, leakage reduction, efficient fixtures and fittings, education, rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling and sustainable drainage systems.

Water supply is provided to Huntingdonshire by Anglian Water and Cambridge Water. The availability of water, and the impact of new water demand on the environment, has led to restrictions/delays on granting planning permission and a requirement to demonstrate water-neutral development in the Cambridge Water area, specifically in Cambridge itself. However, this is also important to Huntingdonshire as some of our towns and villages fall within the Cambridge Water area including, St Ives, Ramsey, Warboys, Bluntisham, Somersham and other villages in the east of the district. The Government published [guidance in March 2024](#) setting out how it would address this challenge in the Greater Cambridge area. This included long and short term responses ranging from the provision of new infrastructure such as the Grafham pipeline transfer and the [Fens and Lincolnshire Reservoirs](#) to piloting schemes such as water positive development by reducing water use in new buildings; reusing more water; and offsetting water use. The guidance also noted that water reuse systems can typically lower drinking water consumption from 144 down to 80 litres per person per day, a significant reduction below that of the current Building Regulations requirements.

In December 2023, the Government also published a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) saying that in areas of serious water stress and where water scarcity is inhibiting the adoption of Local Plans or the granting of planning permission for homes, local planning authorities are encouraged to work with the Environment Agency and delivery partners to agree standards tighter than the 110 litres per day that is set out in current guidance.

Our Water Cycle Study notes that Huntingdonshire is in an area of serious water stress and there is sufficient justification for the tighter water efficiency target currently allowed for under building regulations of 110l/p/d (usage based on litres, per person, per day).

There are 33 Water Recycling Centres (WRC) within or serving in Huntingdonshire. Of these, 29 are expected to meet the needs of growth anticipated within the period of the adopted Local Plan (up to 2036). Ten WRCs are predicted to exceed their permit limit once committed growth is taken into account meaning that upgrades may be required to support any future growth in these areas. We will need to understand the future capacity of areas and may need to consider the phasing of some developments to allow for capacity to be available.

Our Water Cycle Study also notes that growth during the local plan period will also increase the discharge of treated wastewater from WRCs in Huntingdonshire. There is a potential for this to cause a deterioration in water quality in watercourses and this must be carefully considered. A significant deterioration in water quality is not acceptable under the Water Framework Directive. The sensitivity analysis suggests that ammonia concentrations in watercourses within Huntingdonshire may be most sensitive to increases in the discharge of treated wastewater.

### What should we do?

Our findings from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study strongly reflect the concerns you raised with us. Together these provide a focus on what our local plan policies should include. We will be using and building on the options and recommendations presented to us in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1) and Water Cycle Study (Stage 1) documents by producing Level 2 and Stage 2 assessments. These will provide us with more detailed information and help inform what we may ask for in new developments and also where these developments should be. Some requirements are already required through national policy and guidance, for example requiring major developments to "incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that

this would be inappropriate" and that there are clear maintenance and adoption arrangements in place for the lifetime of the development. Therefore we have only set out some additional options below and would like to know what you think.

### Integrated Flood and Water Management

National Planning Practice Guidance sets out some potential approaches to natural flood management. [Natural flood management techniques](#) use natural processes to manage flooding, they also can assist in providing additional benefits to people, the environment and wildlife. Techniques proposed include measures such as land management e.g. tree planting, making green space to allow flood water to flow or collect and removing impermeable surfaces to allow water to soak away. River restoration is another technique that could be used, this could include removing culverts and physical restraints, increasing the river capacity by reintroducing meanders or even using natural techniques to slow the flow of the river.

#### Options - Integrated Flood and Water Management 1

##### Should we....

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Meet national requirements only.**

**Option B - Require natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach** to flood risk management and impact on water quality **on all developments** (excluding extensions).

**Option C - Require natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach** to flood risk management and water quality **on all developments in high and medium risk areas** (excluding extensions).

**Option D - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

## 11 Tackling Flooding and Water

### Options - Integrated Flood and Water Management 2

#### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Ask that developments do not increase flood risk elsewhere**

**Option B - Ask that all developments seek a betterment of existing flood risk** both within the site and in surrounding areas.

**Option C - Ask that developments** (excluding minor extensions) **in high or medium risk areas seek betterment of existing flood risk** both within the site and in surrounding areas.

**Option D - Require developments to provide surface water management plans** where applicable, addressing run off rates.

**Option E - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

### Options - Water Efficiency in Residential Development

#### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Have no policy, meaning that all development would meet existing and future Building Regulations Standards of 125 litres per person per day** (possible future equivalent of 105 l/p/d) for residential buildings.

**Option B - Ask that all residential developments meet Building Regulations optional standards or future equivalent and require 110 l/p/d** (possible future equivalent of 100 l/p/d) as in the current Local Plan.

**Option C - Ask that all residential developments go above current/future Building Regulations standards and require up to 80 l/p/d** if practicable, investigating opportunities for efficient fixtures and fittings, rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling <sup>(4)</sup>

**Option D - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

### Water Efficiency - Residential Development

Building regulations currently ask for residential developments to either require buildings to meet water efficiency targets of 125 litres per person per day; or an optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day which should be set out in a Local Plan. Our current Local Plan asks for 110 litres per person per day. A Thames Water study of customers with smart meters showed that households did not achieve the intended performance levels. The Government are considering amending building regulations to require 105 litres per person per day (l/p/d) and 100 l/p/d where there is a clear local need in the future.

<sup>4</sup> Government published [guidance in March 2024](#) noted that water reuse systems can typically lower drinking water consumption from 144 down to 80 litres per person per day, a significant reduction below that of the current Building Regulations requirements.

### Water Efficiency - Non-Household Development

Non-household developments such as businesses currently have no national requirement for water efficiency. Our current Local Plan asks that these developments address water issues by meeting Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard 'Good' as a minimum. BREEAM is widely accepted as the best way to improve standards for non-residential buildings moving towards a zero-carbon target. The [BREEAM](#) New Construction Standard scores developments across nine categories, four of which are related to water: water consumption (called WAT01), water monitoring (WAT02), leak detection (WAT03) and water efficient equipment (WAT04). The score/credits are based on what a development includes e.g. providing certain fixtures, fittings or systems, which then produces a percentage score and a rating from "Pass" to "Outstanding":

1. Outstanding: Less than the top 1% of UK new non-domestic buildings (innovator)
2. Excellent: Top 10% of UK new non-domestic buildings (best practice)
3. Very Good: Top 25% of UK new non-domestic buildings (advanced good practice)
4. Good: Top 50% of UK new non-domestic buildings (intermediate good practice)
5. Pass: Top 75% of UK new non-domestic buildings (standard good practice)

WAT01 specifically looks at reducing the demand for potable water through the provision of efficient sanitary fittings, rainwater collection and water recycling systems, WAT02 at monitoring water use, WAT 03 looks at appropriate technologies designed into buildings to control flow and actively detect leaks and WAT04 reducing water consumption for non-sanitary water uses by using efficient systems for water-using processes.

### Options - Water Efficiency in Non-Household Development

#### **Should we....**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

#### **Option A - Have no policy.**

**Option B - Ask that all 'non-household' development be required to achieve 'outstanding'** for category Wat 01 of BREEAM unless demonstrated impracticable

**Option C - Ask that all 'non-household' development be required to achieve 'excellent'** for category Wat 01 of BREEAM unless demonstrated impracticable

**Option D - For larger employment developments, ask that all 'non-household' developments achieve 'excellent' or 'very good' for WAT 03 on water leak detection and prevention** unless demonstrated impracticable.

**Option E - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

### The Cambridge Water Area

Some of our towns and villages fall within the Cambridge Water area including, St Ives, Ramsey, Warboys, Bluntisham, Somersham and other villages in the east of the district. Here the availability of water, and the impact of new water demand on the environment is having an even more immediate impact.

## 11 Tackling Flooding and Water

### Question - The Cambridge Water Area

Would you support even stricter restrictions on water efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings for settlements that fall within the Cambridge Water Area? What would they be? Or would you suggest a different approach?



## 12 Housing Tenures and Housing Mix

### Introduction

Housing tenures refer to the legal arrangements by which people occupy their homes. They are broadly split into market housing tenures and affordable housing tenures. Owner occupation is the most common market tenure in Huntingdonshire which is where people own their homes either outright or with a mortgage. The private rented tenure is where people have an agreement with landlord (an individual or company) to rent their home at full market value. Affordable housing is defined by the government in the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) as 'Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to homes ownership and/ or is for essential local workers'. This can include homes for rent at levels fixed below private market rates, designated 'first homes' sold at significant discounts below market rates specifically for first time buyers and other discounted routes to home ownership such as shared equity where people partly buy and partly rent their home.

Housing mix looks at the type and size of homes that might be built and the need for homes to meet the requirements of different types and sizes of households. For instance, it considers whether homes should be built as houses, apartments or bungalows, and whether they should be detached, semi-detached or terraced. The size of homes in this case refers to the number of bedrooms rather than the amount of space in each room. It also involves provision of housing specifically to meet the needs of older people, such as retirement housing and provision of residential homes. National policy encourages people to build their own homes, known as self and custom build, which is also considered in this section.



### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you what your priorities were for provision of affordable housing and the mix of sizes and types of new homes that should be built. Suggestions were for:

- Concentration of affordable housing in locations with access to services, employment and public transport
- New homes should be designed to be low cost to run
- Requirements for affordable housing to respond to local evidence
- Provision of a choice of affordable housing tenures including those for sale
- Additional sites to be allocated to make up for any shortfall of affordable housing provision on sites where a reduced proportion is agreed
- Encouragement of rural exceptions housing in small communities to meet local residents' needs only
- A flexible approach to be taken to housing mix to reflect individual site circumstances and market changes
- A mix of new housing to cater for changing demographics and local needs
- Provision of specialist housing to meet older people's needs; preferably within active town and village communities
- Homes that are flexible enough to cope with modern lifestyles
- Flexibility for self and custom build housing to be built on the edges of settlements to meet market demand

## 12 Housing Tenures and Housing Mix

### What is this about?

#### Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

The most recent evidence on the types of homes that we need in Huntingdonshire can be found in the [Housing Needs of Specific Groups for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk](#) which was completed in October 2021. This provides a base to look at for options now but we intend to get updated evidence to help us decide what sort of housing the Local Plan Update should aim to deliver before it is finished to make sure our future policies are up-to-date.

In Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 policy '[LP24 Affordable Housing Provision](#)' sets a target to include 40% affordable housing when a development scheme includes 11 or more homes or 1,001m<sup>2</sup> or more of residential floorspace. Of this 40% affordable housing around 70% should be for social rent with the rest as other affordable tenures. The policy also allows for the viability of a proposed development site to be taken into account to help make it deliverable; the first adjustment is to the mix of tenures, for example to include a higher proportion of shared equity housing than normal and only if this can't make a site deliverable is consideration given to lowering the percentage of affordable housing below the 40% target. It does not specify the types of places in which affordable housing may be supported but does expect the housing to meet the requirements of the local community.

Since the Local Plan to 2036 was adopted there have been several national changes. The 2023 NPPF requires affordable housing within any 'major' housing scheme which means where 10 or more homes are to be built or if the site is over 0.5ha. As the national target is newer than the adopted Local Plan this has to be applied to planning applications. In 2021 a 'First Homes' scheme was introduced to help first time buyers get into the housing market. This expects 25% of all affordable housing within a development to be made available for sale under this scheme at a discount of at least 30% below the market price for the property.

The Housing Needs of Specific Groups for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk suggests that just over 40% of all new homes would need to be built as affordable housing to rent to meet the expected level of need. A small amount of extra need

for affordable homes to buy takes the total affordable housing requirement to around 44%. This level may change slightly when new evidence is prepared looking at the most up-to-date levels of need.

Policy '[LP25 Housing Mix](#)' of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 promotes an evidence led approach to the mix of homes to be provided in new developments using assessments for the Cambridge and Peterborough housing market areas supplemented with any local assessments of housing need and demand such as those which may be done by or for Town and Parish Councils to support preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.

People's choice of market housing to buy or privately rent is usually shaped by a combination of the size of home they need, what they aspire to and what they can afford. Size choices for 'First homes' and shared ownership properties are shaped by eligibility criteria focussed on what people can afford but developments tend to include more 1 to 3 bedroom homes than many market housing schemes. In contrast, the size of affordable housing to rent that people live in is shaped mainly by the number and ages of people who will live in the home and homes tend to be fully occupied rather than having any spare rooms. The size mix of affordable housing is usually shaped by known need from the Housing Register at the time. The Housing Needs of Specific Groups for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk suggests that the greatest demand for market housing is for new 3 bedroom homes with 2 bedroom homes being most needed for affordable housing both to rent or to buy. Just over 70% of new market homes built over the last few years have had 3 or 4 bedrooms. In contrast, just over 50% of all affordable homes have had 2 bedrooms and 25% have had 3.

#### Specialist and Supported Housing

The Housing Needs of Specific Groups for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk also considered the need for a range of supported and specialist housing uses. Within Huntingdonshire the main categories for this are the need for homes designed to meet the additional needs of older people with limited mobility or additional care requirements, residential care homes and nursing homes and plots of land for people wishing to self or custom build their own homes.

## Housing Tenures and Housing Mix 12

As required by government we keep a register of people who are looking for land on which to build their own home. Self and custom build housing varies significantly from people who literally want to build their home themselves to those looking to commission an architect to design a home to their own requirements and then pay for it to be built with many combinations in between. The most frequent reason people give for wanting to build their own home is for it to be built to higher environmental standards than are generally available, the second most common reason is the wish for a larger property and the third most common is that people want to improve or learn building and construction skills. The majority of people on the self and custom build register want to build a 4 bedroom detached house. The [register](#) allows people to select multiple locations where they might like to live. Around 55% of those registered state they are very flexible about where they would like to live selecting the 'anywhere in Huntingdonshire' option. Around 45% would like a home in the countryside outside any settlement and around 40% would prefer to be in a village rather than any of the market towns.

Policy 'LP26 Specialist Housing' guides provision of self-contained specialist housing and residential institutions for people with particular support needs. The proportion of people over the age of 75 living in Huntingdonshire is expected to nearly double through the next two decades. Many will find ordinary market or affordable homes meet their needs. However, some will need more specialised places to live such as housing with support, housing with care and residential care homes or nursing homes due to additional mobility, care or medical needs. Around 1,700 homes with support are expected to be needed, 1,000 homes with care and around 1,800 new bedspaces in residential care or nursing homes. Housing with support is generally described as being self-contained where the property has its own individual front door and adequate kitchen facilities for the resident(s) to prepare meals. Sometimes such housing may be clustered together into retirement communities, variously known as retirement living, retirement villages, continuing care communities or integrated retirement communities. These are characterised by self-contained properties supported by a range of communal facilities, often a restaurant, organised social activities and provision of support services including an amount of care where needed. Residential care homes may be occupied by any group of individuals in need of specialist support which can include people with profound multiple learning disabilities, short-term medical needs or homes for looked after children.



### Gypsy, Traveller, and Boat-dweller Accommodation

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are recognised as ethnic groups and are protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010. Through the national [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) we are required to assess and plan for the needs for culturally appropriate accommodation for these communities. Boat-dwellers include those for whom it is a lifestyle or financial choice and bargee travellers. An accommodation needs assessment of boat dwellers is a statutory duty under the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

In Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 policies '[LP27 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople](#)' and '[LP38 Water Related Development](#)' provide guidance on where proposals for these specialist accommodation types will be supported. The national [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) was updated in December 2023. This reverted the definition of Gypsies and Travellers to the pre-2015 definition as being all those of travelling background, not just those who are currently travelling. This was to recognise the Gypsy and Traveller status of those who have given up travelling due to old age or disability and allow for stability for educational needs. It has made a significant change to our updated evidence Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling

## 12 Housing Tenures and Housing Mix

Showpeople and Boat-dwellers Accommodation Assessment 2024 as this no longer excludes Gypsies and Travellers who no longer travel due to disability, acting as carers or the elderly from those whose accommodation needs are to be considered through the Local Plan Update. The assessment indicates that there are 51 Gypsy and Traveller sites in the district including permanently authorised, temporarily authorised, unauthorised and sites with planning applications where no decision has yet been issued. In total these contain 144 pitches of which 36 are currently vacant. The assessment indicates that the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches is an average of 6 new pitches a year from 2023/24 to 2045/46, weighted towards need in the earlier part with a shortfall of 60 authorised pitches in the first 5 years and 54 in the remainder of the period. The assessment indicates a potential available supply of up to 104 pitches through regularising existing unauthorised ones and expansion and/or intensification of existing sites. The assessment indicated there is no current need for plots for Travelling Showpeople.

Huntingdonshire has many long established marinas which focus primarily on leisure use. However, residential houseboats are established in several with the greatest concentration being at Hartford Marina on the eastern edge of Huntingdon. Information from the owners/ managers of marinas has identified limited need for additional residential moorings.



### What should we do?

We are now asking you to tell us what the Local Plan Update's priorities should be for the mix and tenures of homes to be built over the next couple of decades. We have set some options below and would like to know what you think.

#### Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

##### Options - Affordable Housing Proportion

###### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Try to maximise the proportion of affordable housing within each site of 10 or more new homes**

**Option B - Ask for the same proportion of affordable housing in all schemes for 10 or more new homes**

**Option C - Ask for a lower proportion of affordable housing in very large schemes which need to provide substantial infrastructure such as a new bridge or major road improvements**

**Option D - Ask for for a lower percentage than we do now in all schemes, accepting that this may mean we have to build more homes overall to meet the level of need for affordable housing**

**Option E - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

## Housing Tenures and Housing Mix 12

### Options - Affordable Housing Location

#### Should we...

*(Please pick one option)*

**Option A - Only allow affordable housing to be built in towns and villages with existing services**, such as a shop, primary school or village hall, as appropriate to the likely needs of expected occupiers

**Option B - Allow affordable housing to be built in all towns and villages** to support existing communities

**Option C - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

Note: Any policy relating to housing size would focus on shaping new market homes as the mix of affordable homes provided in any new development would be expected to respond to the need at the time.

### Options - Size and Type of Housing

#### Should we...

*(Please pick one option)*

**Option A - Allow the market to entirely decide what size and type of housing to build** reflecting what there is most demand for at the time

**Option B - Allow a flexible approach as long as the site promoter can show how the mix of homes they want to build will contribute towards a mixed and inclusive local community**

**Option C - Specify percentage ranges for each number of bedrooms that a mix might comprise on any scheme to allow limited flexibility**, accepting the mix might date as new evidence comes forward

**Option D - Require all schemes of 10 or more homes to show how they will widen the range of housing types and sizes available** reflecting our latest evidence on housing need and demand supplemented by any local assessments of need and demand

**Option E - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

### Specialist and Supported Housing

### Options - Supported and Specialist Housing

#### Should we...

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Only allow self-contained supported and specialist housing to be built in towns and villages with existing services**, such as a shop, village hall, and regular public transport services as appropriate to the expected occupiers

**Option B - Support provision of one or more larger scale integrated retirement communities** to include purpose designed homes supported by a range of communal facilities and support services

**Option C - Allow schemes for up to 20 self-contained retirement homes to be built in any town and village**

**Option D - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

## 12 Housing Tenures and Housing Mix



### Options - Residential Care and Nursing Homes

#### **Should we...**

*(Please pick one option)*

**Option A - Expect that all residential care and nursing homes be built in towns and villages with regular public transport services** to provide access to the wider community for residents able to travel with or without support, and to make sure people working in the homes have a choice or means of transport

**Option B - Allow residential care and nursing homes to be built in all towns and villages, and in countryside locations where this would benefit the specific care needs of intended residents**

**Option C - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

### Options - Self and Custom Build Homes

#### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Allocate small sites for groups of less than 10 self and custom build homes within and on the edges of towns and villages**

**Option B - Expect all developments for 50 or more homes to include 5% of plots for self and custom build at a fair market price** with a mechanism included to allow any plots which no self or custom builder is interested in buying after at least one year of marketing to revert to being built by a housebuilder

**Option C - Treat proposals for self and custom build homes exactly the same as we would any other housing proposal in the same type of location**

**Option D - Support community led group self and custom build projects in locations where other housing might not be supported** provided that there is clear evidence of community support for the scheme

**Option E - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

## Gypsy, Traveller, and Boat-dweller Accommodation

### Options - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs

#### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Look for additional sites to allocate to meet needs** for private and/ or social rented pitches

**Option B - Allow for extensions to existing sites which already have permanent planning permission**

**Option C - Allow existing temporarily permitted sites to remain permanently** subject to adequate flood management

**Option D - Continue to rely on a criteria-based policy approach** specifying elements such as proximity to primary schools and GP surgeries to indicate what land may be suitable

**Option E - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

### Options - Boat Dwellers Accommodation

#### **Should we...**

*(You may pick multiple options)*

**Option A - Look for sites to allocate for new permanent residential moorings with access to basic facilities** including water provision, waste disposal and electric hook-ups as well as being close to a safe walking or cycling route to local shops and services

**Option B - Allow a proportion of moorings within existing leisure marinas to be used as permanent residential moorings**

**Option C - Work with partners to ensure access to basic facilities for boat dwellers** who prefer to continuously cruise

**Option D - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

## 13 Transport and Connectivity

### 13 Transport and Connectivity

#### Introduction

Huntingdonshire benefits from extensive transport and connectivity networks. The East Coast mainline railway runs directly through the centre of the district with stations at St Neots and Huntingdon. We have access to the strategic road network through the A1, A1(M), A14, A428 and A47. The district is also served by the A141, A1123, A1096 and A605; parts of the district have limited highway accessibility, particularly the north eastern area. An extensive network of public footpaths, cycleways, bridleways and byways provide active travel opportunities. Waterways provide boat and barge travel opportunities although these are almost entirely leisure focussed rather than serving as a means of day-to-day travel. Technology is expected to continue to evolve and change the way we travel and connect with each other and with employment, retail, education and service providers.



#### What you told us

In our Issues consultations held between April and July 2023 we asked you how the updated Local Plan can respond to transport and connectivity challenges and opportunities in the district. Suggestions were for:

- The Local Plan should actively manage patterns of growth to reduce the need to travel and support non-car transport choices.
- New strategic sites should be close to existing residential and economic growth areas to support provision of sustainable travel and reduce the need to travel.
- A141 upgrade between Huntingdon and St Ives is needed to reduce congestion, open opportunities for further sustainable growth, and improve connectivity into the Fens.
- Should build on excellent connections to the strategic road network to maximise benefits of these.
- Both that development should be focused in the most sustainable locations and that opportunities related to future rail services should be taken.
- Access to railway stations and other key facilities by sustainable travel modes should be improved.
- Future development sites should be accessible by or capable of supporting public transport services.
- Provision of more and more frequent local buses serving villages is needed facilitating connections to larger places and current and planned main public transport hubs.
- Future allocations should be supported by existing walking and cycling routes and prioritise provision of high quality active travel infrastructure.
- Green infrastructure networks should be integrated into new development to facilitate active travel options.
- The public right of way network should be protected and enhanced.
- The Local Plan should require a design-led approach to car parking with flexible policies to respond to changing vehicle technologies and people's



needs and to reflect the location's accessibility by alternative transport modes.

- HGV parking should include provision of toilets, showers and food facilities to be safe and healthy.

### What is this about?

The Council has a limited role in planning for transport and travel infrastructure as most is done by higher level organisations including National Highways, Network Rail, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council. However, we can contribute to achieving higher level ambitions such as reducing the need to travel and promoting access to active travel infrastructure.



Since Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 was adopted in 2019 there have been significant changes to national planning policy with greater emphasis now being placed on provision for attractive walking and cycling routes and provision of infrastructure for electric vehicle charging. However, we recognise the rural nature of large areas of the district and the challenges faced by residents and businesses within them where public transport and active travel opportunities are limited and reliance on private car usage remains high.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority sets the overall transport strategy covering Huntingdonshire and aims to promote a sustainable transport network that is affordable and accessible for all. They also encourage greater numbers of journeys to be made by walking or cycling through establishment of safe connected pedestrian routes between key destinations within settlements and establishment of

safe connected cycling links within and between settlements. This is reinforced by the Cambridgeshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2022) which forms part of a long-term vision to improve the County's walking and cycling networks to increase the number of residents travelling on foot and by cycle. We can contribute to these ambitions through influencing the location, design and layout of new development and securing contributions from developers to provide new infrastructure where required to support development schemes they are proposing.

Several major transport infrastructure improvements may come forward during the lifetime of the Local Plan update. Most immediate is the upgrade to the A428 (to be A421) connecting the A1 Black Cat roundabout to the A428/ A1198 Caxton Gibbet junction improving travel options for St Neots and nearby villages in particular. Land has been set aside for a new railway station at Alconbury Weald although delivery is still uncertain. The East West Rail consortium is proposing a new rail route connecting Oxford to Cambridge via Bedford. If this is delivered new stations are anticipated south of St Neots at Tempsford and to the east at Cambourne.

The National Planning Policy Framework urges us to limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes but it also acknowledges that the opportunities to do so will vary between urban and rural areas. Plan-making is advised to identify and pursue opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. Digital connectivity is playing an increasing role in many people's lives and in many businesses. The Combined Authority's Digital Infrastructure Programme is maintaining an agile approach to be able to react flexibly to rapidly changing government and commercial priorities to take advantage of all opportunities to promote inclusive growth across the area.

Policy LP16 'Sustainable Travel' of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 looks for new development to support an increasing proportion of journeys being undertaken by active travel and public transport. It also requires assessment and mitigation of the transport impacts of proposed development. Policy LP17 'Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement' focuses on more detailed aspects but includes accessibility to services and facilities which is increasingly recognised as important, particularly

# 13 Transport and Connectivity

by active travel modes, and so is likely to need enhancing. It also sets minimum requirements for cycle parking provision for new developments. Car parking levels are expected to be responsive to the location and nature of the proposed development rather than numeric requirements being set.

Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy's fifth journey is that of Travel Transformed. This explores what travel could be like if the car wasn't the first choice of transport; if effective public transport, on-demand travel options, and an attractive cycling and walking network were realistic options for people wanting to get around. The Local Plan cannot deliver this by itself but it can work collaboratively supporting the approaches of infrastructure and service providers and influence provision within new developments. The Travel Transformed journey links closely to our approach to climate change as it will influence how we can help to provide zero-carbon travel options accessible and reliable across our communities. The Strategy explores the possibility of mobility hubs which have been promoted within several of the new communities put forward for consideration. These concentrate complementary transport modes in one place to minimise or eliminate the need for car usage. They can co-locate bus stops, cycle hire, sheltered cycle parking, real time bus information and electric bike charging points.

The Royal Town Planning Institute's 'Net Zero Transport' research (2021) explored how a place-based approach could deliver net zero transport emissions and be a catalyst for better place-making to deliver healthier, happier and more resilient communities. The illustration to the right shows options that might help to substitute trips, shift modes and switch fuels. The feasibility of the approaches varies in different types of location, for instance what might work in a town centre or a new settlement might be very different to the approaches that might work in a village setting.



East West Rail is proposing a new railway line connecting Oxford to Cambridge with the nearest suggested stations to Huntingdonshire being at Tempsford and Cambourne. This could open up public transport options to Cambridge and west to Bedford and beyond that are not currently available helping people to reach jobs, shopping, education and leisure opportunities by public transport that they might otherwise not be able to get to.

### What should we do?

We would like to know what you think about transport issues and options.

#### Options - Approach to Individual Developments

**Option A - Change transport provision within new developments to focus on high quality and plentiful infrastructure for active travel and public transport rather than prioritising road users.** To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on active travel and public transport infrastructure.

**Option B - Continue with the current approach of encouraging active travel and public transport through some provision of infrastructure within new developments but carry on trying to limit the impact of cars and lorries from them by building roads and upgrading junctions.** To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on road and junction upgrades.

**Option C - Consider an alternative option.** Please let us know.

#### Question - Place based Approach to Net Zero Transport

##### Place based approach to net zero transport

Using the previous illustration for reference - which of the suggestions for substituting trips, shifting modes and switching fuels do you think could work either where you live at the moment or in new developments that might be built during the next 25 years?

#### Options - East West Rail

**Option A - Rely on the prospect of East West Rail coming forward** and plan for new growth nearby to be delivered in the late 2030s and 2040s that could connect well with this.

**Option B - Wait until there is greater certainty about the timing of delivery for East West Rail** before planning for growth that might benefit from being nearby even if this means the growth is delivered some years after the railway.

## 14 Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives

### 14 Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives

#### Current Objectives

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 has 25 objectives across 5 themes which are listed below to help you with suggesting possible objectives for the Local Plan update.

#### Cross-cutting objectives:

Objective C1 - To maintain a good supply of suitable land for growth in sustainable locations and focusing on previously developed land, offering sites of a variety of sizes and types to meet a range of market demands.

Objective C2 - To promote high quality, well designed, locally distinctive, sustainable development that is adaptable to climate change resilient to extreme weather.

Objective C3 - To provide better job opportunities and more affordable homes to help create a more balanced and diverse local population and encourage more young people to stay or move here.

Objective C4 - To facilitate opportunities for people to pursue a healthy lifestyle, actively participate in their community and have a high quality of life.

#### Supporting a diverse, thriving economy:

Objective C5 - To promote economic growth and resilience and diversify the range of businesses active across the district that can add greater value to the the local economy.

Objective C6 - To maximise the benefits for Huntingdonshire of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone.

Objective C7 - To maximise the advantages offered by Huntingdonshire's strategic location to develop sector specialisms, supply chains and business accommodation that complement existing local growth sectors.

Objective C8 - To increase the proportion of economically active residents in the district and promote education and skills to meet the future needs of the local economy.

Objective C9 - To enhance the role of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey's town centres helping them to adapt to modern retail trends and focusing commercial developments towards the most accessible locations.

Objective C10 - To support agriculture, farm diversification, estate management and rural tourism that will sustain the function and character of the countryside and its communities.

Objective C11 - To protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from built development.

#### Providing sufficient infrastructure to support healthy communities:

Objective C12 - To maintain an up-to-date Infrastructure Delivery Plan to identify the infrastructure needs of proposed developments and to prioritise investment to be provided by developers contributions and other identifiable sources.

Objective C13 - To focus investment on improving access in strategic expansion locations to make optimum use of available resources.

Objective C14 - To facilitate sustainable modes of travel and give high priority to providing access to public transport and provision of segregated routes for walking and cycling.

Objective C15 - To provide for adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new growth and facilitate active, cohesive communities and sustainable lifestyles.

## Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives

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Objective C16 - To ensure inclusive and accessible provision for community needs including education, health, social care, policing, sports, libraries, play and open space, green infrastructure and integrated community facilities.

### Meeting the needs of a changing population:

Objective C17 - To provide for a quantity and quality of housing growth to support the economic aspirations of the district while contributing to sustainable patterns of growth.

Objective C18 - To provide a range of market and affordable homes that enables choice between types, sizes and tenures as well as over lifetimes and within individual communities.

Objective C19 - To provide opportunities for vulnerable people to live independent lives with support to meet their needs.

Objective C20 - To promote attractive, safe and distinctive residential neighbourhoods in which people can meet their day-to-day social, health, educational, recreational and convenience shopping requirements with access to sustainable transport to meet other needs.

### Working with our climate, landscape and heritage:

Objective C21 - To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's historic environment, characteristic landscapes, natural habitats and biodiversity.

Objective C22 - To utilise sustainable design and construction techniques; as a minimum to meet national standards for building performance as they evolve and to exceed them where feasible and viable to do so.

Objective C23 - To take advantage of opportunities for minimising energy and water use and securing carbon emissions reductions in all new development and transport choices.

Objective C24 - To encourage waste management and pollution control practices which minimise and reduce contributions to climate change and avoid adverse impacts on the local environment or human health.

Objective C25 - To conserve and enhance Huntingdonshire's strategic green infrastructure and to promote a balance between conservation and public access to and enjoyment of these assets.

### Suggested Objectives

#### Options A - The objectives build on Vision Option A and are shaped by the key 'pathways' that support the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy journeys

Objective A1 - All new homes are well-designed and provide the sizes, types and tenures of new homes that meet local needs

Objective A2 - Our communities are actively involved in supporting each other with physical and digital infrastructure available to help them achieve this.

Objective A3 - Our high streets are vibrant, diverse places that attract and retain locals and visitors throughout the daytime and evenings.

Objective A4 - Both existing and new businesses are flourishing as they are operating in the right space for them so they support local investment and provide stimulating, diverse job opportunities.

## 14 Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives

Objective A5 - Investment in new or improved healthcare, public open spaces and active travel infrastructure makes healthier lifestyles achievable by all residents.

Objective A6 - Community buildings, town and village centres and public open spaces are designed as places where children and young people feel safe and can participate in projects and events that help them fulfil their potential.

Objective A7 - A rapid transition to net zero is achieved through investment in net zero and carbon negative infrastructure projects and creation of a physical environment that supports use of active travel and public transport.

Objective A8 - An extensive network of nature-based infrastructure exists, contributing to resilient towns, villages and countryside areas with enhanced biodiversity.

Objective A9 - Renewable energy generation is embedded through all new developments and innovative community and wider renewable energy production schemes are supported where they are complementary to agricultural practices.

Objective A10 - Active travel and public transport infrastructure support genuine choices of travel reducing car dependency.

### Options B - The objectives build on Vision Option B and aim to help achieve a better future through a just transition towards ambitious climate action

Objective B1 - Deliver new developments and infrastructure that minimise and are resilient to the impacts of climate change including extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and heatwaves.

Objective B2 - Support a prosperous, resilient and sustainable economy contributing positively to the wider Cambridgeshire economy.

Objective B3 - New development works towards creating sustainable, well-designed, distinctive places which facilitate improving health, wellbeing, and social interaction to reduce inequalities, promote inclusivity and support a sense of community.

Objective B4 - The need to travel is reduced and travel behaviour is changed to reduce dependency on private cars and encourage walking, cycling, wheeling and use of public transport to support the transition to a net zero carbon transport network.

Objective B5 - Maintain and improve the natural and built environment including biodiversity, landscape, green Infrastructure and waterways by ensuring new development achieves high-quality design standards and conserves and enhances the natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets of Huntingdonshire.

Objective B6 - Support a local zero-carbon energy system that reduces Huntingdonshire's reliance on global fossil fuels and prioritises community energy generation and usage.

Objective B7 - Make efficient use of local natural resources, particularly water.

## Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives

### Options C - Minor amendments to the current list of 25 objectives

Cross-cutting objectives:

Objective C1 - To maintain a good supply of suitable land for growth in sustainable locations, offering sites of a variety of sizes and types to meet a range of market demands.

Objective C2 - To promote high quality, well designed, locally distinctive, sustainable development that is adaptable and resilient to climate change and minimise further impacts on climate change.

Supporting a diverse, thriving economy:

Objective C6 - To maximise the benefits for Huntingdonshire of new employment development and the network of established employment areas.

Objective C7 - To maximise the advantages offered by Huntingdonshire's strategic location to develop sector specialisms and supply chains that complement local growth sectors.

Objective C8 - To increase the proportion of economically active residents in the district to meet the future needs of the local economy.

Objective C9 - To enhance the role of our town centres helping them to adapt to changing expectations of the high street.

Objective C11 - To support local agriculture protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from irreversible harm.

Providing sufficient infrastructure to support healthy communities

Objective C12 and 13 (merged) - To identify the infrastructure needs of proposed developments and focus investment in areas of substantial new growth.

Objective C16 - To support provision for community needs including education, health, social care, policing, sports, libraries, play and open space, green infrastructure and integrated community facilities.

Meeting the needs of a changing population

Objective C18 - To provide a range of market and affordable homes that enables choice between types, sizes and tenures for all residents.

Objective C19 - To provide opportunities for older and vulnerable people to live independent lives with support to meet their needs.

Objective C20 - To promote attractive, safe and distinctive residential neighbourhoods in which people can meet their basic needs.

Working with our climate, landscape and heritage

Objective C23 - To promote minimisation of energy and water use and secure carbon emissions reductions in all new development and transport choices.

Objective C25 - To conserve and enhance Huntingdonshire's strategic green infrastructure and to promote a balance between conservation and public access to and enjoyment of these assets.

## 14 Appendix 1 - Detailed Objectives

### Options D - The objectives build on Vision Option D and are focused on the three strands of economic, social and environmental sustainability

Objective D1 - New development will be high quality, designed to minimise impact on the environment through greater energy and resource efficiency and adapted to climate change.

Objective D2 - The creation of high value, more diverse job opportunities at existing and new businesses will be encouraged and supported through provision of additional land and facilitating expansion of the local employment skills base.

Objective D3 - Deliver high quality sustainable new homes that meet the needs of all sectors of our community and enhance the well-being of residents.

Objective D4 - The retail, community, cultural and leisure opportunities in our town centres will be improved through working to attract investment, diversify activities and encourage the evening economy to make them attractive destinations for residents and visitors.

Objective D5 - Sustain and create places that encourage healthy lifestyles and support strong active communities through the provision of recreation and open space, leisure and cultural facilities, and opportunity to walk, cycle and wheel safely to key destinations within local communities.

Objective D6 - Ensure new development is of high quality, responds to local character, contributes to a sense of place, and integrates into existing communities.

Objective D7 - Facilitate provision of infrastructure to meet the needs arising from new development and facilitate its provision at appropriate points alongside development to meet the changing needs of communities.

Objective D8 - Protect, maintain and enhance the distinct character and identity of each of our towns and villages and countryside areas.

Objective D9 - Facilitate the generation of clean, secure energy through low carbon development, integration of heat networks and support for well-located renewable energy generation projects.

Objective D10 - Protect and enhance strategic green infrastructure, green corridors, wildlife habitats and open spaces enhancing connections to increase their value for people and wildlife.

### Options E - Consider alternative objectives

Please suggest any that you think would be appropriate.