

Local Development Framework

**Core Strategy: Preferred Options Report
Background Paper on Settlement Hierarchy**

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Huntingdonshire
district council

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PART A BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Policy Area P2 of the Council's Core Strategy Preferred Options Report proposes a new settlement hierarchy for Huntingdonshire. This paper provides additional explanation of the basis for the suggested policy approach.
- 1.2 The settlement hierarchy provides a framework for managing the scale of development in different locations. In combination with other policy areas (such as that concerning the location of housing) it indicates the amount of growth that might be allowed to occur in particular places. As well as providing guidance for 'windfall' schemes (i.e. development proposals on unallocated sites), the hierarchy also helps to guide the search for sites at the time that specific allocations are considered.
- 1.3 However, it should be stressed at the outset that **a settlement's position within the hierarchy does not mean that it will have to accommodate a particular level of growth**. In the case of windfall proposals, development can only take place on the scale allowed by the hierarchy if suitable sites become available. Any proposals must also satisfy all other planning requirements (e.g. in relation to flood risk and amenity). When allocations are being made, key factors will be the overall amount of development that needs to be accommodated, the priority accorded to settlements in the 'sequential approach' to site selection (see paragraph 2.3 below) and any settlement-specific constraints and opportunities that exist, including the availability of adequate infrastructure.
- 1.4 The settlement hierarchy for Huntingdonshire was last revised by the Local Plan Alteration, adopted in 2002. Since the Alteration was prepared there have been further changes in national and strategic planning guidance, which must be taken into account in preparing the Council's Core Strategy. In addition further work on access to services and jobs in different settlements has been conducted, key findings from which appear in this paper.
- 1.5 Appendix 1 summarises relevant aspects of national and strategic guidance, and Section 2 (below) highlights the implications for Huntingdonshire's settlement hierarchy. Subsequently, Sections 3 and 4 (in Part B) apply relevant criteria from this analysis to identify appropriate Market Towns and 'Key Centres'. This is supported by information on access to services and employment opportunities contained in Appendices 2 and 3. Finally Section 5 gives further consideration to the implications of the suggested hierarchy for development, and suggests a refinement of the Key Centres classification.

2. National and strategic guidance

- 2.1 The most relevant sources of national guidance on settlement strategy matters are PPS7 (*Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*), PPG13 (*Transport*) and PPG3 (*Housing*). Key messages from these documents are that:
- Most new development should be directed to existing towns and cities, to help maximise accessibility to employment and services by walking, cycling and public transport (e.g. PPG13 para. 6, PPG3 para. 1, PPS 7 para. 1(iii)).

- In rural areas, development should be focused on settlements that can act as service centres for surrounding areas (e.g. *PPS7 para. 3, PPG13 para. 6*).
 - In the case of housing, only a limited amount of growth should be expected through the expansion of villages, with significant development being appropriate only where: (a) it can be shown to be necessary for maintaining local services; (b) the houses are required to meet local needs; and (c) it will be in keeping with the character of the village (*PPG3 paras. 69-70*).
- 2.2 National planning policies are interpreted and applied at the regional and sub-regional level through Regional Planning Guidance (RPG, to be replaced by 'Regional Spatial Strategies' under the revised planning system) and the Structure Plan (which will also be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy once it is adopted).
- 2.3 The documents which the settlement hierarchy must take into account are the existing RPG6 for East Anglia, its draft replacement (draft RSS14 for the Eastern Region) and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan. A full analysis of relevant policies in these documents is contained in Appendix 1, but in summary their implications for Huntingdonshire are that:
- Market towns should be the preferred location for housing and employment growth (except in the Cambridge sub-region, where larger villages with good access to Cambridge may also be considered).
 - 'Key service centres' or 'rural centres' should form the next tier (being those larger villages that offer access to a good range of services).
 - Development in other villages should be very limited, and in a form that will help to meet local needs.
- 2.4 Hence consideration needs to be given to which settlements might qualify as market towns or key service centres / rural centres. This is addressed in the following sections.

PART B MARKET TOWNS AND KEY CENTRES

3. Identification of market towns

- 3.1 Places in Huntingdonshire that merit 'Market Town' status are suggested in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan: St Neots, Huntingdon, St Ives and Ramsey. A list of facilities by settlement (contained in Appendix 2) confirms that these towns possess a far wider range of shops and services than other places in the district, helping to reduce the need to travel for their residents. They also offer a range of employment opportunities, although Huntingdon (and adjoining parts of neighbouring wards) provides far more jobs in comparison to the size of its potential workforce than the other towns (see analysis in Appendix 3).
- 3.2 In principle Huntingdon's relative wealth of jobs makes it the most sustainable part of the district for any further housing growth, although there are significant commuting flows out of, as well as into, Huntingdon at present. Detailed analysis of the 2001 Census data¹ shows that just under half of Huntingdon's employed residents both lived and worked in the town at that time (49%), fractionally higher than the figure for St Neots (47%). In the case of St Ives and Ramsey the level of out-commuting was even greater (as the corresponding figure for both towns was just 36%).
- 3.3 In the specific case of Ramsey, while its facilities clearly support its designation as a Market Town, the availability of employment is comparatively poor (although efforts to address this are being made through the Ramsey Area Partnership). This is reflected in guidance contained in the Structure Plan and draft RSS14, which indicates that the scale of any housing development in Ramsey should be relatively small. This will need to be taken into account in any decisions about land allocations in the town.
- 3.4 Godmanchester is identified as a Market Town in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, and while it may lack the range of facilities to merit retaining this designation, its close physical and functional ties with Huntingdon need to be taken into account. There is little distance between the two settlements, so people living in Godmanchester have relatively good access to the facilities and employment opportunities offered by Huntingdon. Godmanchester is also served by a good bus service to Cambridge. These circumstances are reflected in its suggested designation as a Key Centre (Potential Growth) in Sections 4 and 5 below.

4. Identification of key centres

- 4.1 In considering the tier of settlements below Market Towns, different terms are evident from the various sources of strategic policy: 'service centres' / 'local service centres' (PPG3, PPS7); 'key service centres' (draft RSS14); 'rural centres' (draft RSS14 and the Structure Plan); and 'larger villages' (RPG6). In the Huntingdonshire context it is suggested that 'Key Centre' is most suitable, as it reflects the common elements of these terms while

¹ Source: Cambridgeshire County Council & Peterborough City Council (2005) *Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: Annual Monitoring Report 2004*

recognising that some settlements that fall into this category are not particularly 'rural' in character (such as Godmanchester and Yaxley).

- 4.2 Suggested criteria to assist the identification of Key Centres are contained in draft RSS14 and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan. The two sets of criteria are very similar, common elements being:
- A primary school and good access to secondary education
 - A doctor's surgery
 - A good range of shops and services that can meet day-to-day needs (particularly for food shopping)
 - Local employment opportunities
 - Frequent public transport services to higher-order centres
- 4.3 In addition the Structure Plan indicates that such centres will generally have a population of at least 3,000 people, and also contain a post office.
- 4.4 The comparative list of facilities in each settlement (Appendix 2) can be used to help assess which places meet most or all of these criteria. Both the Structure Plan and draft RSS14 indicate that the criteria are not rigid 'tests', to be met in full if a key centre designation is to be merited. Equally, however, a village that failed to meet the majority of these tests would not be the type of settlement that the key centre designation is intended to apply to.
- 4.5 An assessment has been carried out for all settlements of more than 2,000 people. This is lower than the threshold suggested by the Structure Plan, but recognises that some large villages containing fewer than 3,000 people may nevertheless satisfy most or all of the other criteria. For the same reason Kimbolton has been included in the assessment as a special case; despite having a population of just over 1,000 people it contains an unusually wide range of shops and services, reflecting its historical origins as a small market town serving the surrounding rural area.
- 4.6 For the purpose of this analysis the remaining criteria in draft RSS14 and the Structure Plan have been interpreted as follows:
- Range of shops and services: Food stores that meet most weekly shopping needs and provide an element of choice, together with non-food outlets, a post office and pub.
 - Doctor's surgery: Whether there is a surgery in the settlement.
 - Access to education: All the settlements covered by the assessment have a primary school, so the analysis focuses on access to secondary schools. Places are given a positive score (✓) if secondary education is available either within the village, or can be reached easily by foot or cycle (a distance of less than 5km along a route that is suitable for cycling).
 - Local employment opportunities: The settlement has an industrial estate/business park, or is home to one or more major employers (i.e. a business with 100+ jobs).
 - Good access to higher-order centres: The draft RSS and Structure Plan focus solely on public transport, but ease of access by foot or cycle is also relevant. Hence places are

given a positive score if either: (a) an hourly (or better) bus service operates to a market town or city between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday; or (b) a market town or city can be reached easily by cycle (defined in the same way as access to schools).

- 4.7 The results of this assessment are contained in Table 1. Settlements are ranked according to the number of criteria that they meet, with five places meeting all of them: Yaxley, Godmanchester, Sawtry, Brampton and Little Paxton (although the latter will be reduced to meeting four criteria should its doctor's surgery be lost).

Table 1 Extent to which settlements meet Key Centre criteria

Settlement	Key centres selection criteria					Number of criteria met
	Range of shops and services	Doctor's surgery	Access to secondary education	Employment opportunities	Good non-car access to town/city	
Yaxley	✓	✓	(✓) ¹	✓	✓	5
Godmanchester	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Sawtry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Brampton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Little Paxton	✓	(✓) ²	✓	✓	✓	4-5
Fenstanton	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	4
Somersham	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	4
Warboys	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	4
Kimbolton	✓	✓	(✓) ³	✓	x	3-4
Buckden	✓	✓	x	x	✓	3
Needingworth	x	x	✓	x	✓	2
Stilton	✓	x	x	x	✓	2
Hemingford Grey	x	x	✓	x	✓	2
Bluntisham	✓	✓	x	x	x	2
Houghton/Wyton	x	x	x	(✓) ⁴	✓	1-2

1 At present Yaxley is served by Stanground school in Peterborough, but access to secondary education will improve once the new school at Hampton is complete.

2 The future of the doctor's surgery at Little Paxton is under review at present.

3 Kimbolton school is not in the state sector, but does have many pupils from the local area.

4 The only significant source of jobs is RAF Wyton, to the north of Houghton and Wyton itself.

Source: District Council surveys

- 4.8 Nevertheless, as explained above, a degree of judgement is required in cases where settlements do not satisfy all the criteria. Fenstanton, Somersham, Warboys and Kimbolton all meet four of the criteria, and on this basis are also considered to merit designation as Key Centres (Kimbolton's 'score' is reduced to three if its private sector school is discounted, but this must be balanced against the wide range of shops and other services that the village contains). Buckden meets three of the criteria, and in view of its good range of shops and services it is also considered to justify being made a Key Centre.

4.9 None of the other villages satisfy more than two criteria, common weaknesses being a more limited range of shops and services and/or few employment opportunities. Because of this they cannot be regarded as suitable Key Centres.

4.10 The conclusion is that the following settlements should be designated as Key Centres:

Yaxley	Little Paxton
Godmanchester	Somersham
Sawtry	Warboys
Brampton	Kimbolton
Fenstanton	Buckden

5. Implications for development

- 5.1 It was stressed at the start of this paper that a settlement's position within the hierarchy does not mean that it will have to accommodate a particular level of growth. However, it is appropriate to consider whether all the Key Settlements are equally suited to taking particular levels of 'windfall' development, or indeed would be accorded equal priority in a sequential search for development sites.
- 5.2 Some of the suggested Key Centres benefit from much better links to cities or major towns than the others, notwithstanding the assessment in Table 1 above:
- Yaxley benefits from high quality public transport services to Peterborough, and is within cycling distance of the major retail facilities at Hampton and employment sites at Hampton/Fletton.
 - Godmanchester and Brampton are both within walking and cycling distance of Huntingdon town centre, to which there are also frequent bus services. Godmanchester is also well located in relation to public transport to Cambridge.
 - Fenstanton is served by frequent buses to Cambridge, and also to St Ives town centre.
 - Little Paxton is within walking and cycling distance of St Neots town centre.
- 5.3 The remaining villages do not offer the same level of accessibility to higher-order centres, and function more as service centres for the surrounding rural areas. As such, they are likely to be less sustainable locations for any further development². The one exception is Sawtry, which has its own secondary school and leisure centre, and is likely to benefit from any enhancement of public transport services in the A1 corridor.
- 5.4 Consequently it is suggested that a further distinction be introduced to the Key Centres classification, with Yaxley, Godmanchester, Sawtry, Brampton, Fenstanton and Little Paxton being identified as 'Key Centres (Potential Growth)', and Somersham, Warboys, Buckden and Kimbolton being classed as 'Key Centres (Limited Growth)'.
- 5.5 Once again, this distinction does not mean that a certain level of development will be directed to particular places, but it does provide a means of managing the scale of windfall development that might be permitted on suitable sites, and will need to be taken into account in any decisions about allocations.
- 5.6 In the context of the suggested settlement hierarchy all those villages that are not a Key Centre (whether 'Potential Growth' or 'Limited Growth') will be classified as Smaller Settlements. This will not entail a halt to any development in these locations, but it will be controlled so as to be small in scale in accordance with national and strategic guidance. Particular provision will be made for meeting local housing needs through the rural 'exceptions' policy. Full details of the policy approaches that would apply are contained in the main 'Core Strategy: Initial Consultation on Options' document.

² In this respect the emphasis which regional guidance places on good public transport to nearby towns or cities must be taken into account – see Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 1 REGIONAL AND STRUCTURE PLAN POLICIES

- A.1 Existing Regional Planning Guidance is contained in RPG6 for East Anglia. Across most of the region (including northern and western parts of Huntingdonshire) Policy 4 indicates that housing development should be located in accordance with the following sequence³:
- Give first preference to towns (the priority being those towns where development would help to reduce commuting, followed by towns with good public transport access)
 - Only then consider development in villages, “exceptionally, and on a small scale”, where there is a reasonable balance between jobs, services and housing, and good public transport to a nearby town or city.
- A.2 Similar principles apply to employment by virtue of Policy 6. The sequence is modified slightly in the Cambridge sub-region, which includes the south-east of the district (see map overleaf). Here, Policy 22 gives equal priority for locating housing to market towns and those larger villages with good public transport access to Cambridge, although Policy 23 prioritises the market towns as locations for employment⁴.
- A.3 Draft RSS14, which will replace RPG6, carries forward this strategy with only minor modification. In rural areas generally development is expected to be focused on market towns, and thereafter at ‘key service centres’ (i.e. those larger villages that offer access to a good range of services) (policies SS1 & SS9). However in the Cambridge sub-region the strategy continues to give equal priority to market towns and larger villages that have (or can be served by) good public transport to Cambridge (Policy CSR1)⁵.
- A.4 Additional caveats apply to:
- Central Huntingdonshire, where Policy CSR1 notes that the employment generation associated with re-use of Alconbury airfield may require some modification to the sequence when considering housing allocations; and
 - Ramsey, where Policy GPSR1 suggests limits to the scale of development directed to the town, especially in relation to housing (due to the need to maintain a sustainable balance between homes and jobs).
- A.5 Beyond the market towns and key centres the draft RSS indicates that any development at rural settlements should be related to meeting local housing needs, assisting economic diversification and supporting local services (Policy SS9).
- A.6 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, adopted in 2003, contains similar messages. In Huntingdonshire most development is expected to occur at the market towns, although the potential is recognised for some development to occur in ‘rural centres’ on a scale appropriate to their size, location and function (policies P1/1, P2/2, P2/6). Huntingdon and St Neots are identified as towns with particular potential for additional

³ These are the elements of the sequence that apply beyond the cities and major towns, none of which are situated within Huntingdonshire.

⁴ Again, this is the way that the sequence operates beyond Cambridge and its periphery (together with the major new Settlement at Oakington, which comes next in the sequence, before market towns).

⁵ The policy also suggests that development in these locations should contribute to the social and economic needs of the community.

residential development (Policy P9/4), while the same limits apply to Ramsey as identified in draft RSS14 (Policy P10/3). Beyond the market towns and 'rural centres' the plan indicates that any housing development should be "on a very small scale" and appropriate to the need for affordable housing, access to services and jobs, and maintenance of village character (P5/5 and supporting text).

Map showing parts of Huntingdonshire lying within the Cambridge sub-region



APPENDIX 2 COMPARISON OF FACILITIES: TOWNS AND LARGER VILLAGES (2004)

	Pop ⁿ (2002)	Retail outlets		Service outlets	Food & drink	Post office	Bank	Library	Primary school	Access to secondary education	Doctor's surgery	Public hall	Bus service	Industrial estates & other sites with 100+ jobs
		Food	Non-food											
St Neots	27,490	18	101	71	63	4	10	1	8	Good (Within town)	5	5	1	Little End Road Ind. Estate, Bell Farm Ind. Estate, Howard Road, Colmworth Business Park, Station Road and Cromwell Road Ind. Estate, Tesco, Ernulf School, Longsands School,
Huntingdon	20,440	19	104	71	47	2	11	1	8	Good (Within town)	3	5	1	Stukeley Meadows Ind. Estate, Ermine Business Park, St John's Business Park, St Peter's Road Ind. Estate, Hinchingbrooke Business Park, Tesco, Cambs. County Council, Forensic Science Service, Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Cambs. Constabulary, Hinchingbrooke School, HDC, Anglian Water, Cromwell Clinic, Sainsbury, Waitrose, Hunts Regional College,
St Ives	15,910	11	94	68	51	2	10	1	3	Good (Within town)	7	7	1	St Ives Business Park, Somersham Road Ind. Estate, Compass Point Business Park, St Ivo School, St Ives Leisure Centre, Waitrose
Yaxley	7,700	9	9	17	13	1	1	1	3	Reasonable (Stanground / Hampton)	1	3	1	Mere View Industrial Estate, Clarksteel, Snowcap Mushrooms,
Godmanchester	6,040	5	7	14	9	1			2	Reasonable (Hinchingbrooke, Huntingdon)	1	3	1	Cardinal Distribution Park, Roman Way Ind. Estate, Chord Park Business Park, Wood Green Animal Shelter, RGE Engineering,
Ramsey	5,740	9	33	26	17	1	4	1	2	Good (Within town)	2	0	1	High Lode Ind. Estate, Bury Road Ind. Estate, St Mary's Ind. Estate, Northern Mill Ind. Estate
Sawtry	5,590	4	5	14	5	1		1	2	Good (within village)	1	3	1	Brookside Industrial Estate, Sawtry Business Park

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	Pop ¹ (2002)	Retail outlets		Service outlets	Food & drink	Post office	Bank	Library	Primary school	Access to secondary education	Doctor's surgery	Public hall	Bus service	Industrial estates & other sites with 100+ jobs
		Food	Non-food											
Brampton	5,030	5	4	7	7	1			2	Reasonable (Hinchingbrooke, Huntingdon)	1	3	1	Huntingdon Racecourse, The Environment Agency, MoD Brampton
Warboys	3,960	5	9	7	3	1	1	1	1	Poor (Ramsey)	1	2	1	Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate
Somersham	3,780	7	5	7	7	1		1	2	Poor (Ramsey)	2	2	1	West Newlands Industrial Estate
Little Paxton	3,030	1	3	3	3	1			1	Reasonable (Longsands, St.Neots)	1	2	1	Mass Consultants
Houghton & Wyton	2,750	2	1	2	3	1			1	Poor (St.Peter's, Huntingdon)		2	1	RAF Wyton
Buckden	2,570	5	6	3	4	1		1	1	Poor (Hinchingbrooke, Huntingdon)	1	2	1	
Fenstanton	2,380	4	4	10	5	1			1	Poor (Swavesey)	1	2	1	Dairy Crest
Needingworth	2,300	1	1	3	2	1			1	Poor (St.Ivo)		1	3	
Stilton	2,470	2	3	3	4	1			1	Poor (Sawtry)		1	1	
Hemingford Grey	2,090	1	1	3	1	1			1	Reasonable (St.Ivo)		2	3	
Bluntisham	2,030	2	1	4	2				1	Poor (Ramsey)	1	2	3	
Kimbolton	1,080	4	10	7	4	1	1		1	Poor (Longsands, St.Neots)	1	2	3	Kimbolton Airfield Industrial Estate

Notes

- Information from District Council surveys, except for population and major employer data (obtained from Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group).
- The information is presented for all settlements of over 2,000 people, plus Kimbolton.
- 'Service outlets' includes uses such as hairdressers, travel agents, estate agents and solicitors.
- 'Food & drink' includes pubs, restaurants, cafes, hot food take-aways, etc.
- See notes attached for method of assessing access to secondary education and quality of bus services.

Notes to accompany comparison of facilities

Access to secondary schools; terms used to gauge accessibility

The starting point for this assessment was an analysis of whether secondary education was available within the settlement, or else within reasonable walking or cycling distance of it, using the following thresholds:

- Good = within the settlement or less than 2km from it
- Reasonable = 2 - 5km from settlement
- Poor = over 5km from settlement

However, the quality of routes is an important factor in travel choices, so a qualitative assessment was then carried out to gauge whether the nature of paths and cycleways deters their use for trips to school by foot or bike. Hence even if a secondary school was outside a settlement but within 2 or 5km of it, accessibility was classed as 'poor' if children were unlikely to walk or cycle to it.

Bus service

Figures employed are based on indicators from the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2004-2011, which range from 1 (best level of service) to 3 (the worst, where services exist). The figures provided here were taken from bus timetables, and are based upon current levels of provision rather than targets. The service levels are set out in the following table:

Service Standard	Code
An hourly or better bus service to at least one market town or city between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday	1
An hourly or better bus service to at least one market town or city between 9am and 5pm Monday to Saturday	2
Fewer than one bus per hour to at least one market town or city Monday to Saturday	3

APPENDIX 3 BALANCE BETWEEN POTENTIAL WORKFORCE AND JOBS

- B.1 The table below gives an indication of the balance between the potential workforce and employment opportunities in different parts of the district. In principle areas that have more jobs than workers are the most 'sustainable' locations for further housing growth, as this provides opportunities for people to live nearer to their place of work (if they commute from other parts of the district or from further afield at present). Conversely areas with many more workers than jobs are less suitable for further housing: they are likely to experience out-commuting at present, and more housing would make the situation worse (unless it can be balanced by a commensurate increase in employment-generating development).
- B.2 In reality the picture is far more complicated than this, because the skills of people living in a particular area may not match the nature of the jobs available locally. As a result, areas with a notional 'balance' between workers and jobs may still experience significant inflows and outflows of commuters (see para. 3.2 of this report). However, it is important to consider the availability of jobs in relation to housing growth, as a good supply of employment opportunities does offer new residents the opportunity to work close to home should circumstances allow.

Ward	Potential workforce	Total employment	Ratio workforce : jobs
Alconbury & the Stukeleys	2,199	5,541	1 : 2.51
Brampton	3,509	2,081	1 : 0.59
Buckden	1,585	624	1 : 0.39
Earith	3,465	1,591	1 : 0.45
Ellington	1,686	1,666	1 : 0.98
Elton & Folksworth	1,480	1,129	1 : 0.76
Fenstanton	1,641	1,013	1 : 0.61
Godmanchester	3,240	2,222	1 : 0.68
Gransden & the Offords	2,468	1,385	1 : 0.56
Huntingdon	10,937	16,968	1 : 1.55
Kimbolton & Staughton	1,655	1,629	1 : 0.98
Little Paxton	1,743	882	1 : 0.50
Ramsey	4,129	2,428	1 : 0.58
Sawtry	3,653	1,746	1 : 0.47
Somersham	3,174	1,425	1 : 0.44
St Ives	8,958	6,811	1 : 0.76
St Neots	14,719	10,413	1 : 0.70
<i>St Neots + Roxton</i>	<i>16,880</i>	<i>12,484</i>	<i>1 : 0.73</i>
Stilton	1,764	617	1 : 0.34
The Hemingfords	2,907	1,183	1 : 0.40
Upwood & the Raveleys	1,542	4,141	1 : 2.68
Warboys & Bury	3,282	1,501	1 : 0.45
Yaxley & Farcet	5,039	2,106	1 : 0.41

Source: Census of Population 2001. Potential workforce refers to all residents aged 16 to 74.

- B.3 The table refers to the 'potential' workforce, this being all people in the age groups from which most workers are drawn (i.e. 16 to 74). In practice many of these people will not be participating in the labour market for reasons such as being a full-time student, retired or disabled. Hence to some extent the ratios will overstate the size of the workforce relative to jobs available. Nevertheless it is useful to consider all of those who might be available for work in each area, either now or in the future, as personal circumstances can change (e.g. through finishing education or taking on a part-time job).
- B.4 In the case of St Neots a row has been added giving a combined figure for the town and the neighbouring ward of Roxton (in Bedfordshire), due to the significant concentration of jobs at Little Barford and Wyboston immediately to the south of the A428.
- B.5 The figures in the table are mapped overleaf. The table and map show clearly that the central part of the district contains the highest ratio between jobs and potential workforce; indeed this is the only area where there is more than one job per potential worker. In fact, due to the large size of the wards for which this data is available, the map exaggerates the extent to which this situation prevails. The ratios of more than 1:1 for Alconbury & the Stukeleys and Upwood & the Raveleys reflect particular concentrations of employment within these wards but lying very close to Huntingdon itself:
- Alconbury & the Stukeleys ward contains much of the business development that has occurred around the northern and western edges of Huntingdon during recent years, including Hinchingsbrooke and Ermine business parks.
 - Upwood & the Raveleys ward contains RAF Wyton (due to the inclusion of Houghton & Wyton parish), and the base is a major civilian employer.
- B.6 The total quantity of jobs in different parts of the district is also a consideration, as a good supply of employment provides more opportunities for people to work locally than areas with few jobs⁶. From the table above it is evident that Huntingdon and adjoining areas (including Godmanchester, the Stukeleys and Brampton) contain the largest number of employment opportunities in the district, although St Neots and Little Paxton provide another major concentration in the south.

⁶ Although it should be borne in mind that an area with many jobs, but also a high ratio of workers to the jobs available, implies that there will be a relatively large number of people competing for those positions.



