Core Strategy Amendment: Issues and Options

Section A: Background Information

1. Introduction

1.1 This amendment to the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy (submitted April 2006) should be read in conjunction with that document, in particular with chapter 2. At the pre-examination meeting held in September 2006 the Inspector requested that the examination be postponed to allow for further consultation on the spatial vision and strategy for the district including the scale and broad directions of future growth. It has been prepared in light of the proposed changes to the East of England Plan and the publication of PPS3: Housing in December 2006.

1.2 The vision set out in the submitted Core Strategy aspires for Huntingdonshire to continue to provide a good quality of life as a place which offers:

- Continued economic success
- Opportunities for everyone to gain access to suitable homes, jobs and services; and
- An attractive environment which is conserved and enhanced

1.3 It acknowledges that to achieve this, and to make the most of the opportunities that come from growth, we will need to:

- Accommodate development in a sustainable manner;
- Ensure that the nature of development meets local needs
- Secure developments that respond to the distinctive character of Huntingdonshire's towns, villages and countryside; and
- Achieve major improvements in infrastructure and community facilities.

1.4 Huntingdonshire's towns, villages and countryside offer diverse and attractive environments in which to live and work, each having their own distinctive character and role in the district.

Market Towns

1.5 Huntingdon is the administrative centre and is located toward the centre of the district on the northern valley sides of the River Great Ouse. It is accessible from the A14, which passes around the southern perimeter of the town. The south eastern edge of the town has a strong association with the river and the historic core of the town, which is centred on the High Street, remains intact. Huntingdon is a major housing and employment centre which is well served by road infrastructure (A1 and A14) and the east coast mainline railway. It also has a strong retail sector and functions as the primary shopping centre for the District.

1.6 St Neots is, in population terms, the largest settlement in the District. It is an historic market town which established on the banks of the River Great Ouse. This settlement has expanded significantly over recent years and the smaller and previously independent settlements of Eaton Socon, Eaton Ford and Eynesbury to the south and west have been largely assimilated into the urban fabric of St Neots, their historic character is still recognisable within the town. St Neots has its own railway station located in the north eastern quarter of the town, and has easy access to the A1. It is connected to Cambridge via the A428. Attracting retail, leisure and employment development to St Neots is challenging due to competition from Bedford and Cambridge.

1.7 St Ives is an historic market town situated on the northern bank of the river Great Ouse. The town contains many original buildings and has a distinctive medieval street pattern. The form of the settlement is relatively unusual in that it has grown asymmetrically to the north of the river; the extensive floodplain to the south being retained as open land. The historic core of the town developed around the bridge over the River Great Ouse, and along the northern bank of the river which was an important mode of transport, part of this frontage still being known as The Quay. St Ives has developed a base of small specialist shops which have enabled it to successfully compete with the other market towns. St Ives is a picturesque town and is a popular destination for tourists and visitors.

1.8 Ramsey is located on the edge of the fenland landscape. The original settlement has effectively merged with the village of Bury and is referred to as the Market Town of Ramsey and Bury. Ramsey has a wide variety of urban character. Of particular note is the 'historic core' centred on High Street and Great Whyte and the 'abbey greens' associated with the former Abbey to the north of the town. The road system around Ramsey is not adequate and restricts the scale of future development of the town. Ramsey continues to be the focus of a number of regeneration initiatives and is developing its heritage assets.

Key Centres

1.9 Ten Key Centres are identified in the submitted Core Strategy all of which offer a reasonable range of shops and services, local employment opportunities and public transport services. Key Centres (Potential Growth) generally have greater employment opportunities and good access by foot, cycle or public transport to a city or market town compared to Key Centres (Limited Growth). Yaxley, Godmanchester, Sawtry, Brampton, Fenstanton and Little Paxton are categorised in the submitted Core Strategy as Key Centres (Potential Growth). These villages expanded rapidly in the 1970s, 80s and 90s and as a result their character has changed significantly. Warboys, Somersham, Buckden and Kimbolton are categorised as Key Centres (Limited Growth).

1.10 Some of the Key Centres (Potential Growth) have strong linkages with nearby Market Towns, in particular Brampton and Godmanchester with Huntingdon and Little Paxton with St Neots. Yaxley has strong linkages with Peterborough. Fenstanton and Sawtry have weaker linkages with any single nearby settlement both being adjacent to major transport routes giving greater options for accessing employment and higher order services and facilities.

Transport Infrastructure

1.11 There will be significant enhancement of transport links between Cambridge and the market towns that surround it, achieved through the implementation of the County Transport Plan. High quality public transport services will be developed in the Cambridge-Huntingdon corridor (to include a guided bus route between Cambridge and St Ives and on street bus priority measures between St Ives and Huntingdon) and along the A428 between Cambridge and St Neots. These measures will be complemented by major road improvements in these corridors, including a new route for the A14 between Ellington and Fen Drayton. The District Council supports the route which will pass to the south of Brampton and

Godmanchester, improving traffic flows and road safety on this key strategic route. Removal of the railway viaduct at Huntingdon as part of the scheme will also enable improved local road access to Huntingdon town centre. Delivery of these improvements will influence the distribution and phasing of residential and employment development.

1.12 Within each market town packages of integrated highway, public transport, cycling and walking improvements will be implemented through a programme of market town transport strategies and, where appropriate, by developer-led funding through planning obligations. A park & ride site will be developed at St Ives (in association with the proposed guided bus route). Consideration may be given to a second site serving Huntingdon and Godmanchester. At Yaxley, traffic on the A15 will be relieved through construction of a western peripheral road at Hampton, joining the A15 south of Yaxley with the Fletton Parkway in the north.

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

2. Housing, Employment and Retail Requirements

Housing

2.1 The Draft East of England Plan has confirmed an allocation of 11,200 new houses to be built in Huntingdonshire for the period 2001 – 2021. The housing numbers allocated to a district should be regarded as a minimum target to be achieved.

2.2 8,500 houses that have been built or committed for the period 2001-2006. The table below shows the location of these.

Location	Completions 2001-2006	Commitments at March 2006
Market Towns	1600	3750
Key Centres (Potential Growth)	750	1310
Key Centres (Limited Growth)	140	120
Rural Areas	410	480
Total	2900	5660
Balance of housing to be found	2700 dwellings up to 2021	

2.3 The thrust of settlement policy set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) and the draft East of England Plan (December 2006) has shifted towards an urban focus with greater emphasis on re-using previously developed sites. 85% of outstanding commitments are now located in Market Towns and Key Centres (Potential Growth). This compares to 81% of the housing completed in 2001-2006. If this trend continues then Huntingdonshire will successfully contribute to achieving the national focus on more urban growth.

2.4 The proportion of outstanding commitments in Key Centres (Limited Growth) and in the rural area stands at just 15%. PPS3: Housing (2006) acknowledges the need to provide housing not only in market town and local service centres but also in villages to enhance and maintain their sustainability. Current commitments should satisfy the immediate demand for housing making it unnecessary to allocate further housing in many villages. However, a limited amount of development can still be expected to occur on small, previously developed sites in villages where this makes the best use of the land.

2.5 A draft Housing Land Availability Assessment has been completed to provide information on the availability and suitability of land for housing development. This has revealed that it may be possible to accommodate approximately 8650 dwellings in and around the Market Towns and Key Centres. These will not all be required to meet the housing target for the District for the next 15 years.

2.6 PPS3 specifies that Local Planning Authorities should set out their policies and strategies for housing delivery that will enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption. It is anticipated that the Core Strategy will be adopted at the end of 2008. To ensure a 15 year supply the strategy would need to consider housing delivery up to 2024. The draft East of England Plan addresses this issue and advises that the annual average rate of housing required for 2006-2021 should continue to be sought during the early years after 2021. For Huntingdonshire this means that provision of a further 550 homes per year would be required from 2021 until 2024. To achieve this land for a further 1650 homes will be required over and above the balance of 2700 homes to be found as advised by the East of England Plan (see table in paragraph 2.2 above).

Employment

2.7 Updated labour supply and demand projections forecast the provision of 8,000 additional jobs for period 2006 – 2016. The Employment Land Review (2007) identified a net take up of just over 8 ha of new employment land per annum over the five years from 2002 and 32 ha of new and deliverable employment land available for development.

Location	Taken Up (2002 – 06) ha	Available Deliverable ha	Not Brought Forward ha
Market Towns	24	16.9	7.2
Key Centres (Potential Growth)	9.7	11.1	8
Key Centres (Limited Growth)	2.6	1.6	2.4
Peterborough border	1.7	-	-
Rural Areas	4	2	0.8
Total	42	31.6	18.4

2.8 To support continuing economic growth, there is a requirement to bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in the right locations to meet expected needs for industrial and commercial development, taking into account accessibility and sustainable transport needs and provision of essential infrastructure. However the scale of employment land need for the period to 2021 will be the product of a complex interplay of factors shaping the demand for new accommodation and supply of new and existing employment land and property. It is anticipated that the main factors will concern: overall national economic growth; local labour supply and demand and changing conditions for business competitiveness most notably the need to reduce C02 emissions and unsustainable modes of transport for employees and the distribution of goods.

2.9 In this context, two options are proposed. The first is the business as usual option. This assumes a net requirement of 93 ha based on a projection of development trends over the five years from 2002. The second is the business competitiveness option. This assumes a net requirement of 60 ha and acknowledges the impacts of constraints on the labour supply and need to adjust to climate change.

Retail

2.10 The Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment Study (2005) considered the potential additional floorspace requirements to 2021 for convenience and comparison retailing. This has been supplemented by an Update (2007) giving more detailed assessments on potential distribution of the overall requirement. The study suggests a target of 21,600 sq m net additional comparison floorspace and 3,900 sq m net additional convenience floorspace. At present a high proportion of money spent by residents on comparison goods goes to Cambridge, Peterborough and Bedford rather than being spent in shops in our market towns and villages. This figure proposed allows for a slight increase in the proportion of expenditure retained locally as a result of more attractive retail opportunities being offered.

2.11 The Study recommends the target of 21,600 sq m net additional comparison floorspace should be distributed as 12,900 sq m to Huntingdon, 6,500sq m to St Neots and 2,100 sq m to other locations in the district. The scale of convenience floorspace required is far more modest and is the result of expenditure increases post 2011.

Summary

2.12 Taking into account the houses which have been built or committed since 2001 and the 70 ha of allocated and deliverable employment land, sites for new allocations for a further 4350 homes, either 60 ha or 93 ha of employment land and 21,600 sq m of retail floorspace need to be identified in the Development Proposals DPD and the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan for the period to 2021. Altogether the Core Strategy needs to consider the most sustainable broad directions of growth and the Core Strategy should give a broad spatial indication of its scale and location.

3. The submitted Core Strategy's approach

Housing

3.1 The submitted Core Strategy has objectives to:

- enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which limit the need to travel, while catering for local needs
- ensure that the types of dwellings built are suited to the requirements of the local population, and that an appropriate proportion of units is 'affordable' to those in need
- enable the specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations

3.2 The submitted Core Strategy also says that in accordance with the need to make maximum use of previously developed land and the best use of land and existing infrastructure:

- major housing development of 10 or more dwellings should be accommodated in the Market Towns and Key Centres (Potential Growth) which offer a range of

services and facilities to residents with the minimum need to travel to access them;
- minor housing development up to nine dwellings should be accommodated in the Market Towns, Key Centres (Potential Growth) and Key Centres (Limited Growth) which offer a basic range of services and public transport appropriate to the form of housing to be provided.

3.3 The means to achieve housing development within this framework are to:

- promote mixed use schemes on large previously developed sites in the town centres of Market Towns and then sequentially on the edge of town centres and locations with good access to high quality public transport;
- promote housing schemes on smaller previously developed sites in the town centres of Market Town and then sequentially on the edge of town centres and locations with good access to high quality public transport;
- consider some large greenfield releases on the edge of the defined limits of settlements where balanced, comprehensive and mixed use development can deliver physical and social infrastructure, community facilities and opportunities to make necessary journeys by foot, cycle and public transport.
- consider some small greenfield releases on the edge of the defined limits of settlements where new housing and related investment in housing can supplement and make best use of existing infrastructure and facilities and opportunities realised to make necessary journeys by foot, cycle and public transport.

Employment

3.4 The submitted Core Strategy has objectives to:

- facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out-commuting
- enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and avoids adverse environmental impacts
- help create and sustain strong, diverse communities for the benefit of all members of society.

3.5 The submitted Core Strategy says that in accordance with the need to make maximum use of previously developed land and the best use of land and existing infrastructure:

- office development should be accommodated in the town centres of Market Towns and then sequentially on the edge of town centres and locations with good access to high quality public transport; and
- industrial and warehousing development should be accommodated within the defined limits of the Market Towns and Key Centres (Potential and Limited Growth) and sites within established industrial estates, distribution and business parks.

3.6 The means to achieve employment development within this framework are to:

- promote mixed use schemes on previously developed land in the town centres of Market Towns and then sequentially on the edge of town centres and locations with good access to high quality public transport;

- consider some greenfield releases on the edge of the defined limits of settlements where balanced, comprehensive and mixed use development can deliver physical and social infrastructure, community facilities and opportunities to make necessary journeys by foot, cycle and public transport; and
- consider some greenfield releases on the edge of the defined limits of settlements where new employment development and related investment can supplement and make best use of existing infrastructure linked to established industrial estates, distribution and business parks and opportunities realised to make necessary journeys by foot, cycle and public transport.

Retail

3.7 The submitted Core Strategy has objectives to:

- strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping and leisure
- to maintain and enhance the availability of key services and facilities in villages

3.8 The submitted Core Strategy says that in order to focus retail developments in the most sustainable locations possible in terms of accessibility and to not have an adverse impact upon town centre facilities:

- major retail developments (<500 sq m gross) should only be accommodated in the town centres of Market Towns and then sequentially on the edge of town centres and locations with potential to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport
- minor retail developments (>500 sq m gross) should be accommodated within Market Towns and Key Centres (Potential and Limited Growth) and within Smaller Settlements where the site offers potential to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport

3.9 The means to achieve retail development within this framework are to:

- promote mixed use schemes on large previously developed sites in the town centres of Market Towns and then sequentially on the edge of town centres and locations with potential to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- consider smaller sites within the defined limits of existing settlements where the development would not have an adverse impact on the range of existing retail facilities in the settlement

Section B: Issues and Options

Issues to consider

When considering where new development should be built there are a number of issues which need to be considered.

Issue 1 - The need for sustainable development.
This could involve promoting development which:

- minimises greenhouse gas emissions
- reduces the need to travel and maximises accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport
- caters for local needs
- minimises risk to flooding and climate change
- helps create and sustain strong, diverse communities for the benefit of all members of society

Issue 2 – The need to take account of major infrastructure proposals
A number of major infrastructure developments are expected to be completed within the next 15 years which will significantly affect the district. These include the re-routing of the A14, the construction of the guided busway to St Ives and on-road bus priority measures to Huntingdon. Further into the future when a study is anticipated to consider options for improving the A428. These could involve:

- phasing development to reflect completion of infrastructure supply
- promoting development in locations with improved public transport services

Issue 3 - The need to provide housing for all members of the community
Huntingdonshire's current and future residents require a significant range of housing types, tenures and cost to meet their needs. Strategic Housing Market assessments will provide information and guidance on the proportion of households seeking market and affordable housing, the likely profile of household types requiring market housing and the size and type of affordable housing required. This could involve promoting development which:

- provides a range of housing types to meet the requirements of the local population
- ensure that an appropriate proportion of units is 'affordable' to those in need
- meets the specialist housing needs of particular groups within the community in appropriate locations.

Issue 4 – The need to provide employment opportunities
Huntingdonshire's business sector will need to evolve and grow if it is to remain competitive in the local, national and international economies and provide suitable employment opportunities for residents and the wider workforce. This could involve promoting development which:

- addresses economic structural change – the decline of traditional manufacturing and run down of defence bases – through the attraction of high order economic and high technology related activities
- provides existing businesses with real choice across a range of needs through competition
- caters for local needs, for example, in Ramsey where there is deficit of jobs
- offers a supply of land which the market will find sufficiently attractive to develop rather than land bank in the hope of a later change to higher value uses

Issue 5 – The need to provide retail opportunities

Huntingdonshire's retail sector will need to evolve and grow if it is to provide viable facilities which are attractive to the local community. Vibrant town centres offering an attractive range of retail and related facilities can significantly contribute to people's quality of life, reduce the need to travel and help retain a higher proportion of expenditure locally. This could involve promoting development which:

- is attractive to the retail sector
- will contribute to the vitality and viability of existing town centres
- caters for local needs

Question 1 - Are there any other issues which we need to consider?

Spatial planning areas

The following areas reflect the economic and social relationships between settlements within the district.

Huntingdon area

The Huntingdon area, including Huntingdon, Brampton and Godmanchester, had 31,000 residents in 2005. The area is a key driver of the local economy. Huntingdon is identified in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) as locations for future growth in the Cambridge Sub Region. The Housing Land Availability Assessment (HLAA) recently completed by the Council identified that this area offers significant opportunities for development. The realignment of the A14 could have significant implications for development opportunities, particularly post 2015.

St Neots area

The St Neots area, including St Neots and Little Paxton, had a population of 31,200 in 2005. Coupled with land in Bedfordshire around Wyboston, the area is also a key driver of the local economy. St Neots is identified in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) as locations for future growth in the Cambridge Sub Region. The HLAA recently completed by the Council identified that this area offers significant opportunities for development.

St Ives

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

Ramsey area

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

Key Centres (Potential Growth)

Several of these are closely associated with market towns and could offer particularly sustainable opportunities for access to jobs, services and facilities. Others are more free-standing and further development could help make them more self-contained. The HLAA showed considerable variation in the number of houses different settlements in this category could accommodate. The Employment Land Review identified available allocated employment land in Fenstanton, Yaxley and Sawtry.

Key Centres (Limited Growth)

The submitted Core Strategy only recommends development sites of up to 9 dwellings in this category of settlement. Due to the small scale of sites involved directions of growth have not been identified as they would be too site specific.

Options to consider for housing growth

The scale of housing growth is pre-determined by the East of England Plan as described in paragraph 2.1. This sets a target of 550 new homes per year. Up to 2021 land for just 2,700 new homes needs to be found. However, to ensure a 15 year supply of land consideration needs to be given up to 2024 which results in a total target of 4,350 new homes.

There are many ways that the necessary number of new homes could be distributed across the district. We need to make fundamental choices on whether the district should pursue a very intense urban focus for new growth or a more dispersed approach; whether priority should always be given to re-use of brownfield land or whether in some circumstances developing greenfield land with very good access to services and facilities is preferable. The maps below indicate the scale and direction of growth options in and around each of the main settlements.

Huntingdon and St Neots areas

Huntingdon and St Neots have been identified in strategic guidance as locations for future growth in the Cambridge sub-area. In spatial planning terms the relationship between the Market Towns and their nearby Key Centres (Potential Growth) is an important consideration.

Question 2 – Do you agree with the approach of considering market towns in conjunction with adjoining key centres?

When considering development in these two areas the following options have been identified:

Option 1 - Plan that the Huntingdon area should get most of the growth
Option 2 – Plan that the St Neots area should get most of the growth
Option 3 - Encourage both areas to grow at a similar rate

Question 3 - What proportion of growth should be focused in the two main urban areas?
Question 4 - Which of these options would you prefer and why?
Question 5 - Are there any other options which should be considered?
Question 6 - To achieve your chosen option which of the directions of growth shown on the maps would you rather see developed?

St Ives and Ramsey

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

Option 4 – Allow growth only within the existing built framework in Ramsey and/ or St Ives
Option 5 – Allow small-scale extensions to Ramsey and/ or St Ives

Question 7 - Which of these options would you prefer and why?
Question 8 - Are there any other options which should be considered?
Question 9 - Which of the directions of growth shown on the maps would you rather see developed?

Key Centres Potential Growth

When considering development in key centres that are not closely linked with a market town the following options have been identified.

Option 6 – Plan that development is distributed across all Key Centres (Potential Growth) broadly in proportion to their existing size
Option 7 – Plan to limit development in those settlements which have recently received high levels of growth

Question 10 - Which of these options would you prefer and why?
Question 11 - Are there any other options which should be considered?
Question 12 - Which of the directions of growth shown on the maps would you rather see developed?

Key Centres (Limited Growth)

The submitted Core Strategy only recommends development sites of up to 9 dwellings in this category of settlement. Due to the small scale of sites involved directions of growth have not been identified as they would be too site specific. When considering development in Key Centres (Limited Growth) the following options have been identified.

Option 8 – Plan that development is distributed across all Key Centres (Limited Growth)
Option 9- Plan to focus higher levels of development in Key Centres (Limited Growth) with the best links to market towns or Key Centres (Potential Growth)

Question 13 – Which of these options would you prefer and why?
Question 14 - Are there any other options which should be considered?

Options to consider for employment growth

Overall scale

There are a number of ways in which the overall scale of employment land need can be calculated. One approach is to project recent trends and another is to take into account the impact of changing economic, social and environmental conditions. Two options have been identified:

Option 10 – Plan for a net requirement of 93 ha. This based on a projection of development trends over the five years from 2002. It assumes continued relatively high rates of economic growth, no constraints on the availability of labour and no concessions to climate change.

Option 11 – Plan for a net requirement of 60 ha. This is based on an acknowledgment of constraints to the availability of labour and the impacts of climate change: the policy, business and environmental imperatives to site large scale warehouses at multi modal locations and replace older C02 emitting stock with zero carbon buildings.

Question 15 – Which of these of options would you prefer and why?
Question 16 – Are there any other options which should be considered?

Overall distribution

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

Option 12 - Plan for location of employment development to follow population growth.
Option 13 – Plan to allow location of employment development to follow the market preference for location in the Huntingdon area, the St Neots area and to a lesser extent St Ives.

Question 17 - Which of these options would you prefer and why?
Question 18 - Are there any other options which you think we should consider?
Question 19 – To achieve your chosen option which of the directions of growth shown would you rather see developed?

Options to consider for retail growth

Overall scale

The Retail Study Update (2007) suggested that the Core Strategy should endeavour to increase the proportion of available expenditure which is spent locally. One way of encouraging this is to provide a greater quantity and choice of shops for people to use which has the added benefit of reducing the need to travel further afield for certain purchases. A target is suggested of 21,600 sq m net of additional comparison retail floorspace and a further 3,900 sq m net of convenience floorspace in the district for the period 2006-2021. This is based on the aspiration of a slow, steady increase in the proportion of expenditure being retained locally.

Option 14 – Plan for a target of 21,600 sq m net additional comparison retail floorspace and 3,900 sq m net additional convenience floorspace
Option 15 – Plan for a higher target
Option 16 – Plan for a lower target

Question 20 – Which of these options do you prefer and why?
Question 21 – If you prefer a lower or higher target what should it be and why?

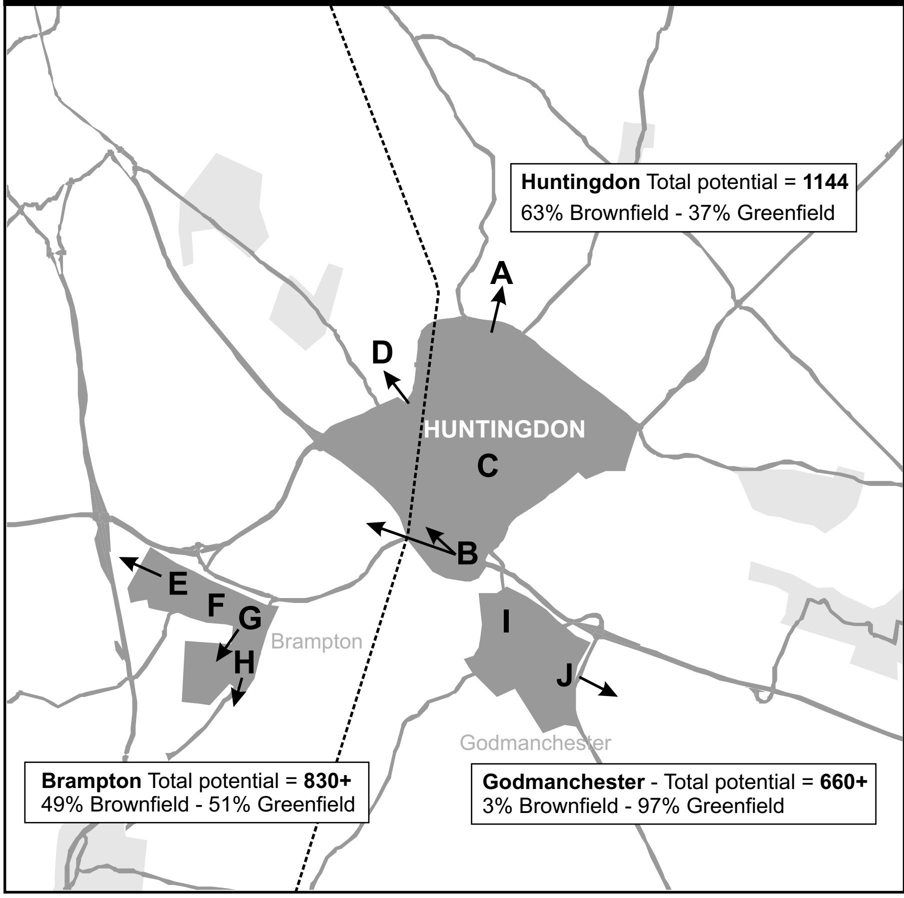
Overall distribution

A target of 21,600 sq m net additional comparison floorspace is suggested above. The Study identified comparatively strong demand from retailers wishing to open in Huntingdon and an encouraging level of interest in St Neots which has traditionally been considered less attractive by investors. The distribution given in Option 17 was suggested by the Study. Government guidance dictates that new retail facilities should be in town centres and edge of centre and out of centre locations only considered where this cannot be reasonably achieved. The Study suggested that although the level of quantitative need for convenience floorspace appears low there may be opportunities for provision based on qualitative grounds in order to increase the range of facilities available. In particular it noted the need for a discount foodstore in Huntingdon town centre.

Option 17 – Plan to allow the location of comparison retail growth to follow the market preference resulting in around 12,900 sq m net in Huntingdon, around 6,500 sq m net in St Neots and 2,100 sq m net in other settlements.
Option 18 – Encourage retailing in St Neots and Huntingdon to grow at a similar rate and to a lesser extent in St Ives and Ramsey.

Question 22 - Which of these options would you prefer and why?
Question 23 - Are there any other options which you think we should consider?

Figure 1: Huntingdon *NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.*



A. Greenfield development

B. Brownfield mixed use development

C. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the built up framework

D. Greenfield employment Development

E. Greenfield housing development

F. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the existing built up framework

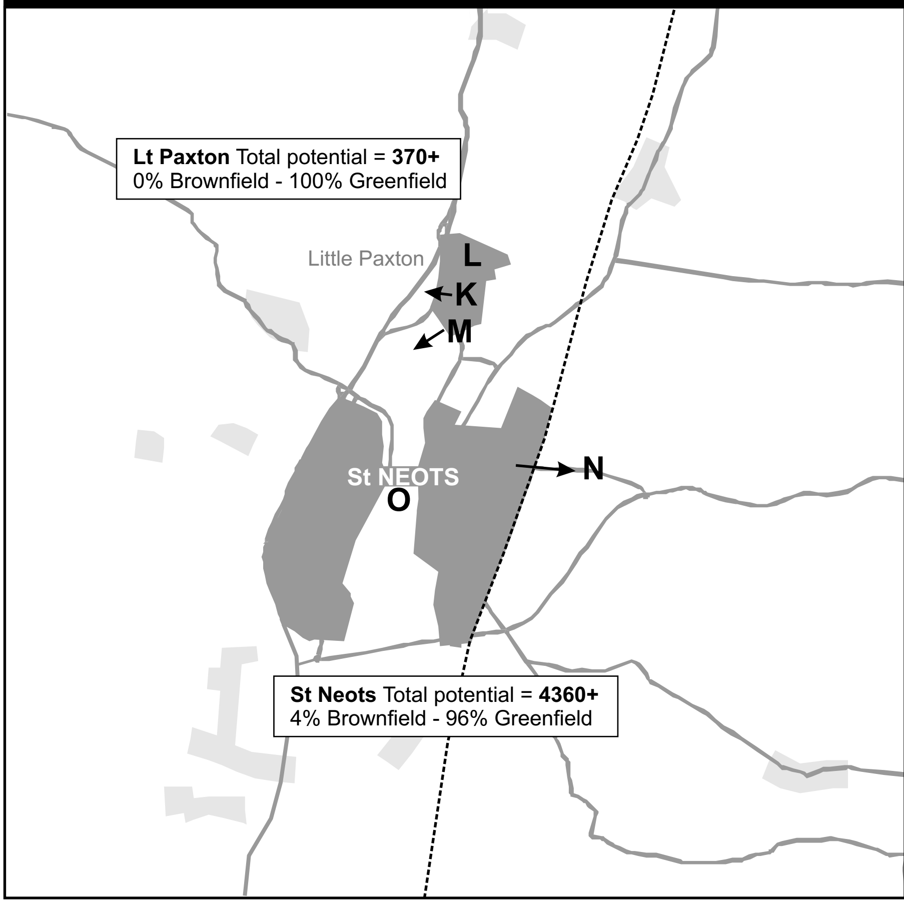
G. Brownfield mixed use development

H. Greenfield Employment development

I. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the existing built up framework

J. Greenfield housing release

Figure 2: St Neots *NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.*



K. Greenfield mixed use development

L. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the built up framework

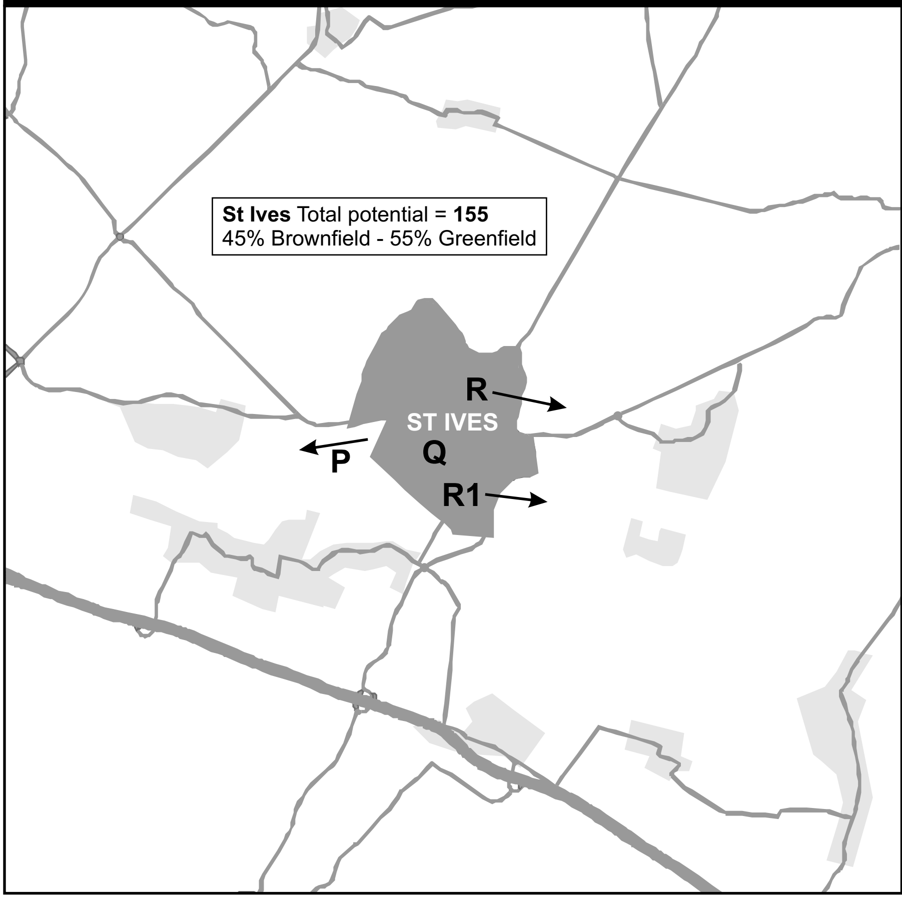
M. Greenfield Employment development

N. Greenfield development

O. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the built up framework

Figure 3: St Ives

NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.



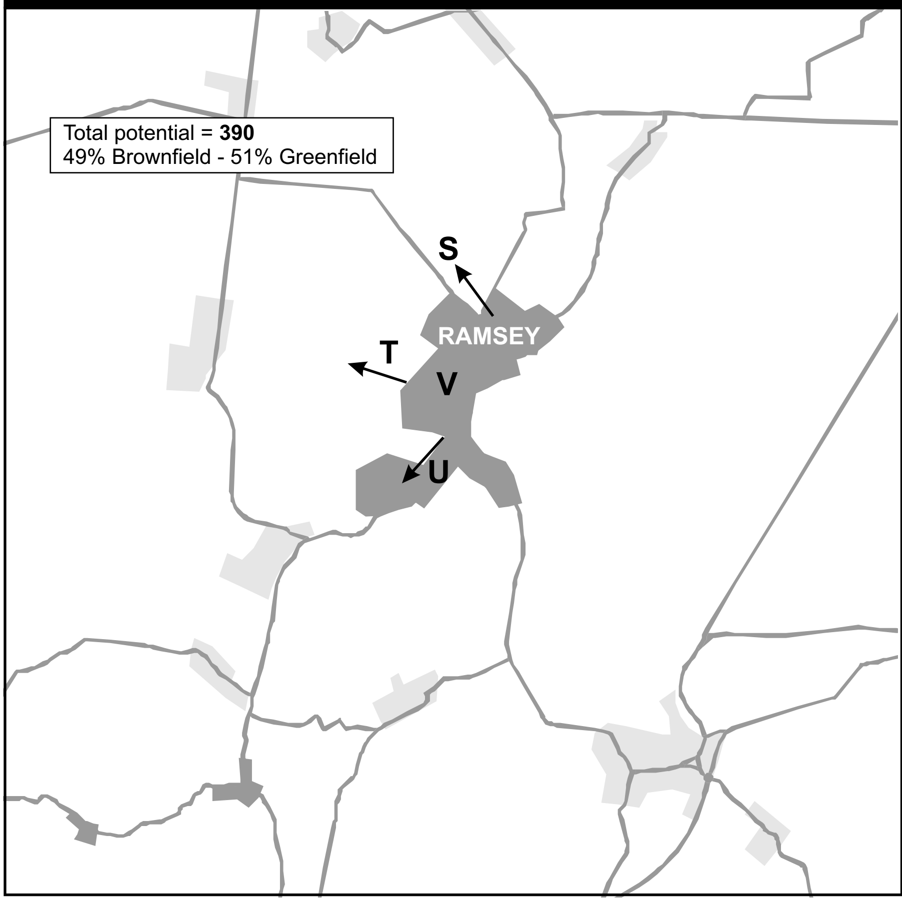
P. Greenfield mixed-use development

Q. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the built up framework

R.& R1. Greenfield employment development

Figure 4: Ramsey

NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.



S. Greenfield mixed use development

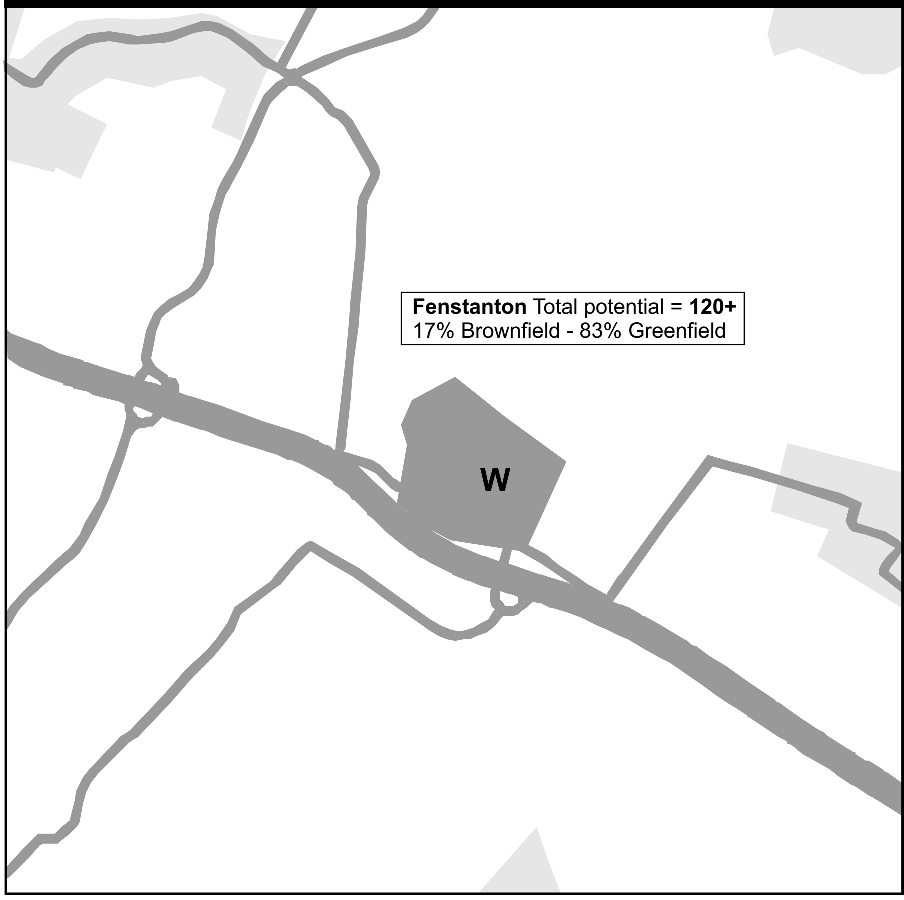
T. Greenfield housing Development

U. Brownfield mixed use development

V. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the built up framework

Figure 5: Fenstanton

NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.



W. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the existing built up framework

Figure 6: Sawtry

NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.

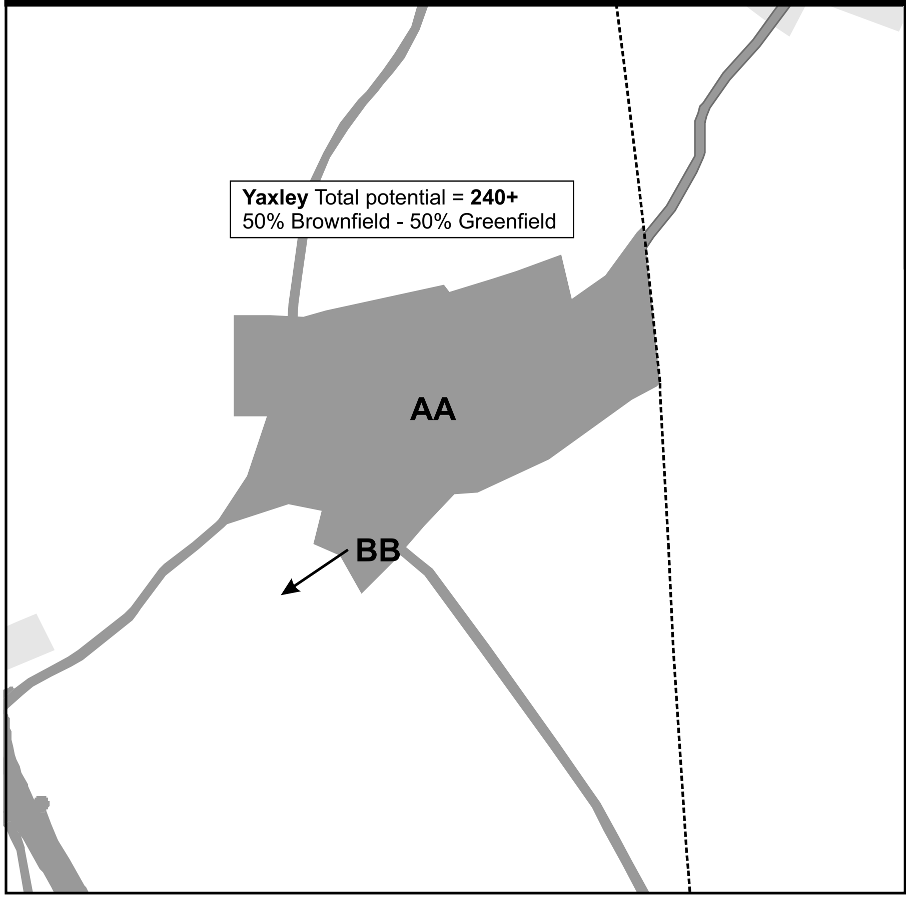
X. Greenfield development

Y. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the existing built up framework

Z. Greenfield employment development adjacent to A1

Figure 7: Yaxley

NB. Arrows indicate the potential directions of growth.



AA. Greenfield housing development

BB. Development of small scale sites within or adjacent to the built up framework