

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Huntingdonshire District Council

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1 Introduction

What is the AAP

1.1 National planning guidance recommends Area Action Plans be produced for areas where significant levels of change or conservation are needed. Huntingdonshire District Council has therefore decided to prepare an Area Action Plan for Huntingdon West which will provide a framework for development in the short, medium and long term. It is needed because significant land-use changes are likely to come forward, including mixed-use redevelopment of the Ermine Street/ George Street area, changes to the road system as a result of the A14 improvements, and the need to guide development of the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus including an extension to the Country Park.

1.2 The Area Action Plan, once adopted, will form part of the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework and will be in conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy. It will also need to be consistent with the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy which is also in production.

What will the AAP include

1.3 The Area Action Plan will include site specific allocations and general policies for the area. It will:

- consider land uses
- consider the form of development
- set out specific standards which will be applied to the area.

1.4 The Area Action Plan will need to take into account:

- existing and surrounding uses
- the impact of proposals on other parts of the town
- transport links
- impact on landscape, amenity and the existing built environment, including listed buildings and the conservation area.

1.5 Further detail on the proposals included in the Area Action Plan will be provided in the form of a master plan.

Purpose

1.6 This Issues and Options document is the first formal stage in the production of the Area Action Plan. Its purpose is to give the opportunity to comment on the key issues identified and on the options identified to address these issues. It also gives the opportunity to raise additional issues and to put forward alternative options. The representations made will be considered and used to help produce the Preferred Options paper which will set out the Council's favoured approach to development of the area.

Next Steps

1.7 The Area Action Plan will go through a number of stages in its production. The first of these is this Issues and Options document. It will be followed by:

- Preferred Options Consultation (December 2007)
- Draft Plan Submission to the Secretary of State (September 2008)

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- Consultation on the Submission Plan (September 2008)
- Consultation on site allocation objections put forward by objectors
- Independent examination - Hearing (February 2009)
- Adoption (December 2009)

How to get involved

1.8 It is important that we get your views on how Huntingdon West should be developed. Copies of this document have been sent to key stakeholders and are available at Libraries and Access Points across the District and at the District Council Offices at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. An interactive version of the document is also available on the Council's website.

1.9 You can comment on the document online via our interactive version at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> or email your comments to us at ldf@huntsdc.gov.uk or write to us at the following address:

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

2 Local and Policy Context

Area Covered & Description

2.1 The site covered by the Area Action Plan is illustrated on maps 2.1 and 2.2. It comprises approximately 247 hectares of land encompassing the Ermine Street/ George Street area, Huntingdon railway station, Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

2.2 The Ermine Street/ George Street area is one where there is potential for major redevelopment. It is located immediately west of the town centre and east of the railway line. The site is currently in mixed use including factories, offices, car parking and housing.

2.3 The remainder of the site lies to the west of the town. It is bounded by the A14 to the north and west, and Huntingdon/Brampton Road to the south. This section comprises the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus, that is, the Fire Service HQ, Cambridgeshire Constabulary HQ, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke School and Hinchingsbrooke House. Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Land to the south west is also included within the Area Action Plan as is Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and adjacent housing and Huntingdon railway station.

2.4 Map 2.1 identifies potential areas of change within Huntingdon West. Map 2.3 shows the 1:100 year floodplain and County Wildlife Sites within this area.

2.5 The local landscape character areas comprise:

- the Ouse Landscape⁽ⁱ⁾ underlying the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus in the western section of the area
- Central Claylands⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ underlying the Ermine Street/ George Street area on the eastern boundary of the Area Action Plan.

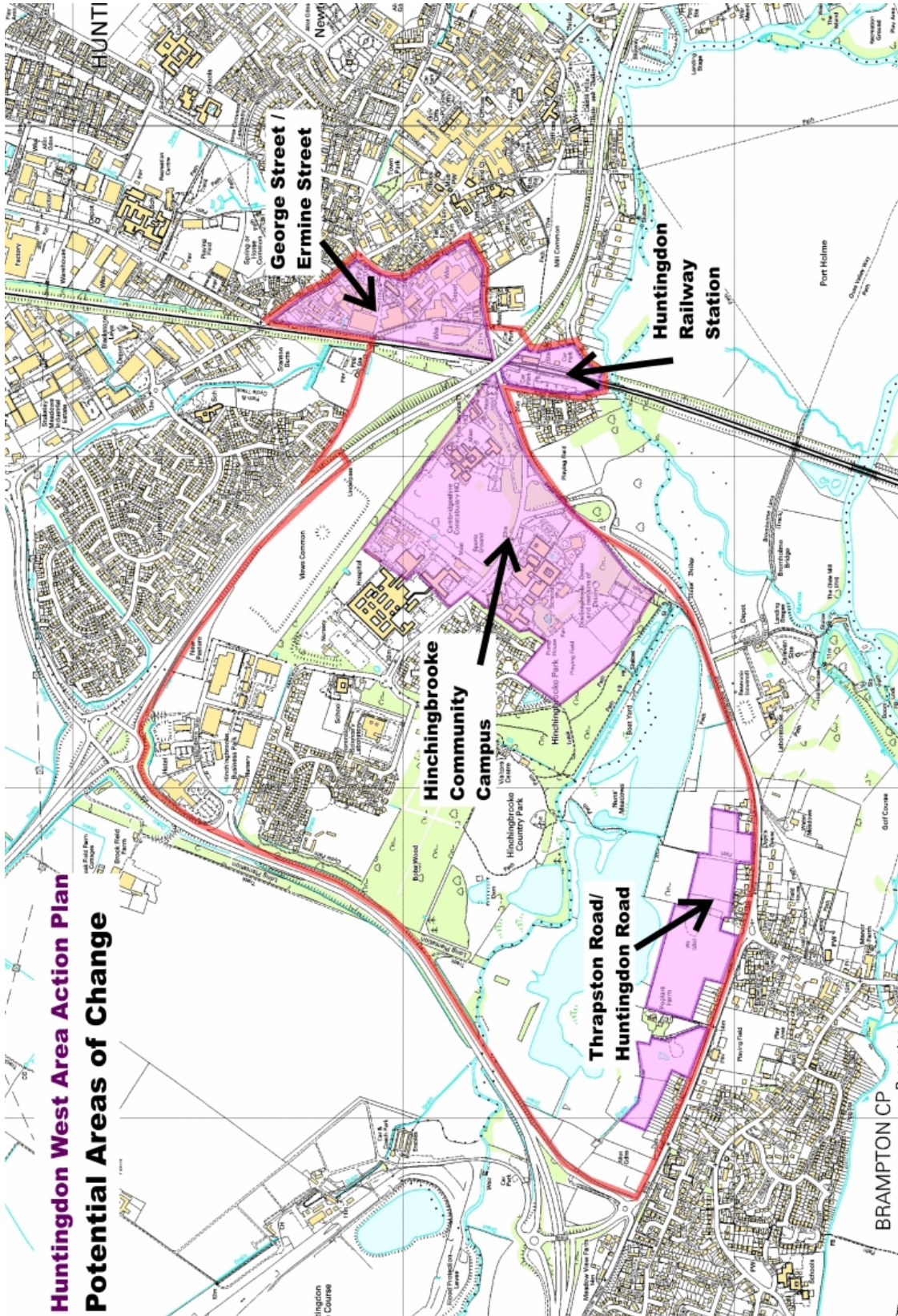
2.6 Understanding the landscape is important to formulating policies that are sensitive to, and protective of, their locality. These landscapes influence the architecture and wildlife.

i as defined in the Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2006

ii as defined in the Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2006

2 Local and Policy Context

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Map 2.1 Potential areas of change

Local and Policy Context 2

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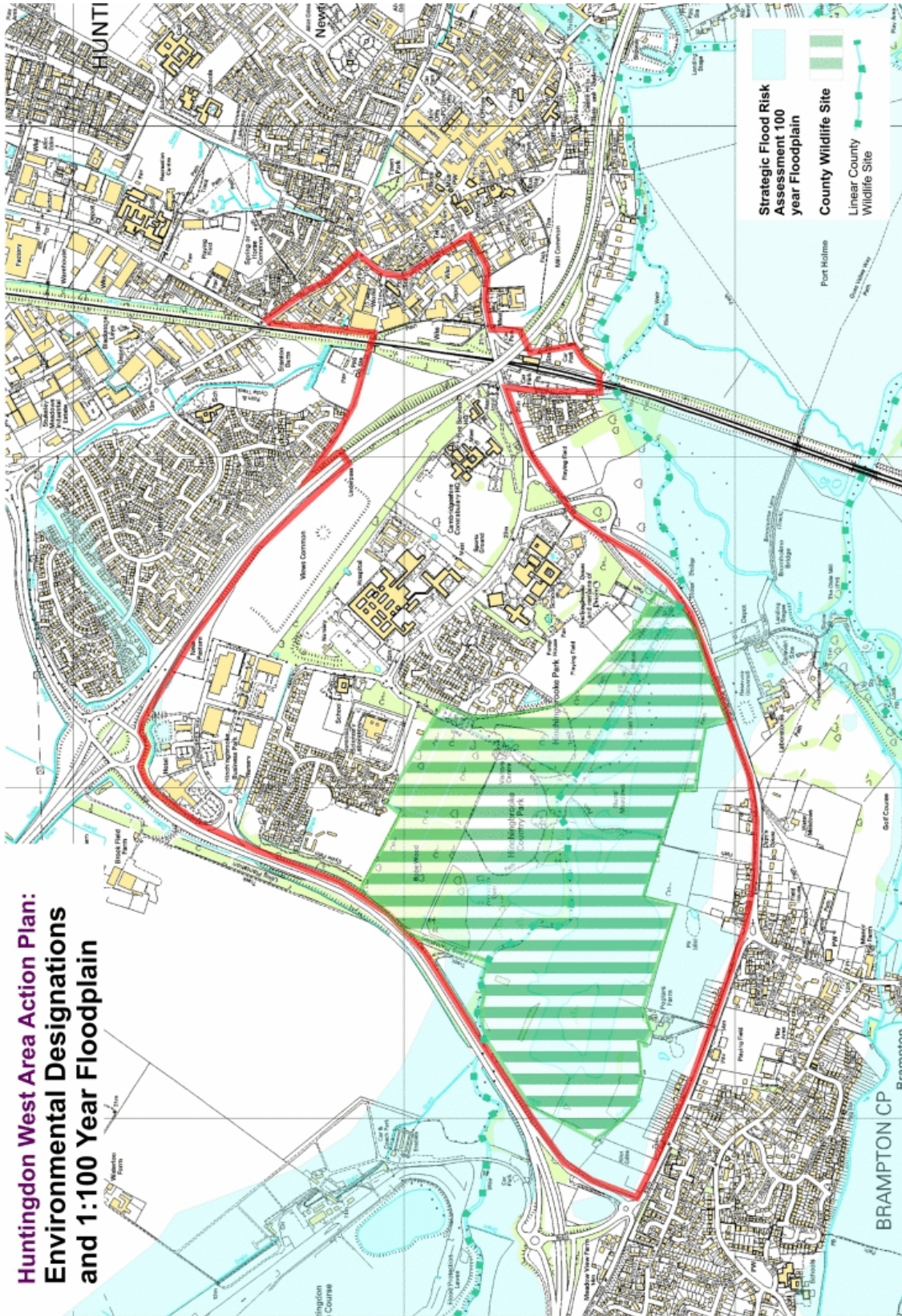


Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Map 2.2 Huntingdon West aerial photo

2 Local and Policy Context

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Map 2.3 Environmental designations

Why does Huntingdon West need an Area Action Plan

2.7 There are a number of reasons why Huntingdon West requires an Area Action Plan. Huntingdon's existing town centre has reached capacity and to maintain Huntingdon town centres role as a principal retail and employment centre and enable the town's economy to grow, this needs to expand. Within Huntingdon West there are two sites which are close to the town centre which, following government guidance, are the next sequentially preferential locations for town centre uses.

2.8 The Huntingdon West area is in a very sustainable location. It is close to the town centre, railway station and public transport routes and within it there are a number of facilities including the hospital and Hinchingsbrooke School. It is therefore a suitable location for additional growth to be focused and for additional facilities to be provided.

2.9 Congestion on the Huntingdon ring road is a significant problem and an Area Action Plan will help to address this issue in the context of additional development in Huntingdon West. In addition to this the potential removal of the viaduct between Huntingdon and Godmanchester as part of the proposed A14 improvements may provide the opportunity for re-configuration of the road system in Huntingdon West.

2.10 The population of Huntingdon is growing and therefore there is an increasing need for recreational space. Within Huntingdon West there are opportunities to increase the amount and quality of recreational space at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and at Views Common.

Question 1

Do you agree that the area defined on map 2.1 is the correct area for the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan to cover?



3 Vision and Objectives

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3 Vision and Objectives

Draft Vision

3.1 The draft vision for the Area Action Plan draws on the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy*, the Corporate Plan '*Growing Success*' and the Government's vision for sustainable development in *Securing the Future, delivering the UK's Sustainable Development Strategy*.

3.2 The creation of cleaner, safer, greener and healthier communities is an important part of the sustainable development agenda. The Community Strategy's vision for Huntingdonshire is to be a 'place where future generations have a balanced and good quality of life'. To support this vision *Growing Success* sets out that the Council will strive to: make the most of opportunities that come from growth by promoting the development of sustainable communities, enable people to realise their full potential and have access to suitable jobs, homes and services, work towards a balance between social, economic and environmental needs and maintain 'excellent' standards.

3.3 The following draft vision has been produced as a starting point. We are seeking your views on whether this is the right vision for the area.

Vision Statement

Option 1

Huntingdon West will create a vibrant new quarter for the town by rejuvenating this part of the town which will contribute towards the character of Huntingdon. It will provide an attractive green gateway into the town and will be characterised by high quality greenspace with enhancement of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Views Common.

The Ermine Street/ George Street and Railway Station area will be transformed into a thriving area offering modern office development, a range of high quality residential developments, a retail centre which will complement the existing town centre and enhance the vitality and viability of Huntingdon, and a high quality transport hub.

The Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus could become a hub for educational and other community institutional uses and associated employment development.

The Thrapston/ Huntingdon Road area in Brampton could be a location for high quality development which will be sensitive to the location and will help maintain the separation between Huntingdon and Brampton.

Huntingdon West will be an exemplar for sustainable living where development will link living, working and leisure and will be built to a high standard with excellent pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to the surrounding area.

Question 2

Is this the right vision for Huntingdon West?

Question 3

If not, what do you think the vision should be?

Draft Objectives

3.4 To realise the vision a set of objectives need to be developed. The following draft objectives draw on the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy, the Corporate Plan, the Community Strategy and on national planning objectives.

Option 2

Sustainability

- Objective 1 - To ensure development is sustainable
- Objective 2 - To maximise the re-use of previously developed land
- Objective 3 - To protect, preserve and enhance wildlife and biodiversity

Function

- Objective 4 - To create an appropriate mix of uses
- Objective 5 - To ensure that development complements the existing town centre and strengthens its vitality and viability
- Objective 6 - To enhance opportunities for recreation

Local Distinctiveness

- Objective 7 - To create an attractive new gateway into the town
- Objective 8 - To ensure a green gap is retained between Huntingdon and Brampton
- Objective 9 - To create a high quality built environment
- Objective 10 - To protect and enhance the landscape
- Objective 11 - To retain the setting of Hinchbrooke House

Accessibility

- Objective 12 - To maximise walking, cycling and use of public transport
- Objective 13 - To improve links with the surrounding area

Implementation

- Objective 14 - To determine appropriate phasing for development
- Objective 15 - To identify funding requirements
- Objective 16 - To secure appropriate infrastructure

Reasonable alternatives?

3.5 No other reasonable alternatives have been identified as these objectives are essential to ensure development of the area is consistent with national and strategic objectives.

3 Vision and Objectives

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Question 4

Do you agree that these objectives are appropriate and all relevant issues are addressed?



4 Key Issues and Options

4.1 Huntingdonshire faces a number of issues in the period up to 2021. The District needs to meet the targets set out in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and national planning policy. Huntingdon West offers opportunity to contribute towards the achievement of these. The main issues which have been identified are:

Issue 1

How can the Area Action Plan contribute towards achieving sustainable development and re-using previously developed land?

4.2 The Area Action Plan needs to consider the principles of sustainable development⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ as outlined in the Government's *Securing the Future, delivering UK sustainable development strategy*.

Issue 2

How can the Area Action Plan contribute towards providing housing for all members of the community?

4.3 The draft RSS requires Huntingdonshire to provide 11,200 homes between 2001 and 2021. Huntingdon and the neighbouring market towns of St Neots and St Ives are part of the Cambridge Sub-Region defined in draft RSS14 and the Structure Plan. The Cambridge Sub-Region included Cambridge and the ring of market towns which surround it.

4.4 The provision of affordable housing is a priority set out in the Council's Housing Strategy 2006-11. Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, such as key worker housing. In 2006 an update to the Huntingdonshire Housing Needs Assessment (2002) highlighted a need for an additional 585 affordable units per annum in the District to address the current shortfall, 4 of which should be for Key Worker households. The emerging Core Strategy will include a requirement for affordable housing which will be applied in Huntingdon West. A Market Housing Assessment is being prepared for the Cambridge Sub-Region which will estimate housing need and demand in terms of affordable and market housing, determined how the distribution of need and demand varies across the Sub-Region and consider future demographic trends and identify the accommodation requirements of specific groups. The Market Housing Assessment is expected to be completed in spring/ summer 2007.

4.5 Higher densities where appropriate can assist the provision of sustainable development as they promote sustainable travel patterns and help make local services viable. Developing at higher densities also ensures more efficient use of land.

Issue 3

How can the Area Action Plan contribute to the provision of employment opportunities?

iii World Commission on Environment & Development, 1987

4 Key Issues and Options

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4.6 The Employment Land Review (HDC, 2007) identified a net take-up of just over 8 hectares of new employment land per annum in the District over the five years from 2002 and identified 32 hectares of new and deliverable employment land available for development. To support economic growth it is important that sufficient land is brought forward in suitable locations to accommodate this growth. Huntingdon West includes sites which are in close proximity to the town centre and the railway station which could be suitable to meet some of the District's employment land needed to 2021 and could offer a unique quality environment that is not available in other sites.

Issue 4

How can the Area Action Plan contribute to future shopping opportunities in the town?

4.7 In 2006 an update to the Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment (HDC, 2005) identified an aspirational target of 20,000 sq.m additional comparison shopping floorspace across the District by 2021; this is the equivalent of 5.1 Huntingdon Sainsburys' or 14.3 Huntingdon Waitrose's. It suggests that around 12,000 sq.m of this should be in Huntingdon; this is the equivalent of 3 Sainsburys' or 8.6 Waitrose's. Huntingdon West provides an opportunity to accommodate some of this additional floorspace.

4.8 In terms of convenience shopping the assessment identified a modest requirement of around 3,900 sq.m of additional floorspace in the latter part of the plan period, this is equivalent to 1 Huntingdon Sainsburys.

Issue 5

How can the Area Action Plan address the reconfiguration of the road system to meet the needs of Huntingdon West and the wider town?

4.9 There are two important issues to consider in relation to the road system. The first is the rerouting of the A14 between Ellington and Fen Drayton. Although this has not yet been finalised, the viaduct which currently runs over Views Common and the Railway Station may be removed if the decision is taken to create a three lane A14 south of Huntingdon. If this viaduct is removed the existing A14 could become a local road between Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and Cambridgeshire Constabulary Headquarters to join the local road network at Brampton Road.

4.10 The second is the opportunity to create a link road in the Ermine Street/ George Street area to relieve congestion on the ring road. This new link road is proposed in the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy as part of the proposed town centre and ring road measures. The Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy is included in appendix 8d of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006). The potential for the Ermine Street/ George Street link road is not dependent upon the removal of the viaduct between Huntingdon and Godmanchester and could go ahead even if this does not take place.

4.11 The proposed new road layout is shown on map 4.1.

Issue 6

What additional infrastructure is needed in Huntingdon West?

4.12 It is important that development is supported by adequate infrastructure. Development in Huntingdon West should not put added pressure on existing infrastructure. Therefore, the provision of additional infrastructure will be required in line with the Council's forthcoming Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Contributions.

Issue 7

How can the Area Action Plan help address the shortfall of car parking in Huntingdon?

4.13 Car parking is a key issue in Huntingdon. A report undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council by consultants identified an immediate need for short-term parking provision and in the long term the need for long-stay charging. The study found that at peak time on and off street parking is at effective capacity and the loss of parking at Pathfinder House and that associated with development at Princes Street will place an immediate short-term problem on the available public parking. To address these issues the study recommended that 165 spaces be provided within the ring road and that outside the ring road further provision should be investigated at Bridge Place and/ or Brampton Road north of Huntingdon Railway Station. In addition to this west of the town centre was seen as a possible area for short-term parking, subject to landowner negotiations, and also as part of a longer term strategy for parking in this area. The Area Action Plan needs to consider allocation of public car parks within Huntingdon West. In addition to the shortage of car parking for the town centre, there are also issues with the amount of parking at Huntingdon Railway Station being inadequate and with rail users parking in spaces provided for the town centre; this issue also needs to be addressed through the Area Action Plan.

Issue 8

How does the Area Action Plan ensure the various elements of the plan link together?

4.14 The Area Action Plan is split into various geographical and topic based sections and options are provided for development within each of these. However, when considering these options the balance of development in the whole area needs to be considered to ensure that development is complementary throughout the whole area. Therefore each section should not be considered in isolation.

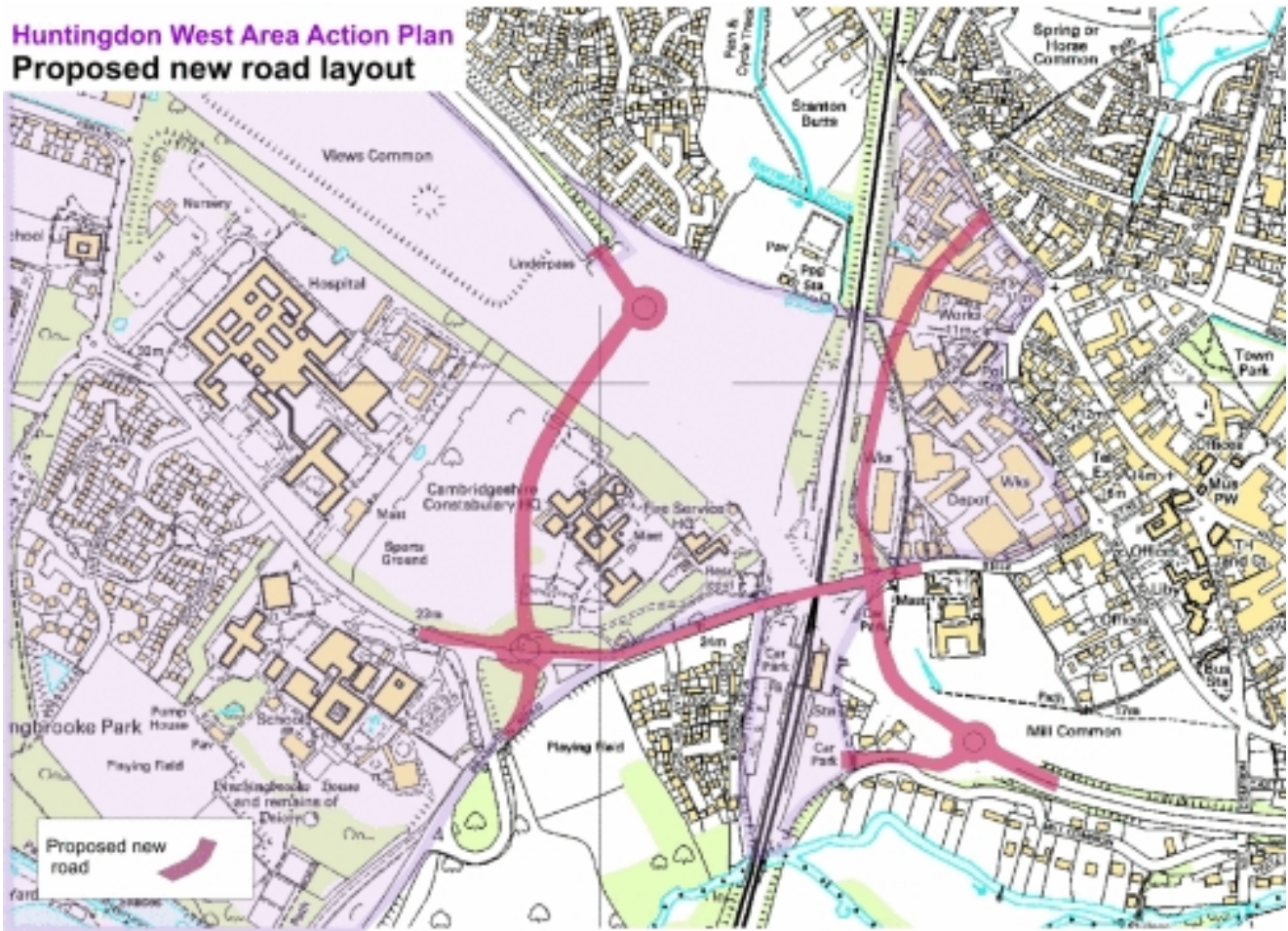
Question 5

Do you agree that these are the key issues which the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan needs to consider?

4.15 The following sections of the Area Action Plan look at these issues in more detail and address Area Action Plan wide uses as well as site-specific issues.

4 Key Issues and Options

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Map 4.1 Road layout

Sustainable Development

Energy

4.16 A key factor in achieving sustainable development is a reduction in use of energy and in use of energy from non-renewable energy sources. The emerging Core Strategy will set out a requirement for the percentage of energy to be provided by on-site renewable energy sources. In addition to this requirement, within Huntingdon West there are also opportunities to reduce further the carbon footprint of development. This could include the use of a decentralised energy supply such as combined heat and power or district heating schemes. Combined heat and power re-uses by products that are normally wasted into the atmosphere and generates heat and power simultaneously and can achieve a 35% reduction in energy use. Combined heat and power plants can be fuelled using a variety of fuels including gas, biomass, coppice wood and forestry waste.

Option 3

In addition to renewable energy requirements set out in the Core Strategy, the Area Action Plan will strongly support, and if possible, require the provision of decentralised energy supplies to meet the energy needs of a significant proportion of new developments.

Reasonable alternatives?

4.17 No reasonable alternatives have been identified as the above option is consistent with national and regional policy and guidance.

Question 6

Do you agree the above option is appropriate?

4.18 In addition to the use of decentralised heating systems it is also important that new developments are designed and constructed to maximise sustainability of development. This can be done through a number of measures including:

- The incorporation of energy efficient devices, energy efficient materials and on-site renewable energy sources, such as solar panels
- The incorporation of water efficiency measures
- The use of locally sourced materials and materials with low embodied energy in construction
- The incorporation of sustainable drainage or rainwater holding facilities
- The incorporation of household recycling and composting facilities
- Layouts which maximise the benefits of solar gain

4.19 In 2006 the Government launched The Code for Sustainable Homes. This is a voluntary code which sets a national standard for sustainable construction and design for new homes. Using the code homes are given a star rating to rate the overall sustainability of the home. Within Huntingdon West it is important that the achievement of the standards within this code are encouraged to ensure that development is sustainable.

Option 4

Within Huntingdon West compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes will be encouraged.

Reasonable alternatives?

4.20 No reasonable alternatives have been identified as the above option is consistent with national and regional policy and guidance.

4 Key Issues and Options

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Question 7

Do you agree with the above option?

4.21 Achievement of the highest star rating within the Code for Sustainable Homes requires a zero carbon development. This means that there are zero net emissions of carbon dioxide from all energy use in the home.

Question 8

Do you think the Area Action Plan should allocate a site for a zero carbon development?

Movement

4.22 The Area Action Plan needs to consider how people and goods move within Huntingdon West and between this area and other parts of Huntingdon. Policies in the Area Action Plan should promote sustainable forms of travel within Huntingdon West and create good links with surrounding areas.

Reconfiguration of the Road Network

4.23 As discussed in the key issues section there is an opportunity within the Ermine Street/ George Street area to create a new link road to help relieve congestion on the ring road and to allow better circulation around the town. At the moment the way the Huntingdon ring road operates creates unnecessary vehicle movements for traffic due to the need to navigate the one way system. A link road between Ermine Street and George Street would enable traffic to flow in the opposite direction to the ring road and would therefore provide a link between the northern entry to the town and the western area of Huntingdon. This would reduce the amount of traffic travelling around the ring road. The new link road could run from George Street, opposite the station entrance, to Ermine Street adjacent to the Travis Perkins site, see map 4.1. At this point Ermine Street is narrow with a built-up frontage and the junction width and traffic generated would need to be taken into account.

Question 9

Do you agree that a new link road is essential for redevelopment of the Ermine Street/ George Street site?

4.24 Congestion is also a significant problem along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road particularly at peak times of day, the majority of traffic is generated by people working at or visiting the Hospital or picking children up from Hinchingsbrooke School. If the rerouting of the A14 results in the removal of the viaduct and the reconfiguration of the road network as shown on map 4.1 then there may be opportunities to improve the flow of traffic along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road.

Question 10

Could the reconfiguration of the road network create an opportunity for improvements to traffic flows along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road? If yes how could this be done?

Public Transport

4.25 There are a number of public transport routes which serve Huntingdon West although in some cases, such as the bus service to the Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, these are limited to certain times of the day.

Question 11

Should provision of public transport in Huntingdon West be extended and if so how would you like it to change?

4.26 As part of the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy a new bus/rail interchange is being created at Huntingdon Railway Station. This interchange will allow buses to enter the station and to turn around and wait in a bus only turning area. Buses will still be unable to turn left out of the station due to the angle of the exit onto Brampton Road but a new stairway is being created to provide access between the railway station and a bus lay-by on Brampton Road. The Area Action Plan needs to consider how proposals in Huntingdon West could help improve access to the station for public transport services, for example the creation of the link road between Ermine Street and George Street could enable a roundabout to be built with direct access to the railway station. A link road between Ermine Street and George Street would also improve bus links between the north of the town and railway station.

Question 12

How could we better integrate the railway station with other public transport services?

4.27 As part of the programme of public transport improvements in the County a high quality public transport corridor is being created between Huntingdon and Cambridge. The Guided Bus is proposed in the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006) and was one of the main recommendations coming out of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study. Between Cambridge and St Ives a guideway will be built along the disused railway line between Cambridge and St Ives and on-road bus priority measures will be introduced between St Ives and Huntingdon. Construction of the Guided Bus has started and it is scheduled to open early in 2009. As part of the bus priority measures a contra-flow bus lane is currently being created along Walden Road to allow buses travelling along George Street to turn right along Walden Road to the bus station. This will mean buses no longer have to go all the way around the ring road and should save approximately 10 minutes journey time.

Question 13

How should the bus priority measures serving the Guided Bus reflect the proposals contained in the Area Action Plan?

Walking and Cycling

4.28 The Area Action Plan should maintain existing pedestrian and cycling links and improve pedestrian and cycling links within the Area Action Plan area and between this area, the town centre and surrounding areas. New walking/ cycling routes are a key concept of the Huntingdon Vision (2006). Map 4.2 illustrates a number of areas where improvements to the walking and cycling network could be made including:

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- Between Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and the rest of the Hinchingsbrooke development
- Between Brampton and Huntingdon via an extension to the Country Park
- Between Ermine Street/ George Street area and the town centre and links to Stukeley Meadows and Views Common
- Between Brampton and Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus/ Hinchingsbrooke Business Park
- Between residential development adjacent to Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and the town centre
- Between Hinchingsbrooke Campus and the town centre

Option 5

The Area Action Plan will include new and improved walking and cycling links within the development and to surrounding areas

Reasonable alternatives?

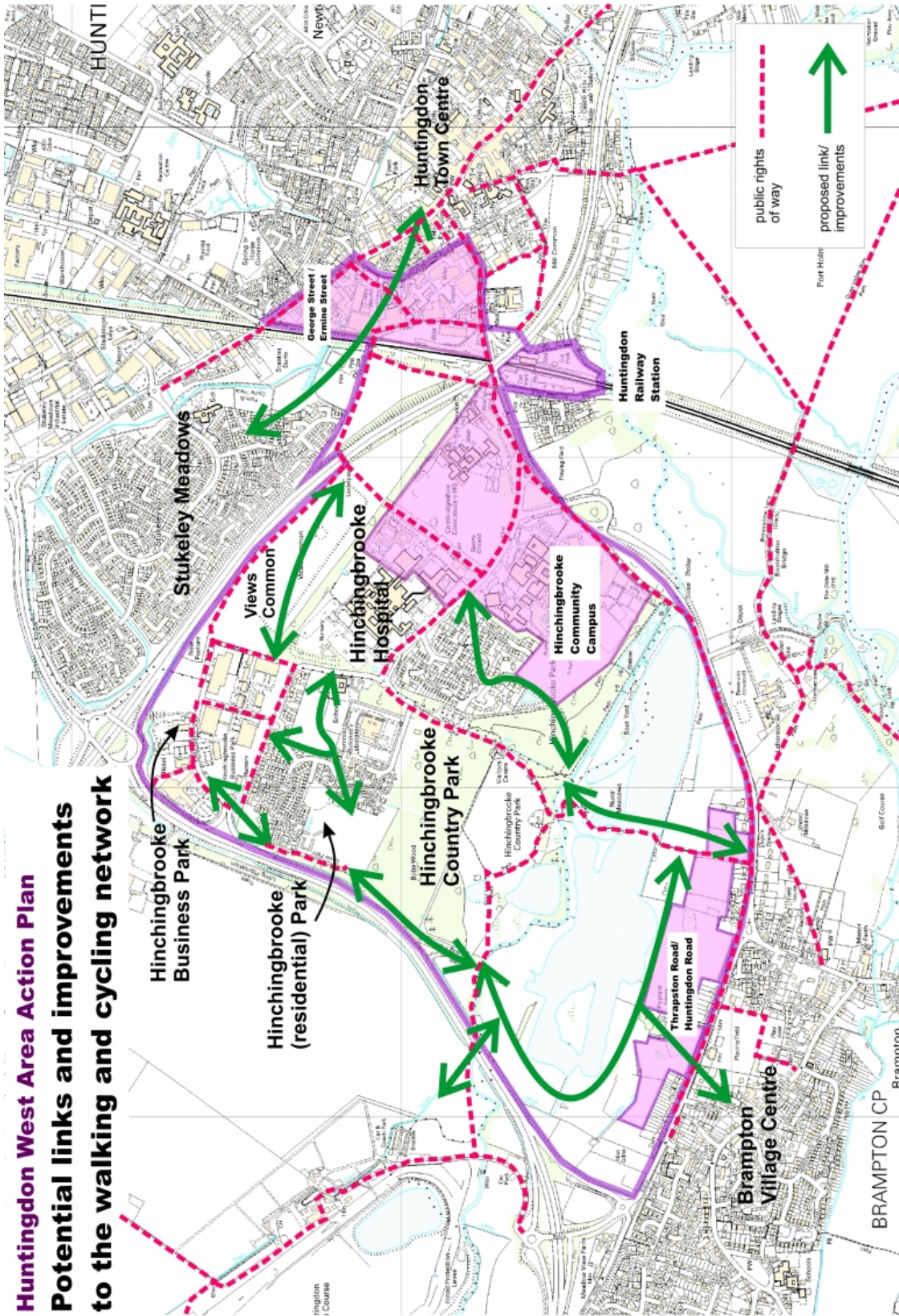
4.29 No reasonable alternatives have been identified because walking and cycling are sustainable forms of transport and there is potential for the number of trips made by walking and cycle to increase around the town. This will result in a fewer number of shorter trips being made by car.

Question 14

Are there other areas where walking and cycling links need to be improved?

Key Issues and Options 4

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Map 4.2 Future walking and cycling links

4 Key Issues and Options

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Green Space

4.30 The Area Action Plan needs to consider how the environment in and around Huntingdon West can be protected and enhanced.

Biodiversity

4.31 Biodiversity is the wealth of wildlife in terms of numbers of species and their habitats and covers species considered to be rare as well as common place. The Area Action Plan includes a County Wildlife Site (CWS) - Hinchingsbrooke Gravel Pits, which covers the southern area of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, around the lakes. The on-going management of the Park and its habitats is crucial to protect and enhance biodiversity within and outside of the Park.

4.32 Urban spaces can also provide a haven for wildlife. There are two types of urban spaces, green areas within the built environment, such as parks, and the built development. A range of measures can be incorporated into new development to encourage biodiversity such as green roofs, nesting and roofing boxes, wildlife friendly landscaping and sustainable drainage systems. Re-development within Huntingdon West provides an opportunity to encourage biodiversity through creative design.

4.33 The promotion of biodiversity is interlinked with encouraging green infrastructure. The provision of improved linkage between existing and proposed green infrastructure resources is key to encouraging biodiversity corridors and habitats. Footpaths, cycleways and bridleways can double as biodiversity corridors.

Question 15

How and where within Huntingdon West would you like to see biodiversity enhanced and created?

Question 16

How much emphasis should be placed on the enhancement and creation of biodiversity habitats?

Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

4.34 Hinchingsbrooke Country Park covers an area of roughly 70 hectares of grassland, meadows, woodland and lakes and is home to a wealth of wildlife. The Park is now at capacity and it could be beneficial to expand the Country Park to offer greater opportunities to local residents. This extension could run south of Alconbury Brook to include an additional section of Hinchingsbrooke Lakes. This would enable walks/ footpaths to be created around the lakes and would improve links between Brampton and the Country Park and the Hinchingsbrooke area. This would provide a good link for people living in Brampton and work at Hinchingsbrooke Business Park.

Question 17

Do you think the Country Park needs to expand?

Question 18

If yes, how far should the Country Park expand?

Question 19

How can the Country Park be improved (e.g. what additional features would you like included)?



Views Common

4.35 Views Common is an important area of green open space which is home to a wealth of wildlife. As part of the proposals to re-route the A14 the viaduct, which currently bisects Views Common, may be removed. This would make the Common more visually attractive and enhance its status as an important area of green space.

Question 20

Do you agree that Views Common is an important green space?

Question 21

If the A14 viaduct is removed should this area remain an important green space?

4.36 Views Common is owned by the Freeman of Huntingdon, it is not access land ^(iv) and the public do not have the right to roam under the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000. However, there are a number of footpaths which cross the Common which people are allowed to use. A new footpath has been created across Views Common and a hard surface link has been created on land at the Police HQ to link this with Hinchingsbrooke

iv as defined in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 1(1)

4 Key Issues and Options

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School. This footpath completes a pedestrian route from Stukeley Meadows to Hinchingsbrooke Road and follows on from a link between Handcrofts Lane, Lake Way and Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. This pedestrian route will improve linkages in this area of the Area Action Plan and forms an important part of the green infrastructure.

Question 22

Would you like to see Views Common become a public open space?

4.37 The Common is currently used for cattle grazing which helps to maintain the land. There may be opportunities to enhance the landscape of the area through, for example, leveling the land and improved landscaping, better management which could link to the Country Park, reducing the sound from the road network and re-seeding the area to improve the flora and fauna.

Question 23

How do you think Views Common could be improved (eg land levelling, new management and re-seeding to improve the flora and fauna)?



Open Space and Recreation

4.38 People living and working within Huntingdon West should have adequate access to open space and recreational facilities. These facilities help create a high quality living environment and enable people to lead healthy lifestyles.

4.39 A forthcoming supplementary planning document on Planning Contributions will set standards for provision of open space, facilities for children and young people and allotments. In addition to this provision should also be made for strategic open space. Strategic open space includes open spaces which are important at a regional and sub-regional level such as Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and the corridors which link these. In Huntingdon West Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and links to it could be extended and improved.

4.40 The main issue to consider is whether open space should be provided within sites where development will take place or whether some of the open space and recreational facilities should be provided through provision off site, either within Huntingdon West or the immediate vicinity, or through improvements to an existing area or facility.

Question 24

How would you like to see open space and recreation facilities provided in Huntingdon West?

Design

4.41 The Area Action Plan can emphasise the need for a high quality of urban design. This can be achieved by developing a clear set of design principles and factors which need to be taken into account when developing and redeveloping the area. The following design principles have been developed taking into account national and regional policy and local issues.

Option 6

Draft Design Principles:

- Development should promote community security by ensuring buildings overlook streets, open spaces and recreation areas
- Layout of development should promote walking and cycling
- Development should create attractive frontages
- Development should create a high quality public environment
- Development should be sympathetic to existing development in terms of layout, form, height, detail and materials
- Layout of development should maximise solar gain
- Development should include landmark buildings and focal points and should enhance views into and out of the site
- Development should promote a mix of uses that creates activity within the development site

Question 25

Do you agree that design principles should be included in the Area Action Plan?

Question 26

Do the design principles above address all issues or are there any other principles which should be included?

4.42 There is the opportunity for the Area Action Plan to designate landmark buildings to help create an attractive entrance into Huntingdon and to provide attractive views and vistas.

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Question 27

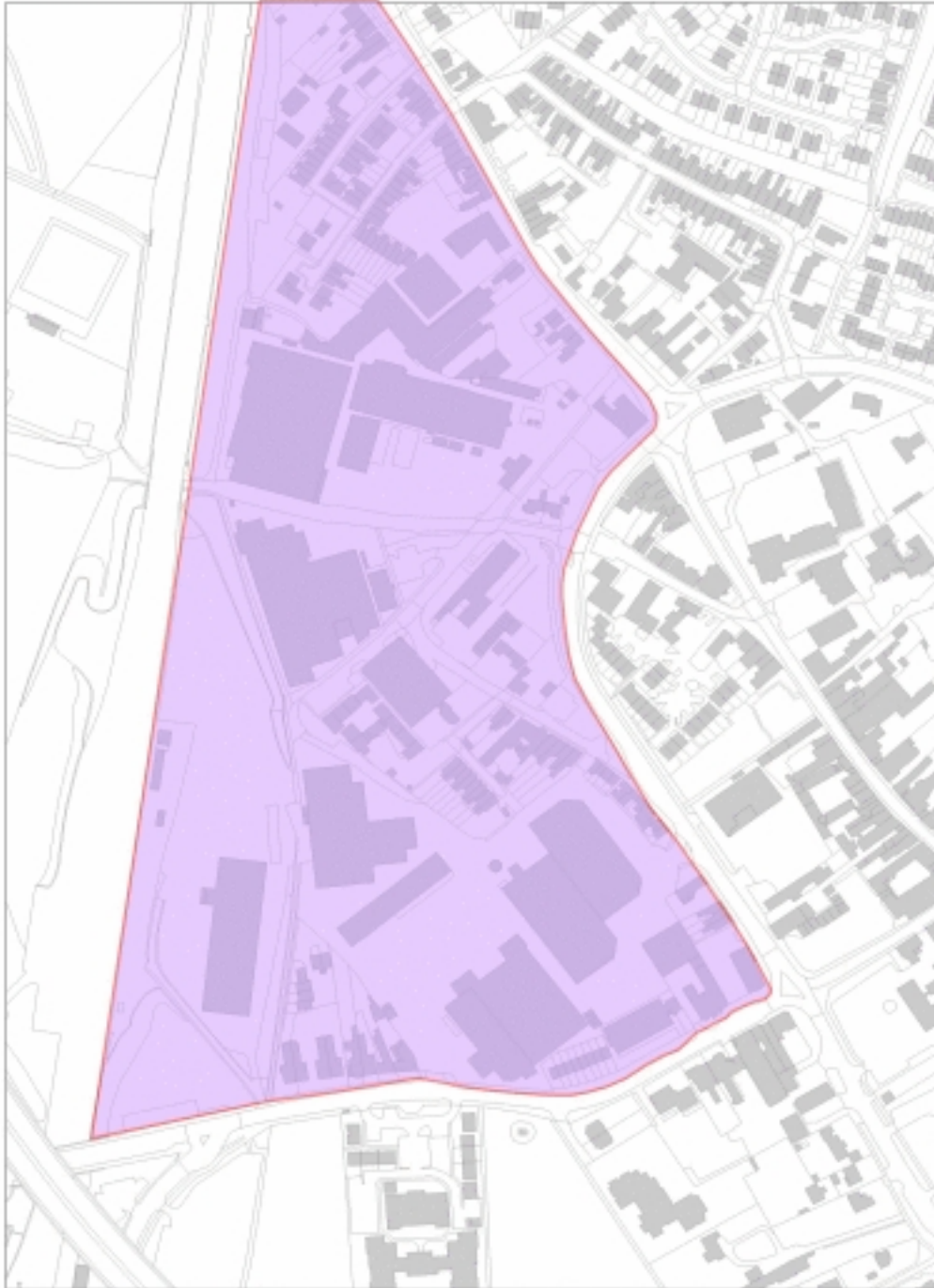
Within Huntingdon West where would you like to see landmark buildings located?

For example:

- a. Along Brampton Road/ George Street into Huntingdon
- b. At key locations within the site
- c. In the Ermine Street/ George Street area
- d. At Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus
- e. At the Railway Station
- f. On the sites along Thrapston/ Huntingdon Road

Ermine Street/ George Street area

4.43 This area includes the land between Ermine Street, George Street, the railway line and the ring road, as shown in Map 4.3. Currently, the site is in mixed use, with a significant proportion of this in commercial/industrial use alongside residential. The site is classified as previously developed land and redevelopment will therefore make efficient use of land. The site also offers a prime sustainable location as it is close to the town centre with good public transport links. Using the site for mixed use redevelopment can contribute to sustainability, as this promotes sustainable travel patterns and a diverse and vibrant locality.



Huntingdon West Area Action Plan
Map to show Ermine Street/ George Street Area

Map 4.3 Ermine Street/ George Street area

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

4.44 This area requires comprehensive redevelopment and it provides the opportunity to link the town centre with the railway station and beyond. The area has previously been the subject of an urban design framework^(v) which appraised various land use options on the site. Given the existing uses and location of the site, development will be mixed use, with various options for that mix.

4.45 Because of the historical and existing uses of the site and other uses in the surrounding area there are a number of significant constraints including contamination, noise, environmental and built heritage and existing vehicular and pedestrian routes. These are shown on the diagrams below. When considering redevelopment it is important that these constraints are taken into account.

Contamination of land

4.46 As a result of the industrial use of the land the site is in an area of moderate sensitivity to chemical contamination of groundwater and surface water resources. There are also high levels of metal concentrations in ground soil across the site. The level of some metal concentrations are considered to be sufficiently high to present a hazard to future residents.

4.47 Employing appropriate contamination remediation methods can remove the risk associated with contaminated land^(vi). As the majority of contamination in this area is soil based, appropriate remediation methods may include the removal of a certain amount of soil and replacement with clean fill material. Soil removal may also be appropriate to mitigate groundwater contamination in some circumstances.

4.48 Despite there being evidence of contamination on some of the land between Ermine Street and George Street, development is considered to be beneficial and should be encouraged subject to appropriate remediation methods being implemented.

4.49 Issues of contamination will be an important consideration when allocating land. Map 4.4 shows the levels of possible contamination in this area.

Noise

4.50 The main sources of noise pollution are from the east coast mainline railway and the A14. Noise primarily affects the existing industrial area between Ermine Street and George Street. The north western edge of the area between Ermine Street and George Street abuts the railway line. The noise produced by the railway line is particularly acute where it moves onto the embankment. Any development scheme proposed for this area must therefore take into account the noise and possible vibration originating from the railway line.

4.51 Towards the southern section of the area between Ermine Street and George Street heavy traffic noise from the A14 will need to be considered, as will the lesser traffic noise originating from the ring road to the east.

4.52 The impact of noise is an important consideration in determining the design and layout of a development scheme which can help alleviate the impact of noise. Map 4.5 shows noise corridors in this area.

Environmental and Built Heritage

4.53 This includes Listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Tree Preservation Orders. There are 19 Listed Buildings in the Ermine Street/ George Street area as shown on map 4.6, these include the Alms Houses and the Old Post Office on George Street, No's 14, 16 and 18 St John's Street, 81 High Street and 14 and 32-36 Ermine Street. A small section in the north east of the Ermine Street/ George Street area is in the conservation area and this runs along the eastern edge of the area, a proposed extension to the conservation area includes a much

v The Civic Trust (2002) West of Huntingdon Town Centre Urban Design Framework

vi as defined in PPS23 Annex 2, para 2.5

larger section of the site as shown on map 4.6. There are also four tree preservation orders within the Ermine Street/ George Street area. New development in the area will need to be integrated sensitively, and take into account the character and setting of areas of importance. Map 4.6 shows areas of high, medium and low values landscape as identified in the West of Huntingdon Town Centre Urban Design Framework (Civic Trust, 2002).



Access and Links

4.54 Map 4.7 shows the existing pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes in the Ermine Street/ George Street area. The main vehicle routes run around the site, vehicle routes into the site are all dead ends. There are therefore opportunities to improve connectivity through redevelopment of the area. There are several existing pedestrian routes which link to the surrounding area. These need to be taken into account when considering the form of new development in this area.

Future Access and Links

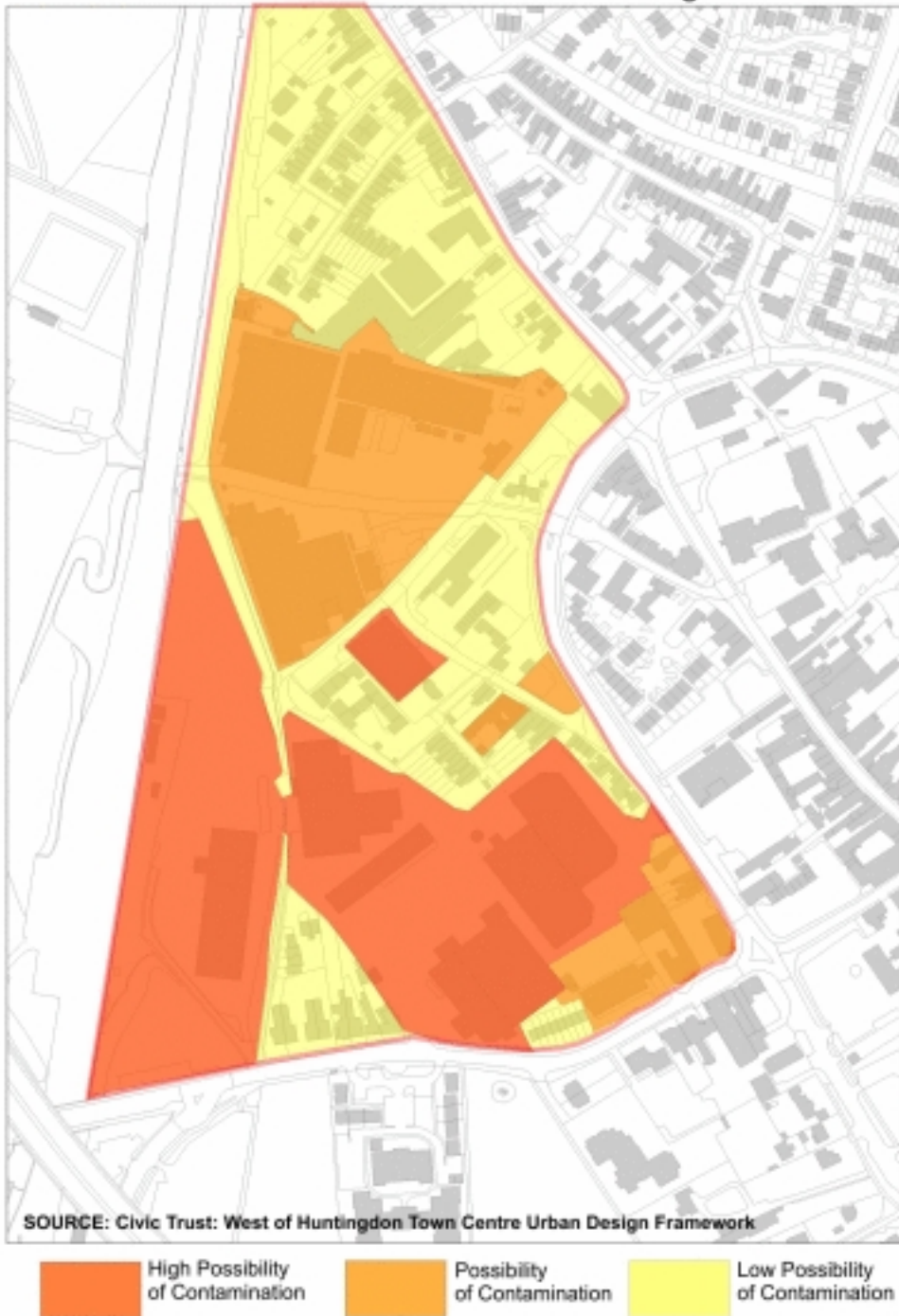
4.55 Map 4.8 shows the potential reconfiguration of the road system if the viaduct is removed as part of the rerouting of the A14. This would create a link road between Ermine Street and George Street which would reduce traffic on the Huntingdon Ring Road and would create a link between the north and west of the town.

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

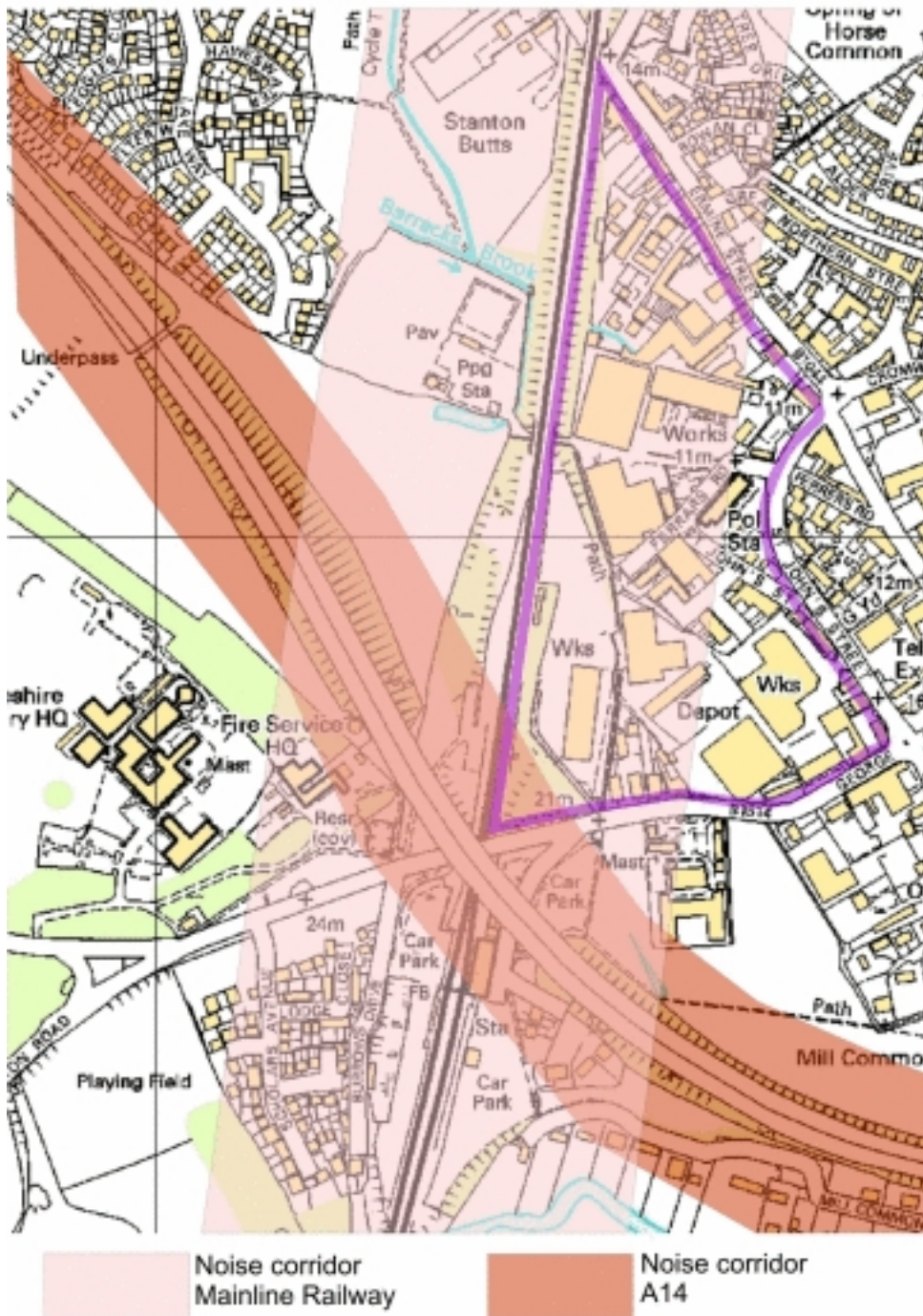
Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Land Contamination in Ermine Street /George Street Area



Map 4.4 Contamination

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Noise Constraints Ermine Street/ George Street Area



Map 4.5 Noise

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options



Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Townscape and Built Heritage Ermine Street/ George Street Area

Map 4.6 Built heritage

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Access & Links in Ermine Street Area / George Street



Map 4.7 Access and links

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Proposed new road layout



Map 4.8 Proposed new road layout

Overall development of the site

4.56 Taking into account the constraints identified above there are several options for how the site could be developed. The Urban Design Framework (2002) highlighted that there is a strong market for residential development in this area but there are also opportunities for other types of development to be located in this area. The key issues to consider are whether this should become a residential quarter or an extension to the town centre.

Question 28

What should the Ermine Street/ George Street area's primary function be?

- Residential or
- Business (including retail and employment)

Residential development

4.57 The proximity of the site to the town centre, railway station and local employment makes this a sustainable location for residential development. In relation to residential development there are several issues which need to be considered including the amount and density. The sections below cover these issues.

Question 29

Do you think this is a suitable location for residential development?

Question 30

If yes, where should this be located?

4.58 The emerging Huntingdonshire Core Strategy will include targets and thresholds for the provision of affordable housing. The targets and thresholds included this will be applied within Huntingdon West.



4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Density

The emerging Development Control Policies Development Plan Document will set out density ranges for development. The Ermine Street/ George Street area is close to the town centre and railway station and would therefore require higher densities to ensure the land is used efficiently. The following photos show examples of different densities:



Picture 4.1 58 dwellings per hectare



Picture 4.2 80 dwellings per hectare

Key Issues and Options 4

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options



Picture 4.3 75 dwellings per hectare



Picture 4.4 137 dwellings per hectare

Question 31

Which of these densities would you like to see in the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Employment Development

4.59 Employment development includes business, industrial and storage and distribution. The Council considers that office development would be the most appropriate use given the proximity to the town centre and railway station.

Question 32

Do you think this is a suitable location for employment development?

Question 33

If yes, where should this be located and what type?



Live/ work units

4.60 Live/ Work units provide accommodation for both residential and business use. The use of live/ work units differs from ordinary home working in the nature and intensity of the business use involved. Ordinary home working is secondary to the domestic use where as live/ work units have more space devoted to the work use or they may be able to accommodate more workers.

4.61 Live/ work units can play an important role in creating sustainable communities through the reduction in car travel and can help the establishment or expansion of small businesses. Live/ work units may be suitable in a variety of locations including within established mixed use areas such as town centres or in large new mixed use developments. It is therefore appropriate that the inclusion of this type of accommodation is considered in the Ermine Street/ George Street area.

Question 34

Should live/ work units be located within the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

Retail and leisure development

The relationship between the Ermine Street/ George Street area and other shopping areas in the town needs to be considered and it is important that any shopping and leisure development in this part of the town needs to complement the town centre rather than detract from it. The retail study update (2006) advised that after Chequers Court the next sequentially preferable location for shopping development is the Ermine Street/ George Street area but that it should only be developed following the implementation of the Chequers Court improvement scheme. The study considers that Ermine Street/ George Street should be earmarked as a longer-term (post 2011) opportunity for shopping uses as part of a comprehensive mixed-use development. The retail study identified a need for 12,000 sq.m, approximately 3 Huntingdon Sainsburys or 8.6 Huntingdon Waitrose, of additional comparison shopping floor space, approximately 4600 sq.m (50,000 sq ft) of this could be provided within the existing town centre. Therefore the remaining amount, approximately 8300 sq.m (89,000sq ft), the equivalent of 2 Huntingdon Sainsburys or 6 Huntingdon Waitrose, needs to be found elsewhere.

4.62 The Area Action Plan needs to make decisions about the type (e.g. large retailers, specialist shops, trade store etc), and quantity of retail development which could be located in the Ermine Street/ George Street area.

Question 35

Do you agree that this area is an appropriate location for shopping development; if not, where within Huntingdon do you think shopping development should be located?

Question 36

What type of shopping development would you like to see in this area?

- Large supermarket
- Large DIY type stores
- Smaller budget supermarket
- A range of comparison shops selling, for example, clothes, household furniture etc

Question 37

How much shopping development would you like to see in this area?

4.63 In addition to retail development Planning Policy Statement 6 also encourages a number of other uses to be located near to the town centre, these include:

- Leisure, entertainment facilities and more intensive sport and recreation facilities (including restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, health and fitness centres)
- Arts, culture and tourism (including theatres, museums, hotels and conference facilities)

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Question 38

Which of these other uses would you like to see in the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

Car Parking

4.64 The Huntingdon Town Vision (2006) and the Steer Davies Gleave Parking Study identify the Ermine Street/ George Street area as a location for additional public car parking. The advantage of using this area is that it could be reached by two feeder roads and would therefore reduce the amount of traffic travelling around the ring road to get to other long stay car parks. It would also be needed to serve any new shopping development in this area.

Question 39

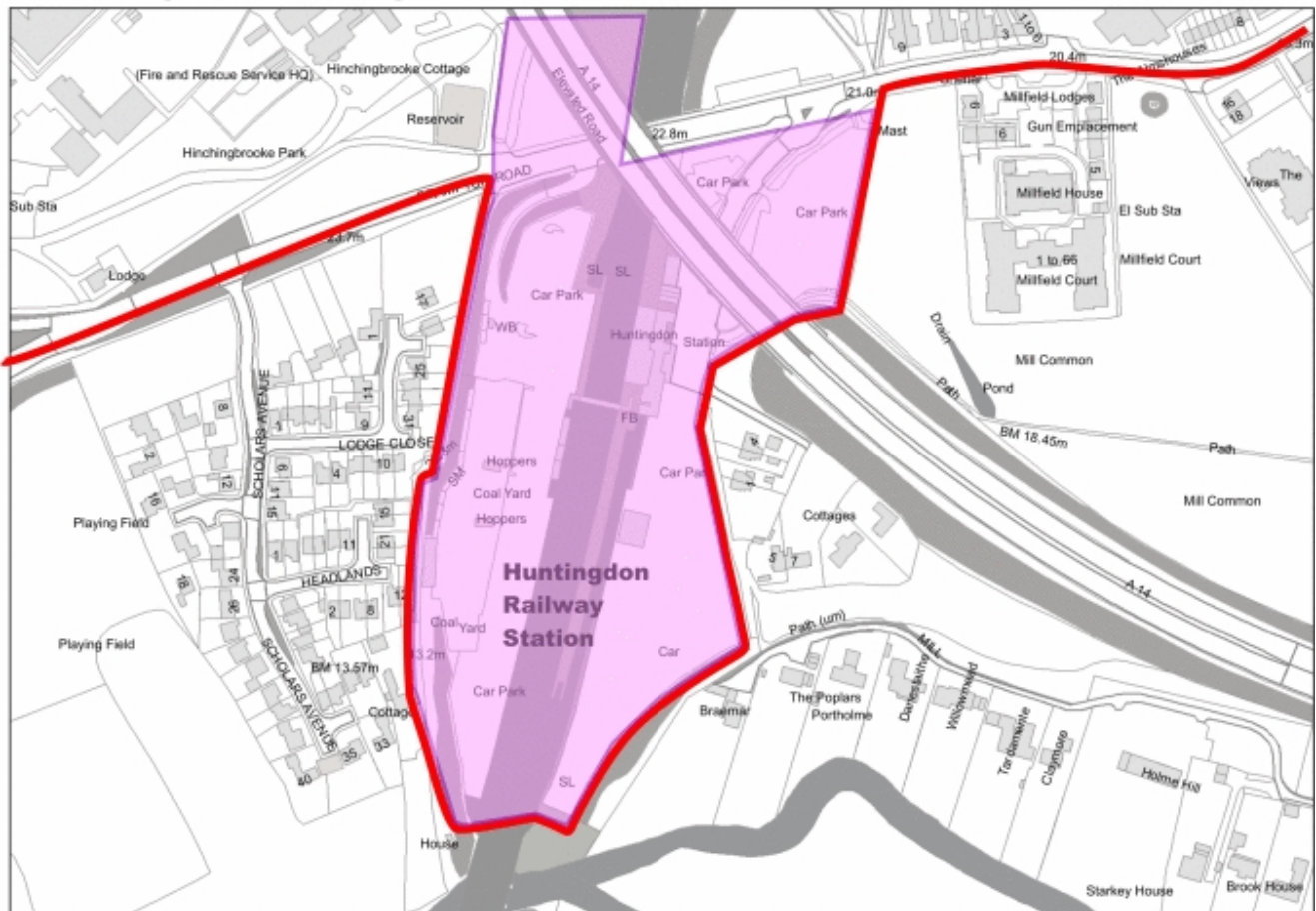
Do you think that additional public car parking should be provided in the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

Question 40

If you do not think public car parking should be provided in this location, where in Huntingdon should it be provided?

Huntingdon Railway Station

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Huntingdon Railway Station Area



Map 4.9 Huntingdon Railway Station

4.65 Huntingdon railway station, see map 4.9, provides good quality links with London, Peterborough and St Neots. The location of the railway station is currently dominated by the A14 viaduct but if this viaduct was to be removed as part of the rerouting of the A14 there would be an opportunity to enhance this area and to provide a more attractive gateway into Huntingdon.

4.66 Car parking is currently an important issue at the railway station and the train operating company is investigating the possibility of increasing car parking at the railway station.

Question 41

Do you think this is an appropriate location for additional levels of car parking to be provided for people using the station?

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

4.67 There is an area of land north of the station north of Brampton Road shown on map 4.9 which is currently unused. The land could be used to provide additional car parking for the Railway Station and town centre.

Question 42

Do you think it would be appropriate to use this land for additional car parking for the railway station and/ or the town centre?

4.68 Map 4.10 shows the potential reconfiguration of the road system if the viaduct is removed as part of the rerouting of the A14. The reconfiguration of the road system allows an additional access to be created into the Railway Station car park. These changes to the road system could result in the reconfiguration of the area in front of the station. As part of this additional development could take place, for example commercial development.

Question 43

Do you think this would be an appropriate location for a landmark commercial building?



Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Proposed new road layout



Map 4.10 Reconfiguration of the road network

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Hinchingbrooke

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Hinchingbrooke Campus Area



Map 4.11 Hinchingbrooke Community Campus

4.69 The Hinchingbrooke Community Campus includes Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Hinchingbrooke School, the Fire Headquarters and the Police Headquarters and associated playing fields, see Map 4.11.

4.70 There are a number of issues which affect the opportunities for development on this site, these include:

- the future of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and the need in the future for this to reduce in size, in particular the future of the wards adjacent to the playing fields which are surplus to requirements.
- the A14 and whether this is down-graded and the viaduct over Views Common and the Railway Station is removed. If this is the case then the down graded A14 would run through the site from Views Common down to Brampton Road, see map 4.15 This would significantly affect the availability of land within the site.

4.71 There are also a number of constraints which need to be considered. These include the landscape setting, the environment and built heritage and access and links.

Landscape Setting

4.72 The Hinchingsbrooke landscape is one of the most important historic elements in the Huntingdon landscape, map 4.12 shows an extract of the area from the 1809 Ordnance Survey. Hinchingsbrooke House was built in the 16th Century and the landscape remains largely unchanged since this time. The best preserved parts of the Hinchingsbrooke landscape are the former pleasure grounds and gardens and the Rose and Yew gardens. These features form the core of the landscape area and are of more than local importance. Beyond this core area features are more patchy but lend character to the local landscape. It is important that any development in the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus is sensitive to this historic landscape.

Environment and built heritage

4.73 Listed buildings within the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus are focused around Hinchingsbrooke School. There are a number of listed structures including Hinchingsbrooke House, the Brewhouse and laundry at Hinchingsbrooke House and gates, walls and a well at Hinchingsbrooke House and Hinchingsbrooke park as shown on map 4.13. The majority of the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus area is included in a proposed extension to the Conservation Area and the whole area is covered by a blanket Tree Preservation Order. New development in the area will need to take into account the character and setting of these features.



Access and links

4.74 Map 4.14. shows the existing pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes in the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus area. These need to be taken into account when considering development in the area.

Future Access and Links

4.75 Map 4.15 shows the potential reconfiguration of the road system if the viaduct is removed as part of the rerouting of the A14. This new road layout includes a link between the downgraded A14 and Brampton Road and potentially offers the opportunity to help relieve congestion on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road as discussed earlier.

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Historic Map, extract from 1809 Ordnance Survey



Source: Huntingdon County Record Office.



Huntingdon, at the end of the 18th Century, was a coaching town along the route south to London, along Ermine Street.

Commons: The Views

The town of Huntingdon has historically been surrounded by "commons", open land administered by the Borough of Huntingdon. This land was rented for grazing. It was also once Medieval strip farming (arable crops), part of the open fields of Huntingdon which fed the larger town. In 1850 the Views was divided into **Views Common** and **Mill Common**.

Hinchingbrooke House and Park

Originally a medieval nunnery, at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 the property was obtained by the Cromwell family. The church and priory buildings were then converted into a country residence. In the 17th century the Montagues, who became the Earls of Sandwich after the Restoration, brought the land and the house and park has evolved with the successive generations. In 1967 the 10th Earl of Sandwich sold the house to the District Council and it became part of Hinchingbrooke school.

Map 4.12 Historic context

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Built Heritage Hinchingsbrooke Campus Area

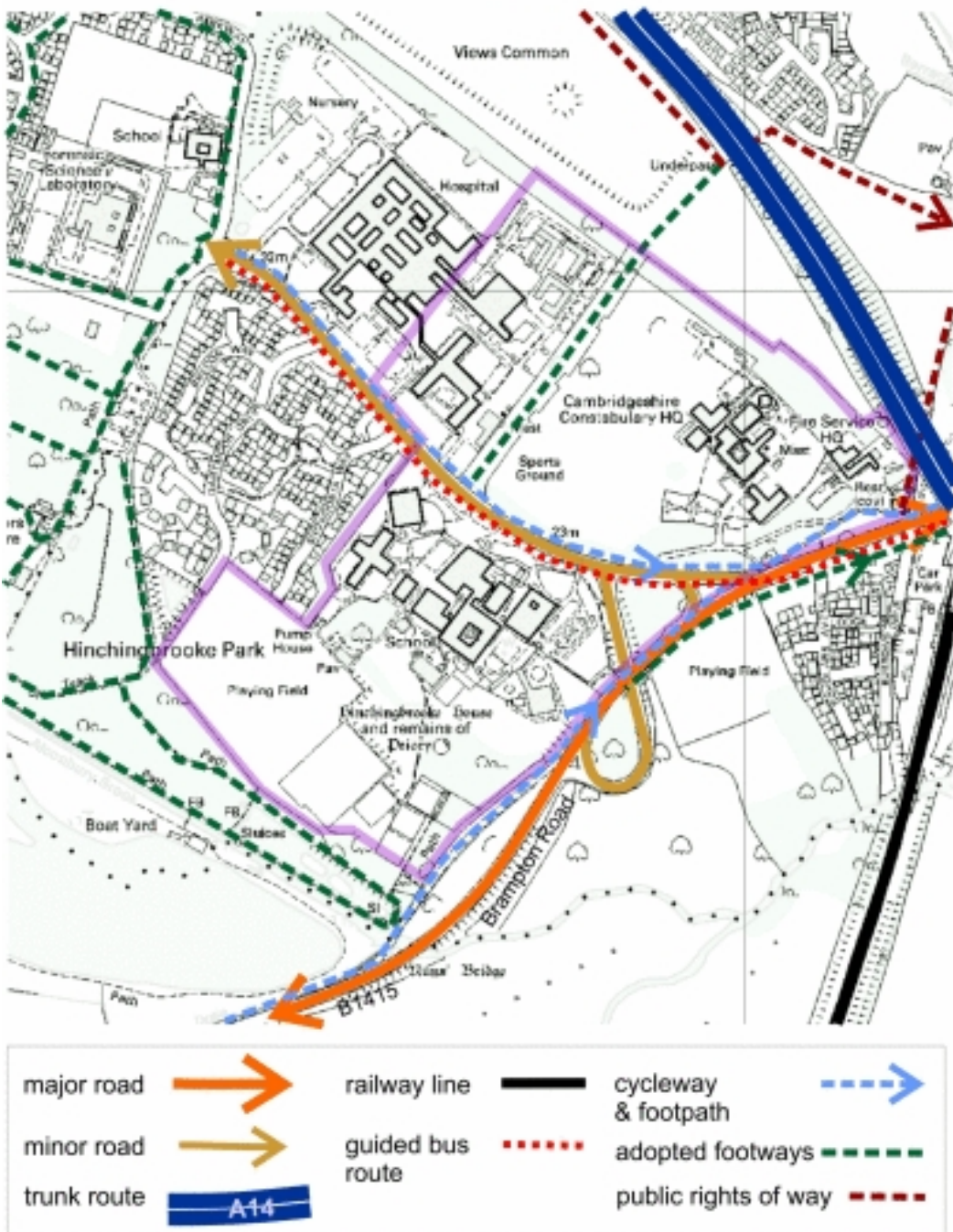


Map 4.13 Environment and built heritage

4 Key Issues and Options

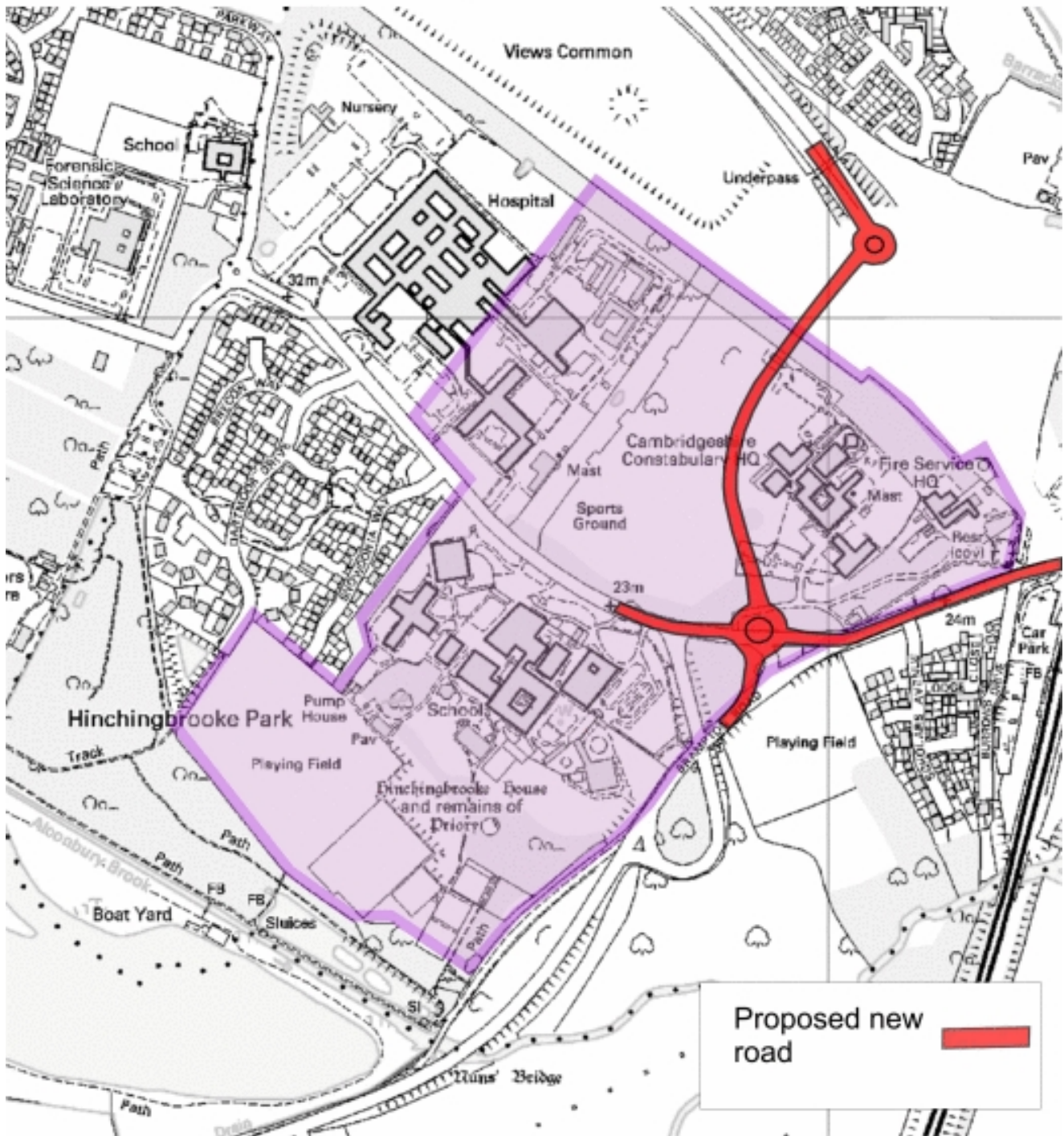
Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Access and links in Hinchingsbrooke Campus Area



Map 4.14 Access and links

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Proposed new road layout



Map 4.15 Future access and links

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Overall development of the site

4.76 The key issue to consider in this area is whether further development should be of an institutional nature or whether other uses should be incorporated. It is important that any development is able to fully integrate with existing uses.

Question 44

Should further development be primarily institutional, residential or employment?

Institutional uses

4.77 The Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus is dominated by institutional uses, such as the hospital, school and police headquarters.

Question 45

Do you think there should be additional institutional use in this area?

Question 46

If yes, where would you like these to be and what type of institutional use? e.g. additional education uses

Employment development

4.78 Employment development includes business, industrial and storage and distribution. The Council consider that office development would be the most appropriate use given the proximity to the railway station.

Question 47

Do you think this is a suitable location for employment development?

Question 48

If yes, where should this be located and what type?

Residential Development

4.79 In terms of residential development there are several options to consider including the location of housing and density.

Question 49

Do you think there should be further residential development in this area?

Question 50

If yes, where should this be located?

Car parking

4.80 Car parking in this area is already at full capacity. The Huntingdon Town Centre Vision (2006) identified this as a location for additional public car parking spaces.

Question 51

Do you think additional public car parking should be provided in the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus area to serve the town centre?

Question 52

If you think that additional public car parking should be provided in this location who should this additional car parking be provided for? (i.e. town centre users, people using the school or hospital or for people using the Guided Bus)

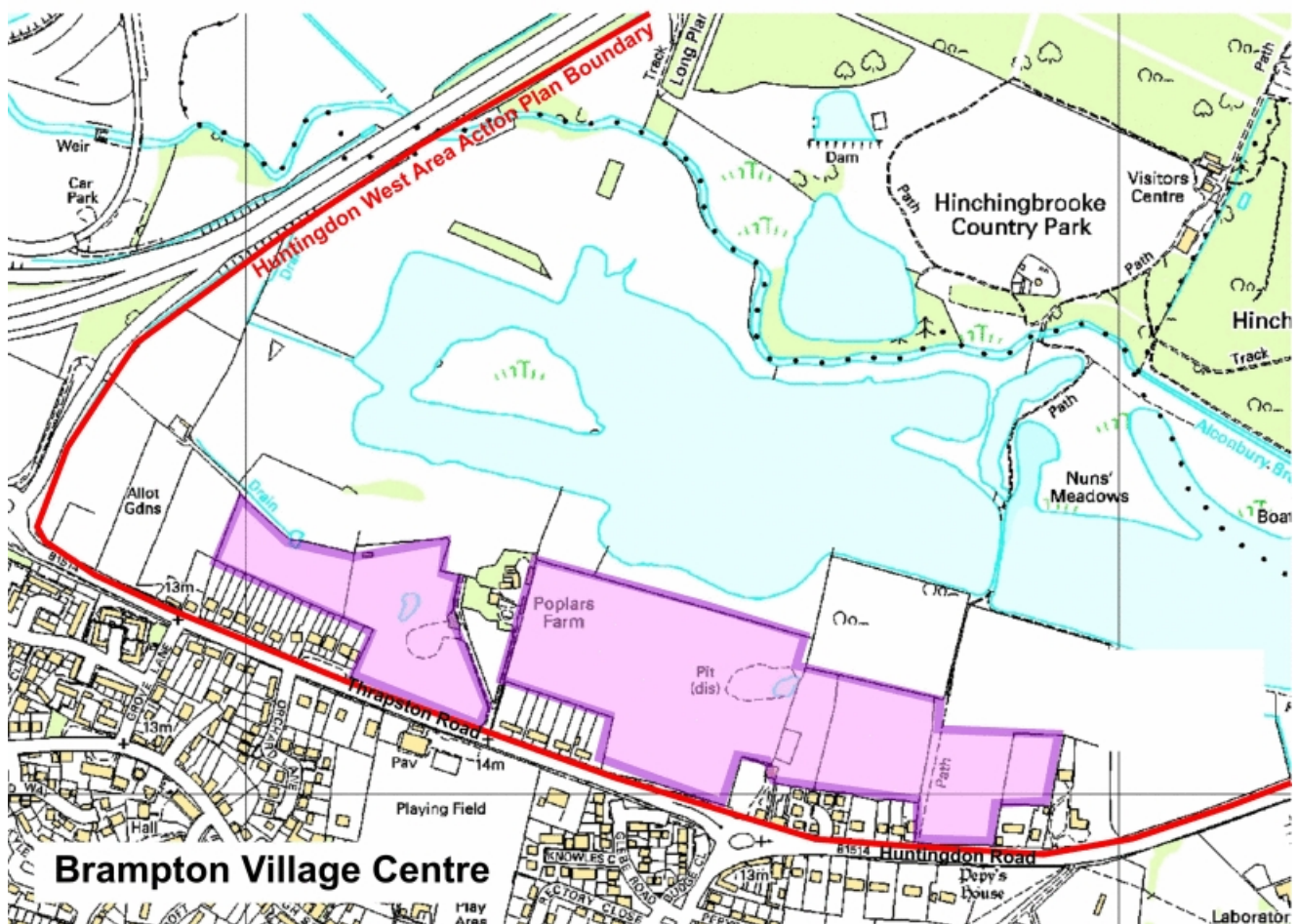
4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road, Brampton

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road Area



Map 4.16 Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road sites

4.81 Along Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road, Brampton there are several sites which overlook the Country Park (see map 4.16). The Area Action Plan needs to consider whether these sites are suitable for development and if so what type of development.

Residential development

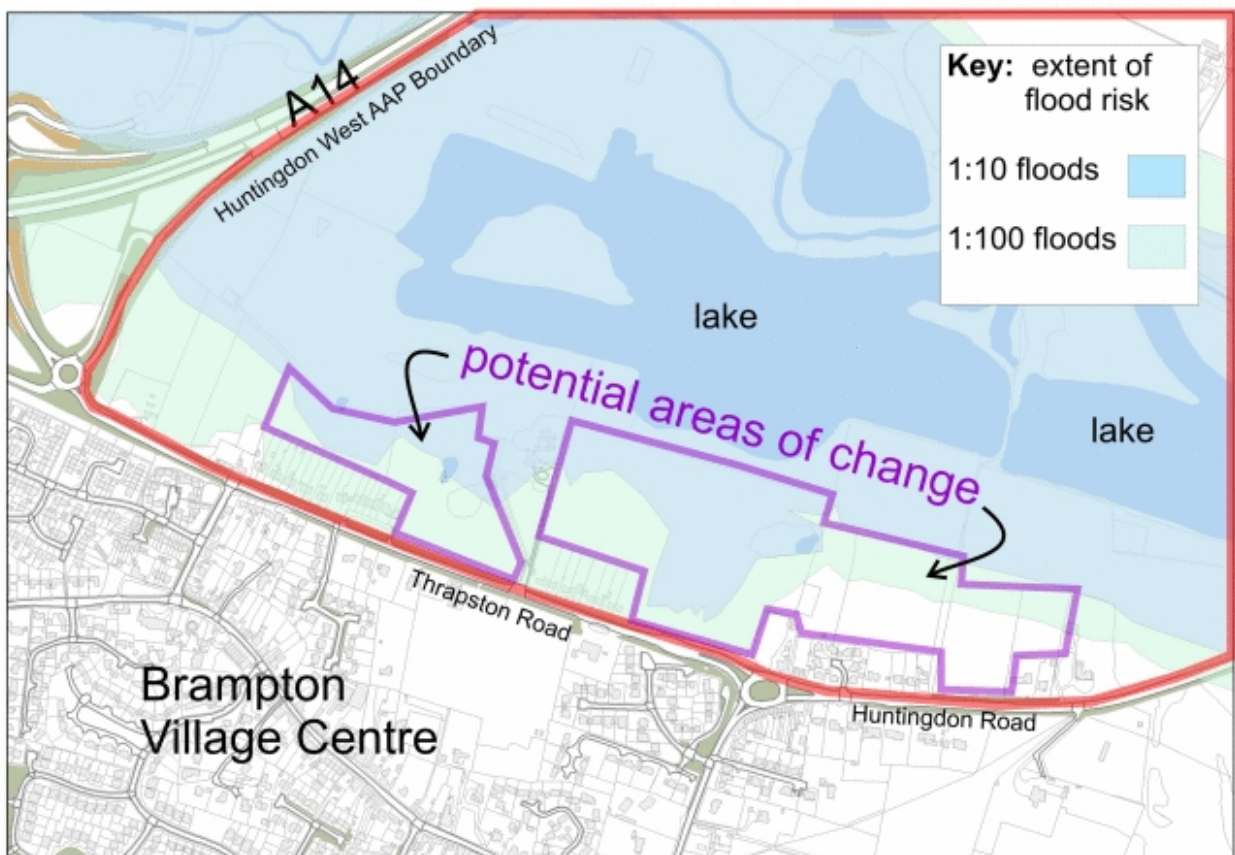
4.82 These sites have been put forward by developers for residential development and were included in the Council's recently completed Housing Land Availability Assessment. These sites are relatively close to services in Brampton but are separated from the village by Thrapston Road/Huntingdon Road which is a busy road leading into Huntingdon. It would therefore be difficult to integrate the sites into the village. Two of these sites and a section of the third are in the 1:100 year floodplain as shown on map 4.17. PPS 25 states that residential development

should not be allowed within the 1:100 year floodplain unless the exceptions test is met; these sites would not pass this test. Therefore, only the site which is not in the 1:100 year floodplain should be considered for residential development.

Question 53

Do you think the site which is not in the 1:100 year floodplain is an appropriate location for residential development?

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road Area



Map 4.17 Flood risk

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Employment development

4.83 These sites are in a prestigious location overlooking Hinchingsbrooke Country Park with good access to the railway station and Huntingdon town centre and may have potential to be developed for high quality employment developments such as a high quality business park or science park. A development of this type would link with the wider economy of the Huntingdon area and would therefore not need to be as closely integrated into the village as residential development, although it would provide employment opportunities for residents living in Brampton.

Question 54

Do you think these sites are appropriate locations for employment development?

Question 55

If yes, which of the sites would you like to see developed for employment development?

Car parking

4.84 It is currently possible to access Hinchingsbrooke Country Park on foot from Brampton but vehicle access is limited to the Hinchingsbrooke side of the Country Park. It may be possible to create an additional surface level car park on one of these sites to provide access to the Country Park from the Brampton side. This would enable visitors travelling from this direction to park on this side to save them driving through the Hinchingsbrooke estate. This car park could also be used as a tourist information point to promote tourism.

Question 56

Do you think that it would be appropriate for one of these sites to be used as a surface level car park to give an additional access to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park?

Question 57

If yes, which of these sites would you like to see developed for a surface level car park?

Alternatives

4.85 This Issues and Options paper attempts to identify all relevant issues and reasonable options for addressing these. However, if you feel there are relevant issues or reasonable options which have not been considered then please put these forward.

5 Phasing and Implementation

5.1 The phasing and implementation of the Area Action Plan is vital to ensure the proposals contained in it are delivered and therefore need to be considered early in the process. Delivery of the Area Action Plan will involve a wide range of partners from the public and private sector. It is therefore important that development is phased to ensure that infrastructure is provided at the right time and in the right place. The timescale for the Area Action Plan is from adoption of the plan to 2021.

Phasing

5.2 The re-routing of the A14 and subsequent removal of the viaduct are beyond the scope of this Area Action Plan; therefore phasing and implementation of the proposals need to take account of this but not be dependent upon it. The A14 is scheduled to be completed in 2015, but redevelopment of the area will take place prior to this.

5.3 In terms of phasing the Area Action Plan needs to determine which projects should take place before the A14 is finished (before 2015) and which should take place after the A14 is finished (post 2015). The following schedule is based on those projects which need to take place once the A14 has been completed and those which can take place prior to this.

Before 2015	Post 2015
Redevelopment of Ermine Street/ George Street area	Improvements to Railway Station
Creation of Ermine Street to George Street link road	Improvements to Views Common
Improvements to footpath and cycle path network	Reconfiguration of roads through Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus
Developments at Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus (dependent upon when part of hospital is available for redevelopment)	
Development at Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road	
Extension to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park	
Improvements to parking at the Railway Station	

Question 58

Do you agree that this schedule is appropriate? If not how should it be changed?

Funding

5.4 The Council is producing a Planning Contributions SPD. This SPD will set out the district-specific standards for social and physical infrastructure that may be required with new development, including open space and will be the basis for section 106 agreements. In Huntingdon West contributions will be sought towards the following infrastructure:

5 Phasing and Implementation

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Option 7

- Ermine Street to George Street link road
- Improvements to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park
- Improvements to Views Common
- Open Space and recreation
- Education - improvements or extensions to existing schools
- Affordable Housing
- Car parks, footpaths, cycleways, highways and public transport
- Community facilities
- Environmental improvements
- Health and social care
- Drainage/ flood prevention
- Waste recycling facilities

Question 59

Do you think this list is appropriate and is there any other infrastructure you think should be required in this area?

Construction Strategy

5.5 The Area Action Plan will need to consider how construction waste and spoil will be dealt with. Within the Ermine Street/ George Street area there is a significant amount of existing buildings and hardstanding which will need to be removed before redevelopment can take place. A considerable amount of contamination remediation work will also need to take place. The key issue is whether spoil and waste are transported elsewhere or whether the materials can be incorporated into the new development. For example, hardstanding could be crushed to provide aggregate for foundations. In terms of sustainability it is preferable for waste materials to be recycled and used on-site and for spoil to be used for on-site landscaping or transported short distances for appropriate disposal.

Question 60

Do you agree that waste materials should be recycled and used on-site?

Question 61

Do you agree that spoil should be used for on-site landscaping or where this is not possible transported short distances for appropriate disposal?

6 Glossary

Access land

Mapped areas of mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land which, under the Countryside Right of Way Act 2000, the public are allowed to freely walk on without the need to stick to paths.

Adoption

The point at which the final agreed version of a document comes fully into use.

Affordable Housing

Housing available at a significant discount below market levels so as to be affordable to householders who cannot either rent or purchase property that meets their needs on the open market. It can include social-rented housing and intermediate housing.

Amenity

A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquility.

Areas of Strategic Greenspace Enhancement

Areas which have been identified as having opportunities to expand and create strategic greenspace.

Biodiversity

The whole variety of life on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their genetic variation and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

Brownfield

Previously developed land (PDL). In the sequential approach this is preferable to greenfield land. Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition includes the curtilage of the development. Previously-developed land may occur in both built-up and rural settings. A precise definition is included in Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing'.

Carbon footprint

Indicates the impact of development on the environment by measuring the levels of carbon dioxide emitted.

Community Infrastructure

Facilities available for use by the community. Examples include village halls, doctors' surgeries, pubs, churches and children play areas. It may also include areas of informal open space and sports facilities.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

The power given to the Local Authority to acquire land for redevelopment which may include development by private developers.

Conservation Area

A designated area of special architectural and/or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is a recognition of the value of a group of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect not just individual buildings but the character of the area as a whole.

The Core Strategy

This document which is a *Development Plan Document* containing the overall vision, objectives and policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire.

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County Structure Plan

An existing document containing strategic planning policies and proposals for the county. Under the new system it will be phased out and replaced by policies in the *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Development Plan Documents*.

County Wildlife Site

Areas of land rich in wildlife that are statutorily protected.

Decentralised energy system

Generates heat and electricity in smaller, more localised units.

Density

Density is a measure of the number of dwellings which can be accommodated on a site. The minimum density is 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) as set out in PPS3 Housing.

Department for Communities and Local Government

The Government department responsible for planning and the production of planning guidance.

Development Plan

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. Under the new system the Development Plan includes the *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Development Plan Documents*.

Development Plan Documents

A document containing local planning policies or proposals which form part of the *Development Plan*, which has been subject to independent examination.

European Sites

Consist of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and sites on draft lists for protection as outlined in Regulation 10 of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

Examination

Independent inquiry into the soundness of a draft *Development Plan Document* or *Draft Statement of Community Involvement*, chaired by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State, whose recommendations are binding.

Greenfield

Land which has not been developed before. Applies to most sites outside built-up area boundaries.

Green Infrastructure

The sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and green linkages.

Habitat

The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

Housing Needs Assessment

An assessment of housing needs in the local area. This assessment plays a crucial role in underpinning the planning policies relating to affordable housing. In addition, the information on local needs is required to determine the location of such housing and guide new investment.

Infrastructure

A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Issues and Options preliminary consultation document

This is the first stage in the production of development plan documents. The Council brings possible issues and options for the District into the public domain, in order to generate responses to aid the development of the 'Preferred Options' development documents.

Key Workers

Essential public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and social workers.

Landscape Character Assessment

An assessment to identify different landscape areas which have a distinct character based on a recognisable pattern of elements, including combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

Local Development Document

The collective term for *Development Plan Documents*, the *Proposals Map*, *Supplementary Planning Documents* and the *Statement of Community Involvement*.

Local Development Framework

The collection of documents to be produced by Huntingdonshire District Council that will provide the new planning policy framework for the district.

Local Development Scheme

Sets out the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing statutory planning documents.

Local Strategic Partnership

A group of public, private, voluntary and community organisations and individuals that is responsible for preparing the Community Strategy.

Major development

The creation of 10 or more dwellings within one site.

Material consideration

Factors that may be taken into account when making planning decisions.

Minor development

The creation of up to 9 dwellings on one site.

Mitigation measures

These are measures requested/ carried out in order to limit the damage by a particular development/ activity.

Mixed use development

Development comprising two or more uses as part of the same scheme. Mixed use development can help create vitality and diversity and can help reduce the need to travel, which is more sustainable.

ODPM - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The Government department formerly responsible for planning and the production of planning guidance.

Open Space and Recreational Land

Open space within settlements includes parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, undeveloped plots, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Outside built-up areas this includes parks, sports pitches and allotments.

Permissive Right of Way

These are routes where a landowner allows access over their land without dedicating it as a right of way.

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Planning Obligation

A binding legal agreement requiring a developer or landowner to provide or contribute towards facilities, infrastructure or other measures, in order for planning permission to be granted. Planning Obligations are normally secured under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)/ Planning Policy Statements (PPS)

Central Government produce Planning Policy Guidance Notes, to be replaced by Planning Policy Statements which direct planning in the country.

Preferred Options

Public consultation on the intended content of a *Development Plan Document*, prior to the DPD itself being drafted. It is a statutory stage of the Local Development Framework preparation for the District.

Previously Developed Land (PDL)

(See *Brownfield*.)

Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS)

Plan covering the East of England as a whole, and setting out strategic policies and proposals for managing land-use change.

Section 106

See Planning Obligations.

Sequential Approach

A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment a sequential approach would favour an employment use over mixed use and mixed use over non-employment uses.

Social rented

Social Rented Housing is housing available to rent at below market levels. Lower rents are possible because the Government subsidises local authorities and registered social landlords in order to meet local affordable housing needs.

Spatial Planning

Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning. It brings together and integrates policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use, for example, by influencing the demands on or needs for development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission and may be delivered through other means.

Stakeholders

Groups, individuals or organisations which may be affected by or have a key interest in a development proposal or planning policy. They may often be experts in their field or represent the views of many people.

Statement of Community Involvement

Document setting out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing planning documents and making significant development control decisions.

Statement of Compliance

A report or statement issued by the local planning authority explaining how they have complied with the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2004 and their Statement of Community Involvement during consultation on Local Development Documents.

Statutory Development Plan

The Development Plan for an area which has been taken to statutory adoption. In other words, it has been through all the formal stages and has been approved by the relevant Government office and adopted by the Council.

Statutory Organisations

Organisations the Local Authority has to consult with at consultation stages of the Local Development Framework.

Strategic Greenspace

These are areas of greenspace that serve a wider population than just the District, for example Paxton Pits, The Great Fen and Hinchbrooke Country Park.

Submission

Point at which a draft *Development Plan Document* (or the draft *Statement of Community Involvement*) is published for consultation. At the same time it is submitted to the Secretary of State in advance of its *examination*.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in the *Local Plan* or *Structure Plan*. Under the new system this will be phased out and replaced by *Supplementary Planning Documents*.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in a *Development Plan Document*.

Sustainable Development

In broad terms this means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government has set out five guiding principles for sustainable development in its strategy "*Securing the future - UK Government strategy for sustainable development*". The five guiding principles, to be achieved simultaneously, are: Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance; and Using sound science responsibly.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Development Documents to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic appraisal process. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable principles.

Tenure

Refers to the way in which a property is held e.g. freehold, leasehold, shared equity or rented.

Vitality and Viability

In terms of retailing, vitality is the capacity of a centre to grow or to develop its level of commercial activity. Viability is the capacity of a centre to achieve the commercial success necessary to sustain the existence of the centre.

Zero carbon development

Development that achieves zero net carbon emissions from energy use on site on an annual basis.

1 Appendix 1

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1 Appendix 1

National Policy

- 1.1** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local authorities to prepare a Spatial Planning Strategy in the form of a Local Development Framework which comprises a portfolio of Local Development Documents.
- 1.2** The Government sets out national policy in Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) which are replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs).
- 1.3** Sustainable development is an overarching objective within the planning system. The Government set out its vision for achieving sustainable development in its strategy '*A Better Quality of Life, a Strategy for Sustainable Development*' in 1999 and has recently reviewed and updated this in a new strategy '*Securing the Future, delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy*' (2005).

Regional Policy

- 1.4** The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (RSS14) covers the period to 2021. It identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration and expansion and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. It is at an advanced stage of preparation with Proposed Changes published in December 2005. This is expected to be improved in summer 2007. The Area Action Plan will be in conformity with the RSS14.
- 1.5** The following Draft RSS14 policies have helped guide the production of the emerging Core Strategy but are also particularly relevant to the Area Action Plan; Policy SS1, Policy SS2, Policy SS4, Policy SS6, Policy E2, Policy H1, Policy H3, Policy T1, Policy T4, Policy T8, Policy T9, Policy T13, Policy T14, Policy ENV1, Policy ENV3, Policy ENV6, Policy ENV7, Policy ENG1, Policy WAT2, Policy WAT4, Policy WM6, Policy CSR1, Policy CSR2 and Policy CSR4.
- 1.6** RSS14 will, once finalised, replace most of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003. The Structure Plan provides the strategic policy framework for planning and development that will take place locally up to 2016. It guides more detailed local plans that are produced by Local Planning Authorities within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. The Council has requested that some of the Structure Plan policies that will not be replaced in the final RSS be saved. Saved policies that are most relevant to the Area Action Plan include; Policy P1/3, Policy 5/2, Policy 7/3, Policy 8/2, Policy 8/9, Policy P9/1, Policy P9/4 and Policy P9/9.

Local Policy & Related Plans

The overarching document in the LDF is the Core Strategy which sets out the Council's overall approach to development. Alongside this a Development Control DPD will set out key policies that will be used for determining planning applications.

- 1.7** The Area Action Plan will also need to have regard to the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* which sets out a long term vision for Huntingdonshire and a series of outcomes and results needed to achieve this.

Supporting Documents

- 1.8** A number of background documents will inform the production of the Area Action Plan:

- The *Huntingdon Town Centre Vision: Vision, Spatial Strategy and Action Plan (2006)* looks at the potential for development on fourteen sites across the town, including a site in Huntingdon West.
- The *Urban Design Framework for West of Huntingdon Town Centre*, produced in 2002 by the Civic Trust focuses on the potential redevelopment of the Ermine Street/George Street area.
- The Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy is in appendix 8d of the *Cambridgeshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006)* and aims to provide a programme of integrated transport initiatives for Huntingdon and Godmanchester.

Sustainability Appraisal & Appropriate Assessment

1.9 The Area Action Plan will need to undergo sustainability appraisal (SA). This is a systematic process which is carried out during the production of the plan to ensure that the policies and proposals contribute towards relevant environmental, social and economic objectives

1.10 The SA process incorporates the 'strategic environmental assessment' (SEA) required as a result of the European Directive 2001/42/EC for plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment

1.11 The Council has produced an Initial Sustainability Appraisal of the options included in this Issues and Options document. Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of the process of developing the Area Action Plan. It will assist the consultation process and test and refine any policies and proposals. The Council has produced a Scoping Report which identifies appropriate high-level objectives for appraising policies and examines 'baseline' conditions in the District.

1.12 In addition to the sustainability appraisal, amendments made to the UK Conservation (Habitats & C) Regulations 2006 require an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC for all land use plans likely to have a significant effect on a European site. To satisfy the requirements, Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken before adoption of a DPD. European sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Sites (OMS). The only European site which is within the vicinity of Huntingdon West is Port Holme which is a SAC and is located approximately 500m south/ south east of Huntingdon West.