

# Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Proposed Submission 2009

Huntingdonshire LDF | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Proposed Submission 2009



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## Foreword

The area covered in this action plan will face significant change over the next 15 years. This is seen in the proposed changes to the A14 and the proposal to create a new West of Town Centre Link Road. The Council has long recognised that a plan is needed to ensure that development takes place in a manner which will benefit the existing town centre and the district as a whole. Although the recession will have an impact in the short term, our belief in the importance of this area for sustainable development is undiminished.

This plan sets out a vision for the area which is vibrant, easy to get around, modern yet respectful of the environment. The vision is followed by objectives and policies which will guide development. Monitoring proposals together with infrastructure and phasing details are also included.



Councillor Douglas Dew  
Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport

December 2009

# Foreword

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# 1 Introduction

**1.1** The area action plan covers approximately 300 hectares of land west of Huntingdon's town centre. Of this, some 20 hectares is land between the town centre and the railway line and includes the Huntingdon Railway Station. The remaining land extends west to encompass the Hinchingsbrooke area. The Huntingdon West Area Action Plan is an area where significant change is expected. It will help deliver planned growth, stimulate regeneration, protect areas particularly sensitive to change, and resolve potentially conflicting objectives in this area.

**1.2** Supporting information can be found in the Statement of Consultation... *(this will include the self-assessment of soundness and audit trail)*.

## Appraisal and Assessment of the Area Action Plan

**1.3** A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) has been carried out by consultants in accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive (European Council Directive 92/43/EEC). This assessment considers the potential effects of the area action plan on the conservation objectives and integrity of Natura 2000 sites <sup>(1)</sup>. The first stage is a scoping assessment that determines whether significant effects are likely. Where this scoping assessment cannot rule out significant effects, then a full Appropriate Assessment is required which suggests mitigation measures to help reduce the potential effects of policies and proposals. The HRA was completed and concluded that... *(To be completed after HRA)*

**1.4** A sustainability appraisal (SA) has been carried out. This assesses policies in order to judge their potential effects. The SA is an important part of plan development to ensure that the final plan promotes sustainable growth. A strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is also required and for the purposes of the area action plan is incorporated into the SA process. A sustainability appraisal report has been produced for each stage of plan development and has been an integral part of producing the preferred approach. A final SA has been prepared for this document and is available alongside this document. *(The conclusions of this will be summarised once completed)*.

**1.5** Equalities assessment has been carried out and can be found as attached to the sustainability appraisal... *(This will be summarised after it has been completed)*

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1 Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

# 2 Policy Context

## 2 Policy Context

### East of England Plan

**2.1** The East of England Plan (EEP) is the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the Eastern Region. It was published in May 2008 and sets the regional framework for preparation of local development documents. This area action plan is a development plan document (DPD) that will form part of the Huntingdonshire local development framework (LDF) and as such must be in conformity with the EEP.

**2.2** The EEP sets specific targets and policy requirements. It requires Huntingdonshire to deliver a minimum of 11,200 homes in the period 2001 – 2021, and provide a share of 75,000 new jobs for Cambridgeshire over the same period. The EEP also sets out a number of policies which seek to secure sustainable development.

### Sustainable Community Strategy

**2.3** The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Huntingdonshire, developed by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership, uses six strategic themes: growth and infrastructure; health and well-being; inclusive, safe and cohesive communities; economic prosperity; environment; and children and young people. This area action plan will serve to help meet the SCS vision and contribute towards meeting a number of the spatial outcomes it identifies.

### Core Strategy

**2.4** The Core Strategy sets the strategic spatial planning framework for how Huntingdonshire will develop to 2026. Its vision, objectives and strategic policies are overarching and form the basis for the whole LDF. The Core Strategy was adopted by Huntingdonshire District Council in September 2009. The Core Strategy sets the plan period for the LDF.

**2.5** The Huntingdon West area action plan is identified in the Core Strategy as being important in helping to achieve the requirements of the EEP and the Core Strategy. The area is seen as particularly important in achieving housing, employment and retail targets and meeting objectives for redeveloping previously developed land, enhancing strategic green infrastructure and encouraging sustainable travel.

### Other Development Plan Policies

**2.6** This area action plan forms part of the Development Plan which encompasses all planning policies affecting the district. The policies in this area action plan must be read in conjunction with all other policies of the Development Plan that are relevant. For development proposals within the area covered by this area action plan, relevant Development Plan policies will principally be contained in the Core Strategy and Development Management DPD.



## 3 Area Context

### The Area

**3.1** The Huntingdon West area is situated to the west of the town centre and is defined by the A14, Huntingdon's inner ring road, Ermine Street up to the railway, George Street and its continuation along Brampton Road and Thrapston Road. It also includes the station area, the former station cottages and a small part of Mill Common. Huntingdon's principal housing and employment areas lie to the north and the town centre lies to the east. Open countryside and Huntingdon Racecourse lie to the west and the water meadows, river and the main part of the village of Brampton lie to the south.

**3.2** The area is diverse in character. It contains: the older industrial area with associated Victorian housing close to the town centre and the railway line; vestiges of the parkland setting around Hinchingsbrooke House now containing the secondary school, head quarter buildings and the hospital, new housing and employment areas built on former agricultural land; former gravel workings now part of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park; Views Common; and mixed agricultural land fringing the village of Brampton and the A14.

### History

**3.3** Huntingdon, lying on the north bank of the River Great Ouse, has had settlement since pre-historic times. It was founded by the Anglo Saxons and Danes in medieval times along the approximate line of the Roman road (Ermine Street). Extensive Common land was established around the town in the medieval period and this is still a feature today.

**3.4** The origins of Hinchingsbrooke House to the west of the town centre are medieval. A priory of Benedictine nuns occupied the site and there are some medieval remnants in the house. The grounds were given to the Cromwell family during the dissolution of the monasteries and subsequently owned by the Montagu family, who became the Earls of Sandwich after the Restoration, before becoming publicly owned. Hinchingsbrooke House is Grade I listed and the immediate gardens are also of regional and national importance.

**3.5** The railway opened in Huntingdon in 1830 and attracted industry to the area close to the railway station, including carriage works, foundries and other trades. The area around St John's Street and Sayer Street retains houses from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century which are likely to have originally housed local workers.

**3.6** The Hinchingsbrooke estate was sold in 1962 to the then Huntingdonshire County Council. In 1970 the County Council established Hinchingsbrooke School on part of the land, including Hinchingsbrooke House itself, and subsequently created the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Parts of the land were sold for the hospital, Police Headquarters and Forensic Laboratory. Since the 1990s land has also been sold for housing and employment development. With the exception of the employment area this land is served by a single road access and a variety of pedestrian and cycle linkages.

**3.7** The one-way ring road around the town centre and the A14 cut through the town in the 1960s. The A14 built in the 1970s currently runs through the town on a generally elevated route including a viaduct over the railway. Views Common, to the west of the railway line, is bisected by the A14. The ring road creates both a physical as well as a movement barrier to the rest of the town. Ferrars Road and Handcroft Lane, as the main route to Views Common, have been disrupted by the ring road and past intensification of industrial development.

### Constraints and Opportunities

**3.8** The historical form of development, the railway and the roads constrain the ability of the town centre to grow and link in with this area to the west. New roads, together with public transport and footpaths offer the opportunity for better links. The Highways Agency proposes to re-route the A14 to the south of its current route, removing the viaduct over the railway and introducing a range of links with the local road network. Huntingdonshire District Council plans to create a West of Town Centre Link Road which will serve to alleviate traffic flows, open up land for redevelopment opportunities and aid the introduction of measures to reduce the barrier effect of the ring road. An additional long-stay car park in the vicinity of the new West of Town Centre Link Road would help reduce the need for movements around the existing ring road in search of car parking. Future improvements to Huntingdon Bus Station situated on the ring road outside of the area together with the recently developed bus interchange at the station, will also serve to improve services in the action plan area.

## 3 Area Context

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**3.9** Rundown industrial land between George Street/Brampton Road and Ermine Street offers potential for regeneration. Large industrial sheds are at or nearing the end of their useful lives and it is understood that potential new landowners have options for purchase and proposals for redevelopment. Huntingdon's town centre is currently losing trade to centres outside the district and, in order to allow Huntingdon to fulfil its potential as the main shopping destination for the area, high quality retail development is required. The town centre is constrained and has limited opportunities to expand to cater for its future needs. The action plan area being situated close to the town centre could enable complementary retail and other business development to locate here with improved linkages to the existing town centre.

**3.10** The George St/ Ermine St residential areas have experienced some redevelopment recently and there are opportunities for further residential development. This will help provide much needed housing, including affordable housing, in a location close to the town centre.

**3.11** The pattern of development in the Hinchingsbrooke area is now largely set, with only a few opportunities left for further development. The single access road (Hinchingsbrooke Park Road) causes congestion problems that need to be addressed. The nature of the area, encompassing a number of institutions, provides both a constraint in that further development should respect the existing character, and an opportunity in that the environment can be enhanced to become a 'community campus'.

**3.12** There are opportunities to enhance and expand the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park onto neighbouring agricultural land and with the removal of the A14 viaduct to improve Views Common. There are also likely to be other opportunities to create additional green spaces.

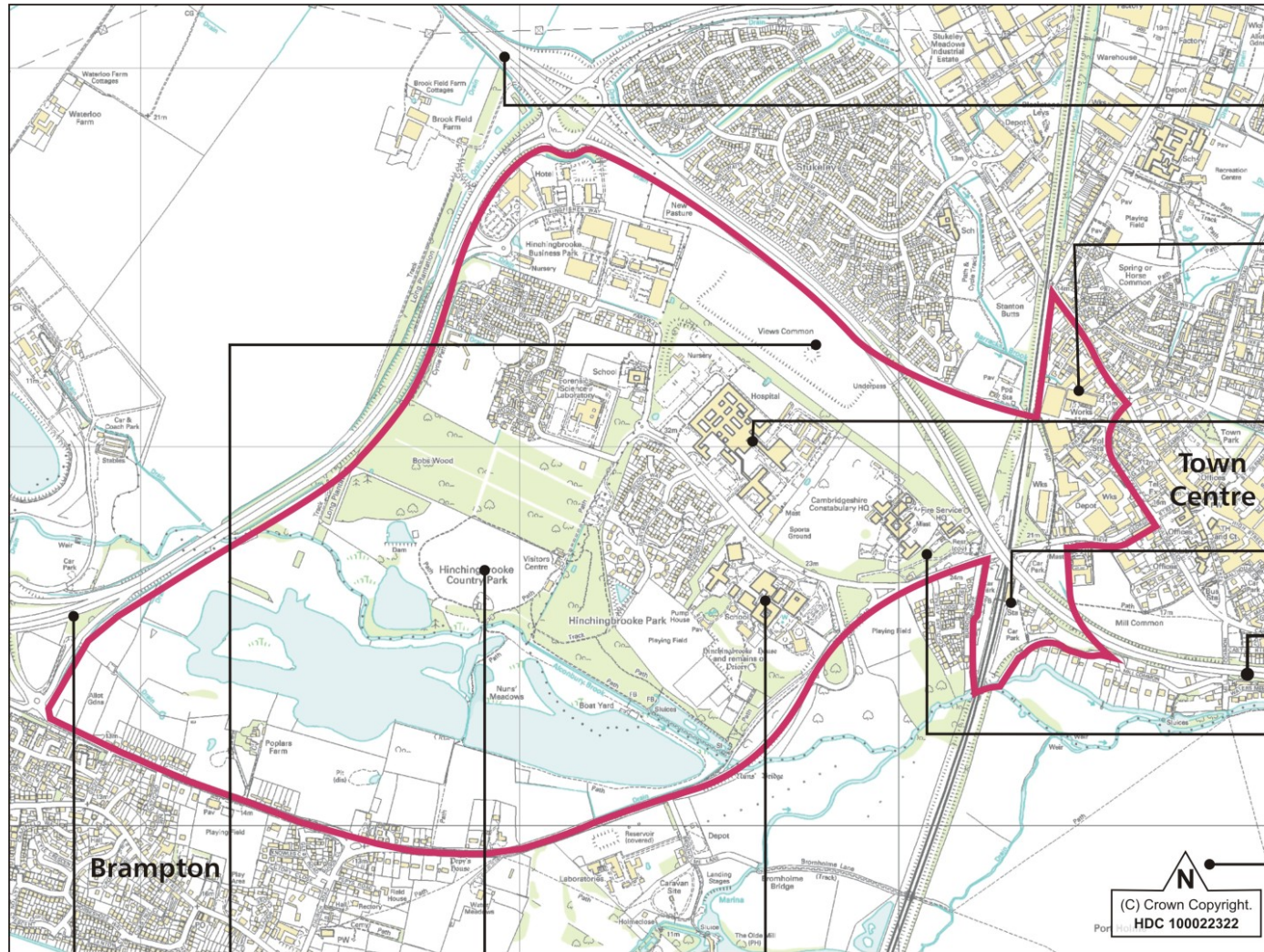
**3.13** Parts of the action plan area are covered by the Huntingdon and Brampton Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), in particular the George Street/ Brampton Road/ Ermine Street area and north west of Hinchingsbrooke. The AQMAs have been designated in order to tackle the high levels of nitrogen dioxide emissions associated with the A14 and Huntingdon Ring Road. There are opportunities to help reduce nitrogen dioxide emissions in the AQMAs through the A14 changes and construction of the West of Town Centre Link Road.

### Issues

**3.14** The issues that this area action plan seeks to address are:

1. Achieving the most sustainable development possible
2. Re-using previously developed land
3. Providing a mix of housing for a wide range of people
4. Providing employment opportunities
5. Providing future shopping opportunities
6. Reconfiguring roads to deal with current problems of accessibility and congestion
7. Improving connections with the town centre and other surrounding areas
8. Providing additional long stay car parking avoiding travel on the ring road
9. Providing needed additional infrastructure
10. Contributing additional open space to link with existing green infrastructure
11. Ensuring the various elements of the plan link together
12. Ensuring a high quality environment
13. Delivering the changes envisioned in the area action plan

Map 1 The Action Plan Area



A14  
to north

George Street/ Ermine Street  
industrial area

Hinchingsbrooke Hospital

**Town  
Centre**

The railway station  
(East Coast Mainline)

A14 to Cambridge

Police and Fire  
Headquarters

Port Holme  
flood meadow

A14 west to  
Midlands

Views  
Common

Hinchingsbrooke  
Country Park

Hinchingsbrooke  
School



# 4 Vision

## 4 Vision

**4.1** The vision is intended to identify the character of Huntingdon West at the end of the plan period in 2026. It must address the challenges the area faces and identify the results of changes.

**4.2** The vision will only be achieved by working closely with the community, landowners, public bodies and service providers. The vision is the starting point from which objectives and policies that will guide development in accordance with the vision are derived.

### The Huntingdon West Vision

It is intended that by 2026 Huntingdon West will be a vibrant part of the town enjoyed by residents, workers and visitors. Huntingdon West will have a distinctive identity with a series of innovative exemplar developments that interconnect providing a transformed community with opportunities for living, working and leisure.

New and improved transport routes will enable better, easier and more sustainable travel patterns enabling new land uses that will reflect the improved accessibility of the location. The new routes will help to break down the barrier caused by the main roads and enhance the connections and inter-relationships between this area and the rest of the town centre. A feature of Huntingdon West will be the impression of a new gateway into Huntingdon along Brampton Rd as a result of removing the viaduct over the railway and the creation of the new routes.

The George St/ Ermine St area will be transformed with modern residential, retail and office development, which will positively complement the town centre and enhance the vitality and viability of Huntingdon as a whole.

Development in the Hinchingsbrooke area and west of the railway involving land no longer needed for other uses will complement the existing community focused land uses. The Hinchingsbrooke area will be a 'community campus' created by the variety of employment activities and agglomeration of institutional and public uses.

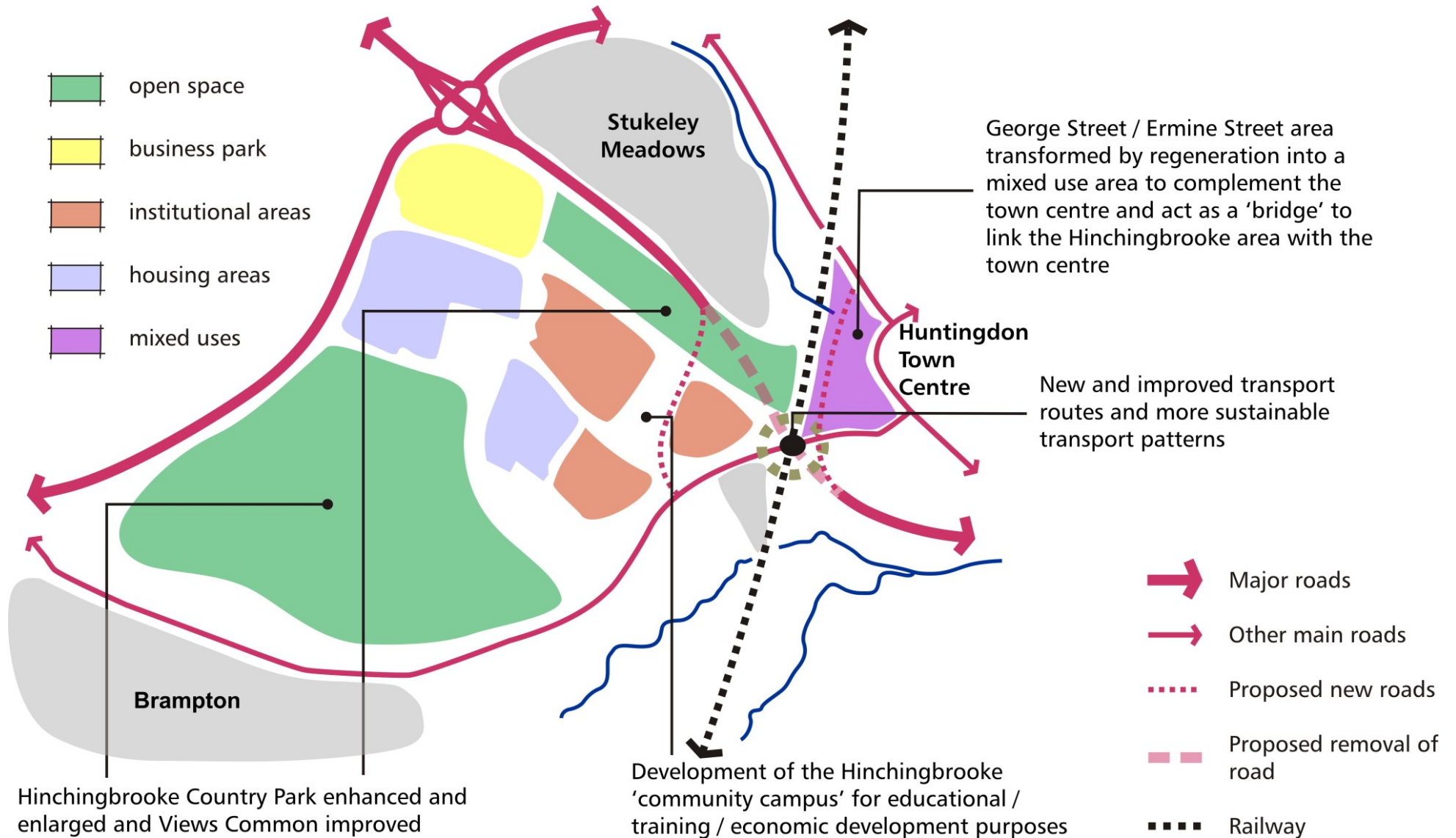
The wealth of heritage in Huntingdon West, including Hinchingsbrooke House and other listed buildings, will be respected by new development. Development will be of a scale that recognises the Conservation Area designation, topography, and context. New buildings will be designed to showcase emerging technologies in renewable energy production, designed to use much less energy, and will promote the use of modern sustainable methods of construction. Buildings will be designed to be adaptable in terms of their design and lifecycle to help respond and adapt to the effects of climate change and the changing requirements of their users.

Hinchingsbrooke Country Park will be enhanced and enlarged to provide a major community and recreational resource and this together with other green space, including Views Common, will link Huntingdon West to strategic open space around the town.

**4.3** The vision takes account of the visions set out in the East of England Plan 2008, the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Core Strategy. It recognises the need for change in the Huntingdon West area and seeks to enhance the area to create a thriving and vibrant area of Huntingdon which will help to boost the town's vitality and viability. It identifies areas where the most change is expected to occur and sets out ways in which improvements to the environment can be made. Fundamental to this are the changes to transport routes which will make the area more accessible.

**4.4** The quality of development is identified as being of particular importance. The vision sets out how Huntingdon West should lead the way in sustainable development and use innovative technologies.

Map 2 The Vision



# 5 Objectives

## 5 Objectives

**5.1** The objectives set the framework beneath the vision upon which the policies are based.

### Objectives

#### Objective 1 - Sustainable Travel

To improve accessibility both within Huntingdon West and in the way it integrates with surrounding areas and encourage walking and the use of buses, trains, and bicycles.

#### Objective 2 - Vibrant Growth

To provide an appropriate level of new and enhanced retail, employment, housing and other opportunities to meet local need in a manner which integrates with existing development and is complementary to, and expressly beneficial to the town centre.

#### Objective 3 - Healthy and Green

To facilitate healthy and active lifestyles by contributing to a network of improved and new high quality green spaces which link to strategic green spaces and routes around the area including an improved Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Views Common.

#### Objective 4 - A High Quality Environment

To ensure that new development is complementary to the existing natural and historic environment and is of a high quality and a sustainable design.

#### Objective 5 - Infrastructure, Phasing and Implementation

To provide necessary infrastructure, using contributions from developers where appropriate and to phase development to occur in conjunction with major road infrastructure provision.

**5.2** The objectives are consistent with the overarching objectives set out in the Core Strategy. Promoting sustainable travel is important for Huntingdon and there are a number of opportunities in the action plan area. There are significant changes being proposed by the Highways Agency for the A14 and the surrounding local road network. If these measures are approved, the new road patterns will significantly influence the potential redevelopment opportunities for Huntingdon West and vehicular and pedestrian/cycle movement in the wider area. Alongside the A14 proposals there is also the opportunity for further accessibility improvements with a West of Town Centre Link Road and potentially other roads, pedestrian and cycle routes and improved public transport.

**5.3** Huntingdon West offers considerable opportunities to contribute towards meeting the District's requirements for retail, employment and residential development. To meet the requirements of the Core Strategy, a mixture of complementary uses is envisaged within the area. This will include opportunities for a range of housing to meet housing needs, additional office employment and potentially new shops provided they link in and support the town centre shopping offer. This mixture of uses is intended to create a much more vibrant area of the town.

**5.4** Improving the environment of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Views Common are central to the area action plan. The network of green space in and around Huntingdon West will be added to, with additional public open space. Improving open space has the twin benefits of increasing people's access to leisure and increasing opportunities to improve biodiversity.

**5.5** A high quality environment is important for everyone who will live or work in the area or visit it. As the area is a prominent gateway area for Huntingdon and provides links between several areas of the town, there is a great opportunity to create a place that is innovative and distinctive, has a sense of identity and responds to its context. It is imperative that new development within Huntingdon West takes account of the character and setting of the surrounding area – this includes the buildings and equally importantly the spaces between them, in order to contribute positively to this part of the District. All the differing areas of Huntingdon West have existing character assets and attributes that need to be respected by new development. This is particularly important in the Hinchingsbrooke area which is characterised by its parkland setting and the Grade I listed Hinchingsbrooke House.

**5.6** To achieve the vision it is necessary to set out what infrastructure and land is needed, how it will be provided, and when development can occur. Phasing will be required as some developments will be dependent on the creation of particular pieces of infrastructure whilst other developments can be brought forward earlier.

## 6 Sustainable Travel

### Objective 1

To improve accessibility both within Huntingdon West and in the way it integrates with surrounding areas and encourage walking and the use of buses, trains, and bicycles.

### New and Enhanced Local Road Networks

**6.1** The Highways Agency's proposed changes to the A14 and the Council's proposal for a new link road between George Street/ Brampton Road and Ermine Street are significant infrastructure changes for Huntingdon. A new A14 south of Huntingdon, together with the removal of the viaduct over the railway and the proposed West of Town Centre Link Road will improve the pattern of circulation around the town and open up land for development.

### Policy HW 1

In order to promote better accessibility and enable redevelopment a new and changed road system as shown on Map 3 .The Road Proposals. will be constructed. The principal elements are:

- a. The removal of the current A14 viaduct and series of changes to the local road network, the design and specification of which will be determined by the Highways Agency.
- b. The West of Town Centre Link Road the design and specification of which will be determined by Huntingdonshire District Council in consultation with its partners.

**6.2** The District Council has endorsed the principle of the changes proposed by the Highways Agency. Within this area, the changes involve the removal of the viaduct over the railway line. The new local road network envisaged involves a new access into Huntingdon over Mill Common (currently known as Pathfinder Link), a new alignment of the existing road with access points into the Railway Station, utilisation of an upgraded Brampton Road, and a new road through Cambridgeshire Constabulary land and Views Common (currently known as Views Common Link).

**6.3** The West of Town Centre link road was first proposed as part of the Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy, approved by both the County and District Councils in June 2003. The aim is to ease capacity issues on the ring road to allow further development in Huntingdon town centre and to serve redevelopment in the George Street/ Ermine Street area. The Council has prepared a detailed scheme for the Link Road in order to seek planning permission. The Council and its partners have secured Housing Growth Funding to help with the early delivery of the Link Road.

**6.4** These two schemes will help to improve air quality in the Huntingdon and Brampton air quality management areas, which cover parts of the action plan area. The removal of the viaduct will also help to visually improve Brampton Road as it enters Huntingdon, providing the opportunity to enhance this gateway to the town.





**6.5** In addition to these two principal elements of road change, it is considered that a further road link in Hinchingsbrooke could enhance the accessibility of this area and help to address congestion issues on Hinchingsbrooke Park Rd. There is currently access through the Hinchingsbrooke Business Park available for emergency vehicles through to the A14, and the potential to open up this access to other traffic, or create a new road over Views Common will be investigated. This potentially important piece of infrastructure could only be provided after the A14 changes have been delivered and would be dependent on funding coming forward.

**6.6** The new roads also provide the opportunity for a better bus service network and bus priority measures, and improved provision for pedestrians and cyclists (through new footpaths and cycleways).



### Map 3 The Road Proposals



-  New proposed west of town centre link road (indicative layout)
-  Stretch of A14 that will be removed including viaduct
-  New or improved roads proposed by Highways Agency when the new A14 route is completed (indicative layout)
-  Potential for new road link to be investigated

# 6 Sustainable Travel

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## Pedestrian and Cycle Links

**6.7** Cycling and walking are heavily promoted through the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan and the Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy. The Strategy and its supporting action plan include measures to improve linkages between the town centre and Hinchingsbrooke, onward links to Brampton, the Racecourse and other areas of Huntingdon and Godmanchester. These existing proposals, together with additional proposals in this area action plan, will encourage walking and cycling.

### Policy HW 2

Pedestrian and cycle links which will improve accessibility between Huntingdon West, the town centre and surrounding areas as shown on Map 4 .Pedestrian and Cycle Links. will be safeguarded and provided within the plan period.

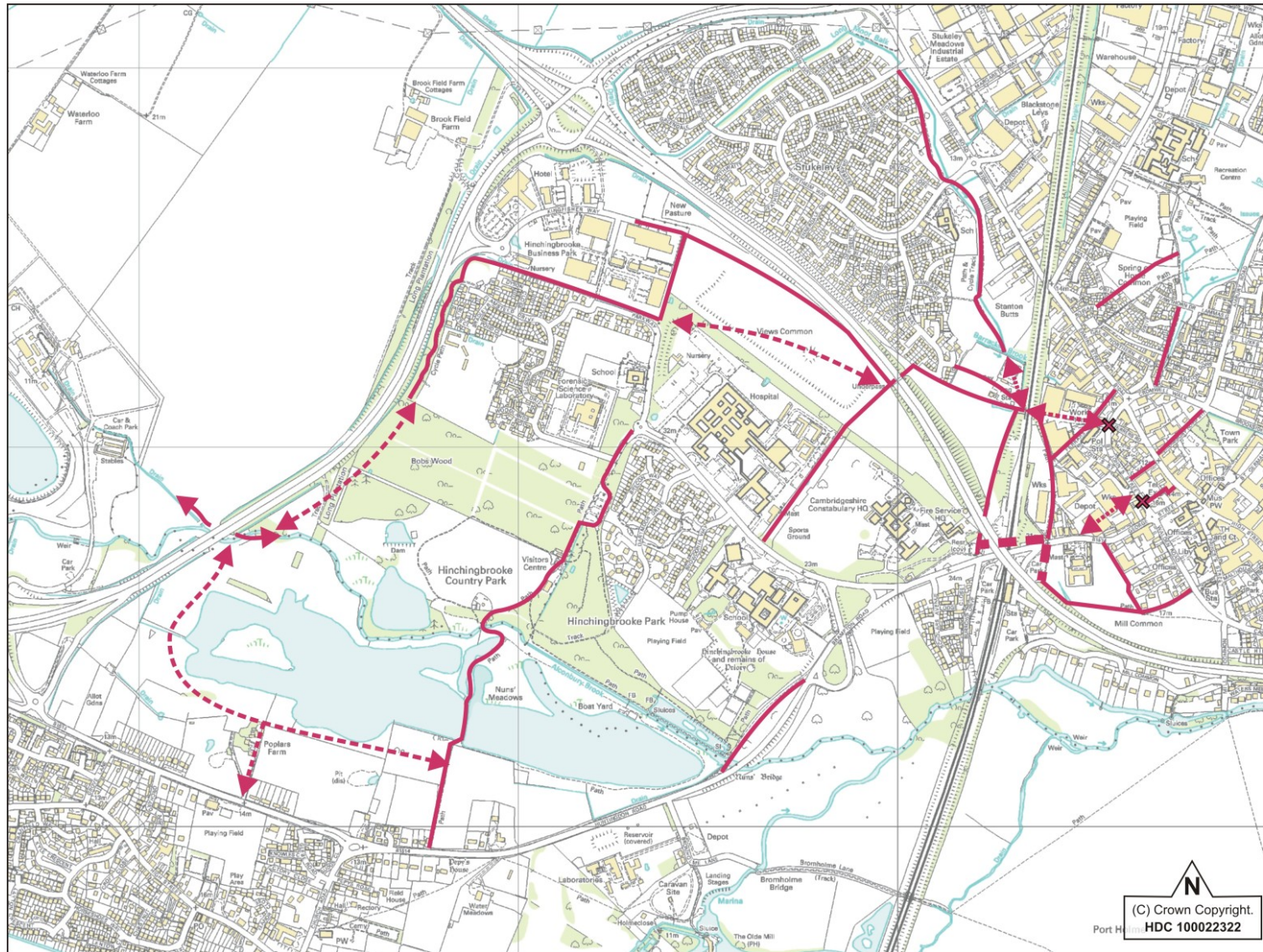
**6.8** Proposed pedestrian and cycle routes affecting this area in the Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy include better links between the town centre and Hinchingsbrooke, and Stukeley Meadows and the railway station. In addition an improved linkage between Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and the town centre across Views Common is desirable, as are further routes through Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. To break the barrier effect of the ring road, measures that give much greater priority to pedestrians are needed.





**6.9** Improved access for pedestrians and cyclists will be associated with the new road proposals associated with the A14 and the West of Town Centre Link Road. In some cases it will be appropriate to move existing rights of way subject to the appropriate procedures being carried out. Signalised crossings to provide for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists across the roads may be required.

**6.10** An additional cycleway/footpath may be required along Brampton Road in the vicinity of the railway station immediately to the north of the current bridge. This would be in addition to the Highways Agency proposals. Such provision could help to encourage cycling and walking in the area by providing a high quality link across the railway.



Map 4 Pedestrian and Cycle Links



-  Existing links
-  Potential links
-  Potential cycle bridge
-  Crossing points on ring road

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# 6 Sustainable Travel

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## The Railway Station

**6.11** Huntingdon railway station is a key transport facility in Huntingdon and to the wider area. It plays a very important part in enabling commuters to travel long distances without the use of a private car. Services operate south to intermediate stations and London Kings Cross and north to Peterborough with interlinking services beyond. The railway station is served by a number of different bus services linking Huntingdon to nearby towns and villages as well as Cambridge.

### Policy HW 3

The Council will work with Network Rail, the Train Operating Company, the Local Transport Authority and bus companies to develop and enhance the Huntingdon Railway Station, in order to provide more integration between modes of travel and improve links with the town centre and other parts of the town.

**6.12** The Council will continue to work with partners to secure improvements as part of proposals for improving public transport accessibility in Huntingdon West. This will include better linkages between the railway station and buses including the Cambridge to St Ives Guided Bus.

**6.13** Improved pedestrian and cycle paths are proposed to the railway station. Additional cycle parking will also be encouraged.






**6.14** Access to the railway station will be changed following the removal of the viaduct as part of the A14 changes. Access to the eastern side will be in two new positions and some of the existing car parking removed as a result of the road changes. Improved access is also desirable for the west car park and improvements will be sought in conjunction with any proposal for additional car parking in this area.

**6.15** No commercial development is provided for on the railway station land as it is envisaged that all the existing land owned by Network Rail will continue to be needed for operational purposes and car parking.



Map 5 The Railway Station



-  New HDC proposed link road
-  HA designed road
-  Removal of A14 viaduct
-  Other roads
-  Existing car parks
-  Potential new car parks
-  Possible temporary car park
-  Railway station
-  Bus station
-  Pedestrian route between bus and rail stations

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## 7 Vibrant Growth

### Objective 2

To provide an appropriate level of new and enhanced retail, employment, housing and other opportunities to meet local need in a manner which integrates with existing development and is complementary to, and expressly beneficial to, the town centre.

### The George Street/ Ermine Street Area

**7.1** The George St/ Ermine St area lies immediately west of the town centre. It includes areas of poor quality industrial development which are largely redundant with opportunities for reuse. However, apart from these poor quality areas, there are several fine buildings and attractive areas which are part of the Huntingdon Conservation Area.

**7.2** Locating new development in this area positively contributes towards sustainability as it is well served by facilities, given its proximity to the established town centre. Redevelopment offers the opportunity of improving the overall character of the area and improving its links to the town centre.

### Policy HW 4

Development sites in the George St/ Ermine St area of approx 6ha will be redeveloped according to a masterplan using the concepts set out in Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses. including provision for the following mixed uses:

- a. Retail that is complementary to the continuing vitality and viability of the town centre and does not jeopardise the delivery of further redevelopment at Chequers Court;

- b. Approximately 170 to 230 homes (including affordable housing);
- c. Open space;
- d. Alternative town centre uses such as office (B1a), live/work units, restaurants, a hotel and leisure facilities;
- e. An additional public car park to serve the need for long stays in the town centre; and
- f. Related servicing, pedestrian and cycle links, cycle and car parking.

**7.3** The redevelopment of vacant and under-used industrial land in this sustainable location will facilitate the sustainable and organic growth of the town centre.

**7.4** National, Regional and Core Strategy policies have been taken into account in determining the amount, type and location of additional retail provision that can be supported in Huntingdon. The Core Strategy is committed to development in the town centre first and seeks to provide at least an additional 9,000m<sup>2</sup> of net comparison shopping space in Huntingdon and at least 4,000m<sup>2</sup> of convenience floorspace across the District. The provision of some of this space as part of a second phase of redevelopment at Chequers Court is planned but there is a need to facilitate further land for retail use. The George St/ Ermine St area offers the opportunity for complementary retail development that can satisfy demand if there are no suitable sites within the town centre. Retail proposals will have to demonstrate that the sites chosen are appropriate and that they enhance the vitality of Huntingdon town centre by complementing existing retail provision and choice and act as a positive factor in terms of the overall regeneration and enhancement of the town centre. The area closest to George Street is the most appropriate for any retail as it will have access from the proposed West of Town Centre Link Road, is close to existing retailing in the town centre and will help to facilitate improved linkages between the town centre, the railway station and the Hinchingsbrooke area through the site.

**7.5** Close to George Street there are also opportunities for some housing or alternative complementary activities such as offices, a hotel or leisure uses. In a housing proposal, a range of approximately 20 and 40 homes is anticipated on approximately 0.5ha.

**7.6** At the northern end of the George St/ Ermine St area around Ferrars Road, redevelopment encompassing housing on the existing industrial and servicing sites is envisaged. Approximately 150 to 190 homes could be achieved either side of the new link road on approximately 2ha. This northern end is not considered suitable for retailing as it is further from shops in the main part of the existing town centre and the railway station than the George St end. The existing residential development in this area also lends support to increased housing in a manner which fits well with the surrounding townscape given the conservation area status of part of the land.

**7.7** The Cambridgeshire Constabulary buildings and the recent site of the temporary library could become available. Town centre uses, principally office (B1a) use would be acceptable here.

**7.8** Live/work units providing accommodation for both residential and suitable business use is an alternative activity envisaged throughout the George St/ Ermine St area.

**7.9** Long stay public car parks in Huntingdon located at Riverside and Bridge Place serve the east and south of the town. In order to avoid unnecessary travel on the ring road, a further long stay car park serving the north and west is proposed. The suggested location is land opened up by the West of Town Centre Link Road adjacent to the railway. This would be subject to charges in the same way as other Council car parks.

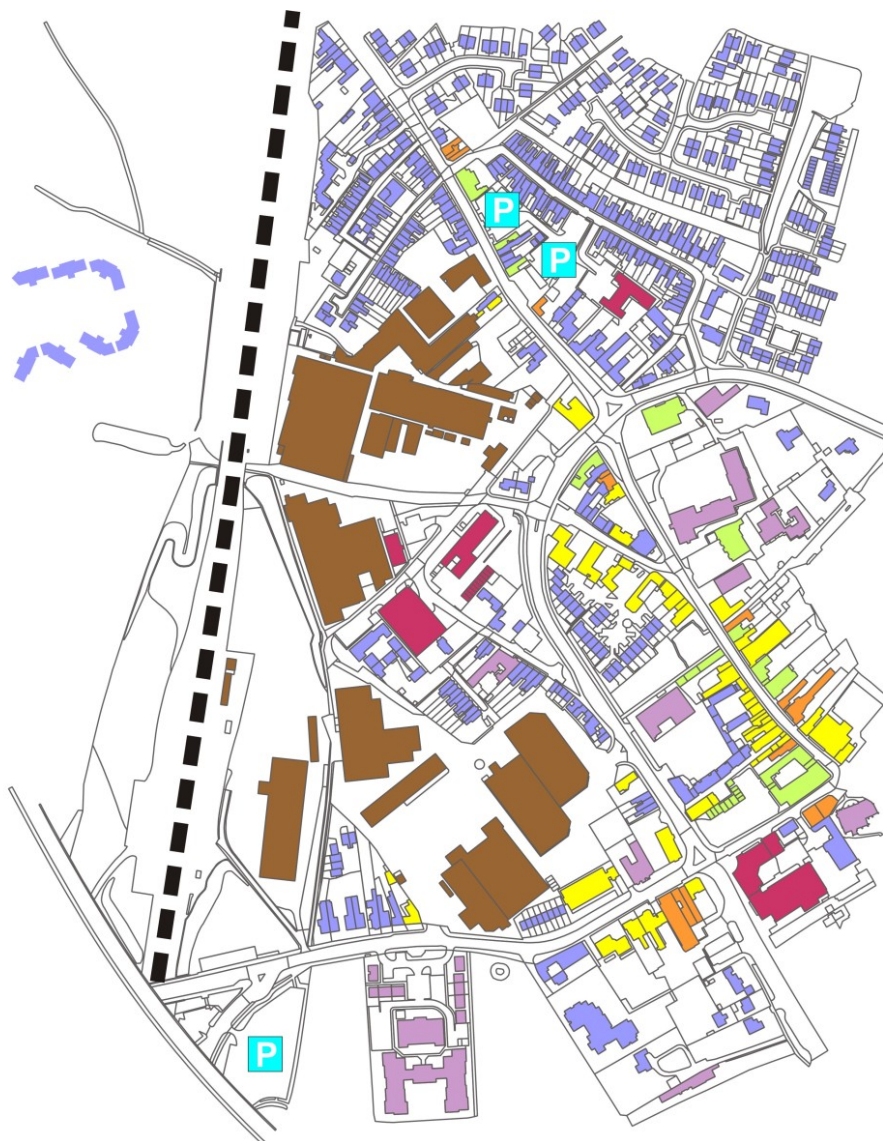
**7.10** Concepts for development of the land are set out on Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses. and this will be used to help develop a masterplan for the area. In addition to development, the masterplan will address open space (further discussed under Policy HW8) and a strategic approach to managing surface water using Sustainable Drainage systems (further discussed under Policy HW9).



# 7 Vibrant Growth

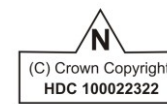
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Map 6a George Street/ Ermine Street - Existing Land Uses



### Existing land uses

-  Residential
-  Warehouse / industrial
-  Public service
-  Retail
-  Office
-  Food and drink
-  Other (care home / church etc)
-  Car park



Not to scale



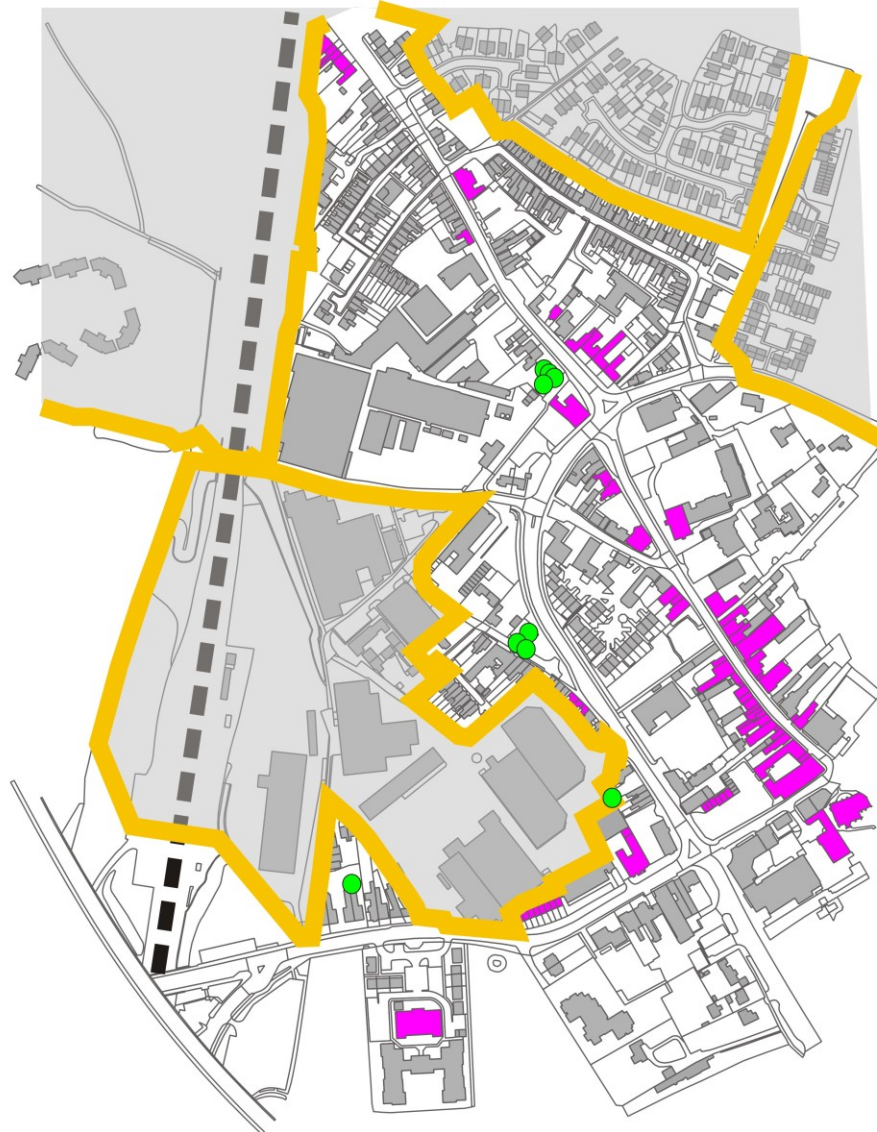
Map 6b George Street/ Ermine Street - Townscape Analysis






# 7 Vibrant Growth

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Map 6c George Street/ Ermine Street - Planning Constraints

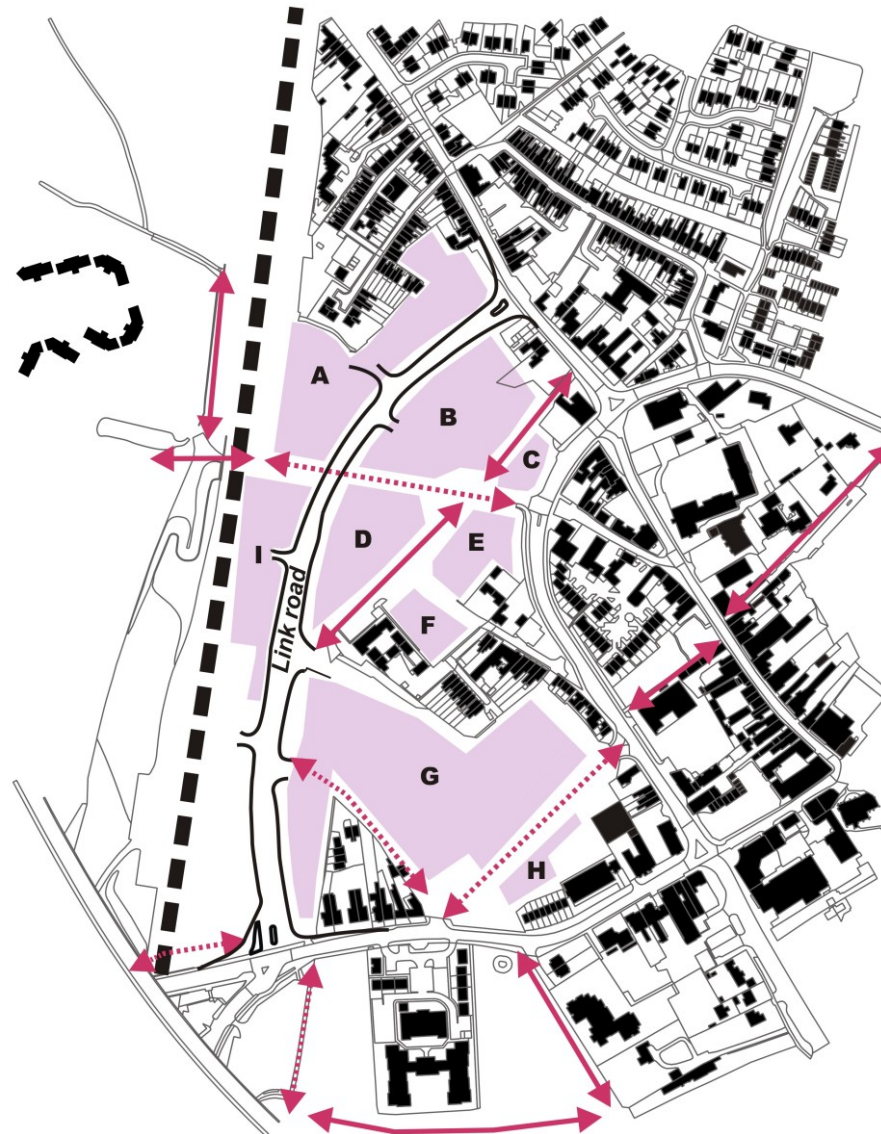


-  Listed buildings
-  Area outside Conservation Area
-  Tree preservation order

  
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Not to scale







Map 6d George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Parcels



The potential land parcels are defined by both the routes of the proposed link road and the potential for improved and additional cycle and pedestrian routes.

This then allows for the creation of defined 'perimeter blocks' within which built form and open space can be designed.

-  Route for link road with integrated cycleway/footpath
-  Potential land parcels
-  Existing footpath and cycle links
-  Potential footpath and cycle links

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# 7 Vibrant Growth

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Map 6e George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses



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### Hinchingbrooke Community Campus

**7.11** West of the railway line there are opportunities to enhance the 'community campus' character that has developed with the institutional uses on the former Hinchingbrooke Estate and make the best use of land that is available for redevelopment in that location.

**7.12** The proposed road changes along with opportunities for new walking and cycling routes will improve the accessibility of this area making it an even more sustainable location for such uses.

#### Policy HW 5

Sites west of the railway and in the Hinchingbrooke area will be developed in accordance with a masterplan using the concepts in Map 7d .Hinchingbrooke Community Campus - Land Use Proposals. for the following uses:

- a. 1.1ha of land between the site of the proposed Huntingdonshire Regional College and Views Common will be redeveloped for office uses (B1a).
- b. 1.9ha of land west of the Railway will be redeveloped for office uses (B1a). Noise mitigation measures will be incorporated recognising the location adjacent to the railway line.
- c. Land that currently has permission for the relocation of Huntingdonshire Regional College and the permission for the Water Tower conversion will be considered for employment uses (B1a and/or B1b) or non-residential institutional uses (D1) should these permissions lapse.
- d. Parts of the hospital site will be considered for office use (B1a), non-residential institutional uses (D1), or alternative uses should those parts not be required for hospital use due to reconfiguration of facilities on site.

Proposals must be set in landscaped grounds that reflect the context provided by Views Common, the historic parkland setting of Hinchingbrooke House and the aims of enhancing the 'community campus' identity.

**7.13** New activities in this location must fit in with the character of the surrounding open space and existing institutional uses, and reinforce the strong 'community campus' identity for the area.

**7.14** Land owned by the Cambridgeshire Constabulary north east of the approved Regional College is allocated for employment uses. This Police Headquarters land would need to be redeveloped having regard to the protected trees on it. Innovative, knowledge-based businesses or an innovation centre with a flexible range of units available offering space for businesses to grow may be suitable uses.

**7.15** The Water Tower west of the railway near Brampton Road has planning permission for redevelopment for office use. Should this permission lapse, alternative office or institutional use may be possible. The 1.9ha site in the same ownership west of the railway is considered suitable for office use in the longer term. This site will present an interesting design challenge with development needing to respond to the constraints upon the area including road access, noise from the railway, and the relationship with the open environment of Views Common adjoining the site.

**7.16** The Huntingdonshire Regional College has planning permission for development of a new further educational facility on part of the Police Headquarters land. Relocation of the college from its current Huntingdon location is dependent on funding. Should this relocation not go ahead, the policy identifies suitable alternative development for employment or institutional uses.

**7.17** The Hinchingbrooke Health Care NHS Trust has advised that there is a possibility that some of the hospital land will become available for alternative uses if there is a reduction in activity at the hospital or there is related redevelopment, such as concentrating car parking in a decked car park structure. As there are no precise proposals or timeframes, no land is allocated in this plan. Office use or other institutional uses such as a general practitioner's surgery or a community facility may be suitable should land be identified and a planning application made. Alternative uses such as housing may also be possible if well related to existing development and appropriate measures are put in place to alleviate traffic on Hinchingbrooke Park Road.

**7.18** A masterplan is proposed to be prepared to direct development and safeguard the important features of the area.



# 7 Vibrant Growth

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Map 7a Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus - Existing Land Uses

The area is dominated by the existing large institutional uses of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke School the Cambridgeshire Police Headquarters and the Fire Service Headquarters.



Map 7b Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus - Townscape Analysis

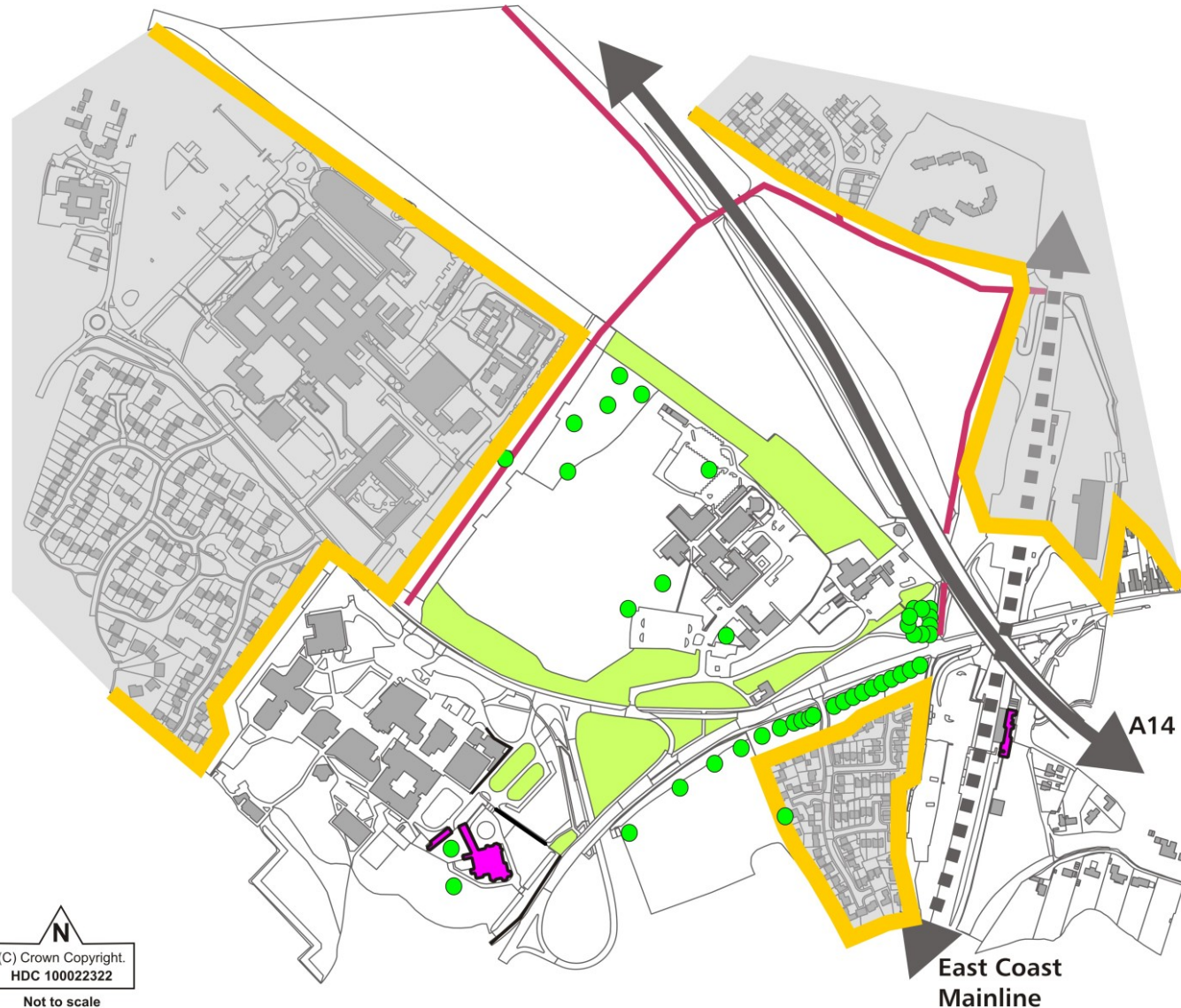




# 7 Vibrant Growth

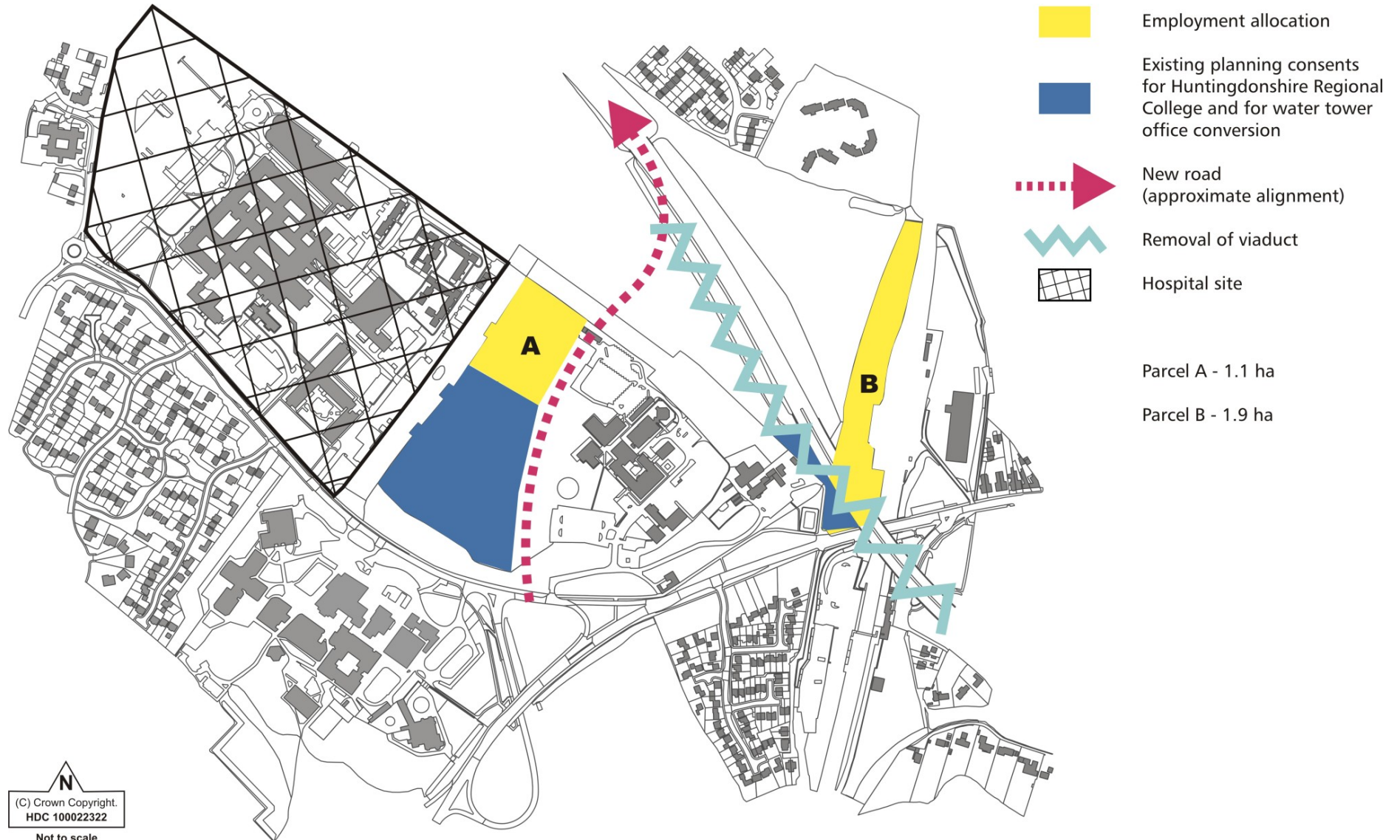
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Map 7c Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus - Planning Constraints





### Map 7d Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus - Land Use Proposals



# 8 Healthy and Green

## 8 Healthy and Green

### Objective 3

**To facilitate healthy and active lifestyles by contributing to a network of improved and new high quality green spaces which link to strategic green spaces and routes around the area including an improved Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Views Common.**

### Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

**8.1** There is considerable potential to improve and extend the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park to provide a better experience for increasing numbers of visitors and to encourage wildlife.

### Policy HW 6

The Council will work with adjoining landowners to pursue extension of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park to include some or all of the land identified on Map 8 .Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. in order to enhance the facilities of the park and to provide for biodiversity and visitors.

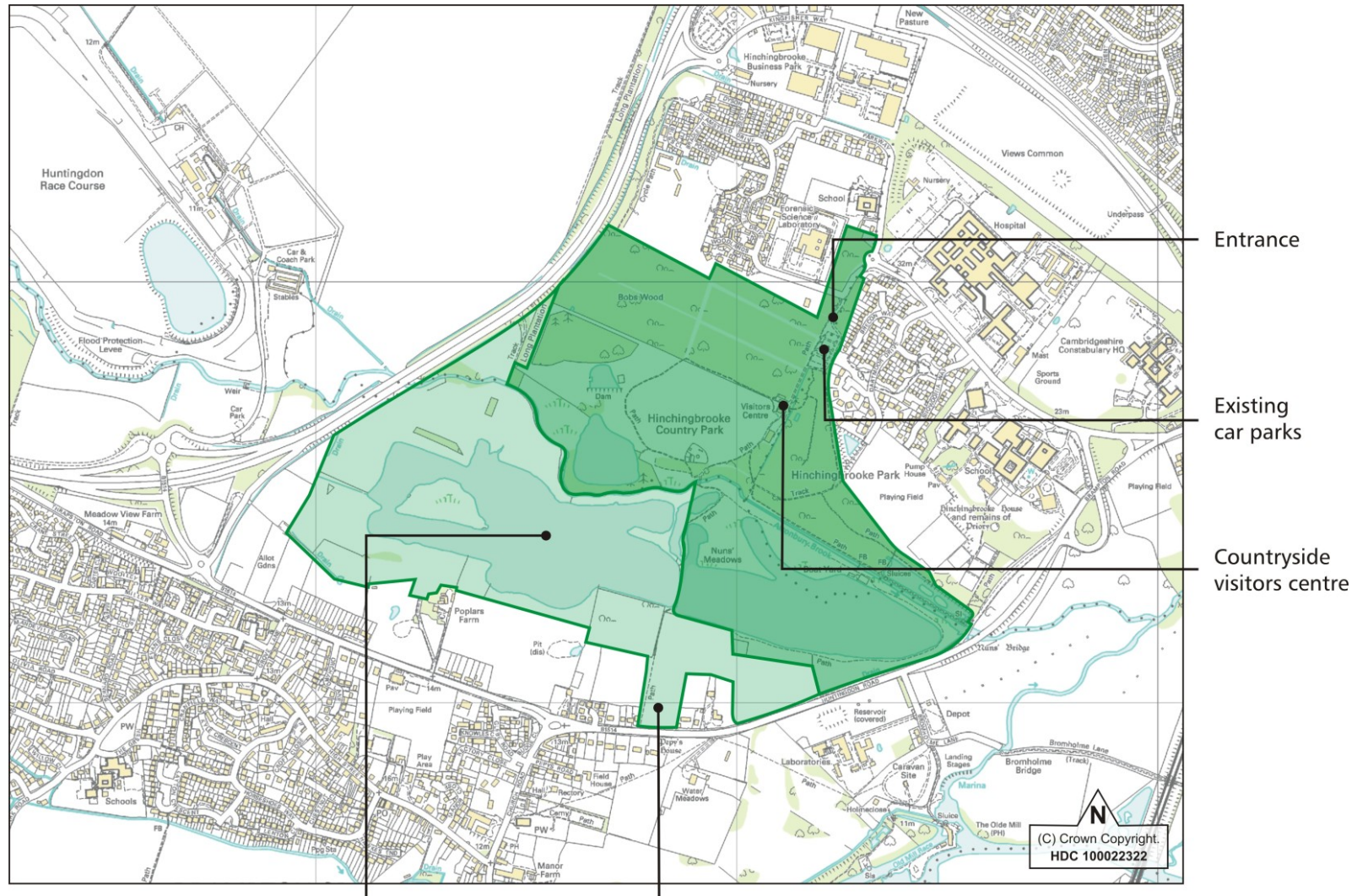
**8.2** Hinchingsbrooke Country Park consists of 70 hectares (170 acres) of woodland, meadows and lakes together with a number of facilities. Land to the south-west has the potential to be added to provide for additional recreational activities and support improved biodiversity. Such land could be leased or purchased. This land is currently farmed and is largely within the floodplain. Adding land to the Country Park which is currently within floodplain will ensure that the land is not used for an incompatible use. The Country Park will need to have flood management practices in place. Low-key recreational use is expected given the potential for flooding.

**8.3** There is a significant demand for car parking during events at the Country Park. Leasing or purchasing adjoining land near Huntingdon Rd could provide for an additional car park. In the short term, it is envisaged that car parking would only be used for events on a limited number of occasions in the summer months. In the longer term a permanent car park may become desirable.

**8.4** It is anticipated that there will be no major development along the Thrapston Rd / Huntingdon Rd border which will help to maintain the rural outlook of the Country Park.



### Map 8 Hinchingsbrooke Country Park



Potential extension to country park

Potential location for additional country park car parking

# 8 Healthy and Green

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## Views Common

**8.5** As part of the proposed A14 changes, the viaduct together with the raised ground across Views Common will be removed and a new local road created to link the downgraded parts of the old A14 route with the existing local road network. An additional footpath/cycleway link is also proposed and a further road link across Views Common will be investigated.

### Policy HW 7

Views Common will remain as a significant open space and will be added to by reinstatement of land currently taken up by the A14 as shown on Map 9 .Views Common.. The Council will work with the owners to enhance public access across the Common.

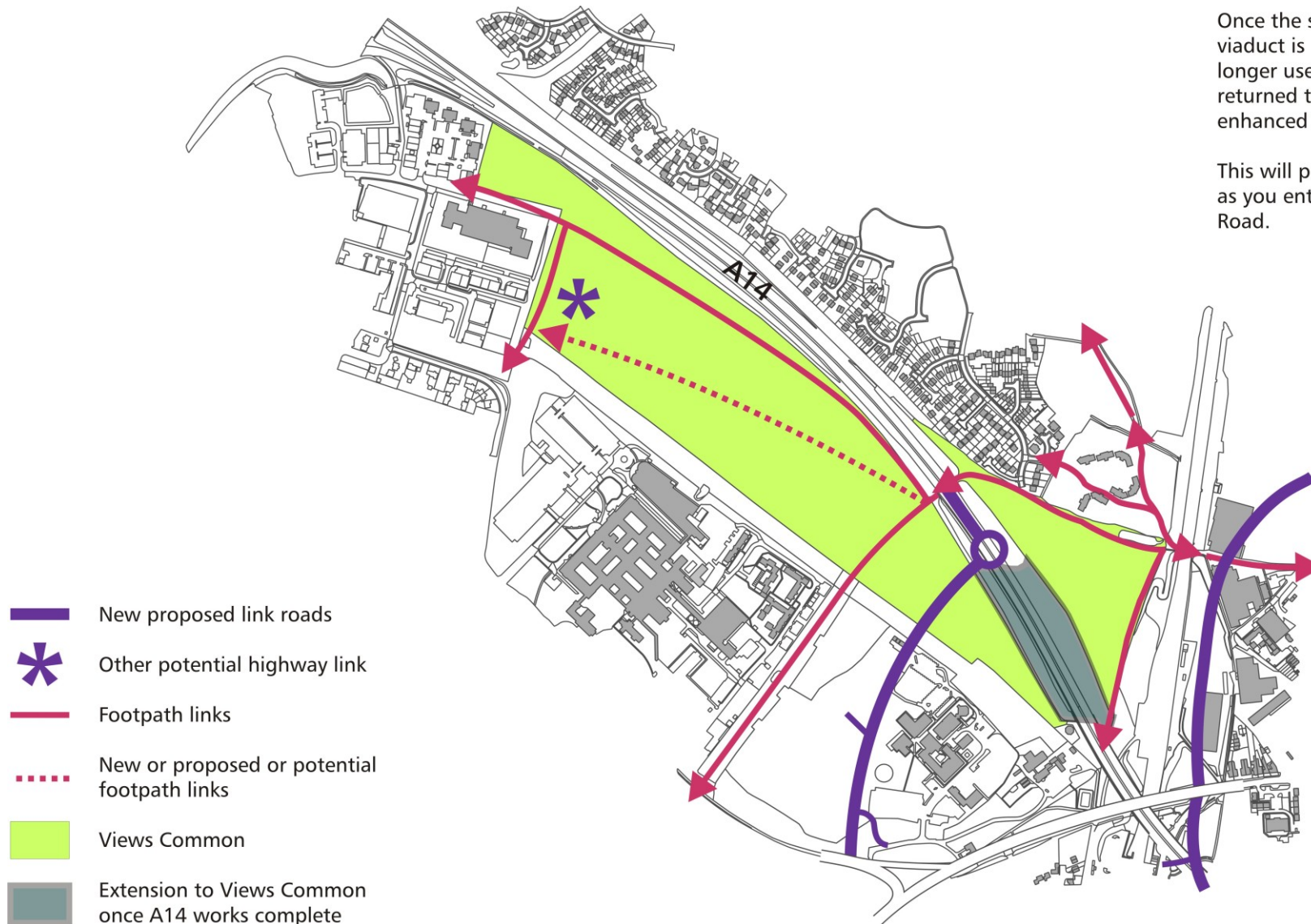
**8.6** Views Common is an important area of historic open space which is home to a variety of flora. It forms part of a green corridor from the River Great Ouse through to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and beyond. Archaeological remains and habitats supporting wildlife will need to be safeguarded in any development works.

**8.7** Accessibility in the area will be improved by the road and footpath/cycleway links proposed. Working with the owners, it is expected that the removal of the raised ground and creation of new links will be accompanied by enhancements which respect the intrinsic landscape and biodiversity values of the Common.

Map 9 Views Common

Once the short stretch of the A14 and viaduct is removed, then the land no longer used for highway can be returned to its former use as part of an enhanced Views Common.

This will provide an attractive backdrop as you enter the town from Brampton Road.





# 8 Healthy and Green

## Other Open Space and Play Areas

**8.8** Open space and play areas are valuable community resources which can promote healthy lifestyles and help foster community pride.

**8.9** There are some small public open spaces and play areas in the Hinchingsbrooke area, together with other open spaces such as the Hinchingsbrooke School playing fields. The George St / Ermine St area currently has no public open space and with large scale redevelopment there are opportunities to create new open and play space and complete a missing part in an otherwise continuous green corridor through the town.

### Policy HW 8

Existing open spaces will be maintained and enhanced and further open space, where possible linking to the strategic open space network around Huntingdon will be provided with future development.

**8.10** There are opportunities to create a continuous green corridor from the waterfront at Riverside Park, through Mill Common, Views Common, and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park with links to the countryside and strategic green spaces defined in the 2006 Green Infrastructure Strategy.

**8.11** Two large mixed use developments in the George St / Ermine St area will create a need for additional open space, for example play areas for children occupying new housing. There is the opportunity in these areas to link open space to the surrounding area by creating the missing links.

**8.12** The re-opening of Handcroft lane as a green corridor will re-create not only an important historic feature but also an important desire line between the town centre and Views Common with access under the railway. Other potential links described below should feed into this corridor.

**8.13** One particular opportunity for greening the area is associated with Barracks Brook. Barracks Brook currently flows through the Ferrars Road area mostly in an underground culvert. This area is subject to a flood probability of 1 in 1000 years

known as Flood Zone 2. Any new buildings should be set back from the watercourse and the opportunity could be taken to open up the stream and create a natural feature in this area. Developers will be expected to liaise with the Alconbury and Ellington Internal Drainage Board and the Environment Agency to assess the feasibility of whether the stream should be opened up as part of a new green linkage. Opening up the culvert within Huntingdon West in conjunction with development could contribute to the natural environment and create a new green linkage as well as create a natural and distinctive focus to this part of the town.

**8.14** Portholme lies beyond Mill Common and is a gateway to the Ouse valley. It is an alluvial flood meadow recognised as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC) and is subject to the Habitats Directive in European legislation. Assessment of the area action plan on this area, and other European sites further afield has been undertaken in accordance with the Habitat Regulations. *Include summary of Habitat Regulations Assessment*

## 9 High Quality Environment

### Objective 4

**To ensure that new development is complementary to the existing natural and historic environment and is of a high quality and a sustainable design.**

### Design

**9.1** Good design, arising from a thorough understanding of place and context, is important in creating environments that contribute to people's well-being. Good design leads to sustainable, high quality, and attractive places.

### Policy HW 9

In areas allocated for development, proposals must demonstrate a high standard of design and show how an attractive environment has been created. Proposals must also provide evidence as to how the principles contained within the relevant design guidance documents and plans contained in this document have been adhered to, and in particular how any proposal has:

1. Contributed towards sustainable principles for example by being adaptable and resource efficient
2. Met or exceeded the standards of the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM or successor standards
3. Utilised renewable energy systems and sources
4. Protected the area's heritage by having regard to Conservation Area status and the setting of any listed buildings
5. Created a sense of coherence and distinctiveness to the area
6. Respected the topography and scale of neighbouring developments
7. Used appropriate materials
8. Retained existing mature trees and promoted biodiversity

9. Utilised Sustainable Drainage techniques
10. Enabled ease of movement through the area, particularly by walking and cycling

**9.2** All new development should use resources such as water and energy efficiently. Assessing new housing against the Code for Sustainable Homes is now mandatory and all new residential development should meet or exceed code level 3 from 2010, code level 4 from 2013 and be zero carbon (ie code level 6) from 2016. Housing development in this area is expected to meet or exceed these targets. Other developments must meet the equivalent BREEAM standards or other national sustainability standards where they are introduced.

**9.3** Employing appropriate design techniques can significantly help mitigate against the effects of climate change by reducing its contribution to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions but also providing comfortable conditions for users by taking account of the unavoidable consequences of climate change.

**9.4** It is expected that developers will investigate the potential for renewable energy sources and for utilising suitable technologies while conforming with development plan policies for renewable or low-carbon sources. The potential for a wind turbine to be erected in Hinchingsbrooke Country Park to serve the Countryside Centre should be investigated. Proposals should seek opportunities to share renewable energy sources with other developments and achieve greater CO<sub>2</sub> reductions.

**9.5** Development should be distinctive, respecting the existing context and environment in which Huntingdon West sits. There are areas of mature trees and landscaping throughout Huntingdon West which will have a significant effect on the design and setting of development. The Huntingdon Conservation Area which includes much of the George St/ Ermine St area, the Railway Station, Views Common and some of the Hinchingsbrooke area including the 'historic core' of Hinchingsbrooke House and gatehouse is particularly important.

## 9 High Quality Environment

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**9.6** In those areas outside of the Conservation Area, development will still need to be of a high standard of design and contribute positively to the environment, but there may be more flexibility to incorporate design of a different scale and form. Additional residential development in the George St/ Ermine St area must relate to the existing residential neighbourhoods in terms of scale and massing.

**9.7** Barracks Brook, which runs through the northern part of the George St/ Ermine St area is currently mostly culverted. Prior to entering Huntingdon West there are already flood retention measures in place in Stukeley Meadows. The Brook flows from Huntingdon West around the ring road to the River Great Ouse at Riverside. A Sustainable Drainage system to manage surface water would help maintain surface water quality, reduce flood risk and create high amenity public open space that supports biodiversity.

**9.8** Developments should have regard to neighbouring developments, existing rights of way, and lines of desirable movement, in order to ensure that it becomes easier to move around and through the area.



## 10 Infrastructure, Phasing and Implementation

### Objective 5

To provide necessary infrastructure, using contributions from developers where appropriate, and to phase development to occur in conjunction with major road infrastructure provision.

### Infrastructure

**10.1** The District Council, together with the County Council and the government are already engaged in providing necessary infrastructure to support development in Huntingdon West. The major proposed changes to the A14 will be funded by government and the District Council is in the process of bidding for further funding for the delivery of the West of Town Centre Link Road. Developers will be expected to contribute to necessary infrastructure.

### Policy HW 10

Contributions from development towards infrastructure in the Huntingdon West area will be expected in particular to assist appropriately in the delivery of:

- a. Planned roads
- b. Public transport
- c. Public car parking
- d. Public access improvements, particularly pedestrian and cycle routes
- e. Improvements to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and other open space
- f. Utilities infrastructure and renewable energy
- g. Education
- h. Any other requirement as set out in Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy

More detail on the contributions is set out in Appendix 1 .Infrastructure Requirements..

**10.2** Development proposals will be expected to provide or contribute towards the cost of providing appropriate infrastructure, and of meeting social and environmental requirements, where these are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Contributions may also be required to meet the management and maintenance of services and facilities provided through any obligation. Specific requirements are set out in this area action plan in addition to other requirements dealt with by other development plan documents.

**10.3** The government has published proposals for the establishment of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which could be applied in future.

### Phasing and Implementation

**10.4** Producing an area action plan for Huntingdon West is urgently needed to manage and coordinate piecemeal change that has been occurring and the further change that will occur.

### Policy HW 11

The timing of the development in the George St/ Ermine St area will be determined by the completion of the link road, the demolition of redundant buildings and treatment of contamination.

Elsewhere the completion of the A14 road changes and associated works to the viaduct will determine when the majority of development can go ahead.

In the Hinchingsbrooke area additional transport measures may be necessary after the completion of the A14 changes before development goes ahead.

Retail development in the George St/ Ermine St area will be dependent on the selected site being appropriate in terms of a sequential analysis considering the existing town centre first and the development being complementary to the town centre.

# 10 Infrastructure, Phasing and Implementation

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Further detail on phasing is set out in Appendix 2 .Potential Phasing..

**10.5** The effects of the recession are likely to result in slower rates of development in Huntingdon West than anticipated when the area action plan was being drawn up. However, key road infrastructure works are publicly funded and these are progressing albeit with revised timeframes. Some office development may not be viable in the short term and is likely to need more favourable market conditions.

**10.6** A planning application for the proposed Link Road through the George Street/ Ermine Street Area has been submitted. The development of this area needs to take place in a comprehensive fashion and be accessed from the link road. Although it may be possible for some development to commence prior to the opening of the whole link road, any schemes advanced before completion of the road cannot undermine the delivery of the road or associated infrastructure.

**10.7** Developers in the George St/ Ermine St area are expected to investigate land for contamination and ensure that any required remediation takes place. Given the large areas of hardstanding, and the need for decontamination, there is also the need to ensure that waste is appropriately dealt with.

**10.8** The proposed A14 works are proposed for completion in 2016. The majority of development in the Hinchingsbrooke area will need to await the completion of these works so that the new access arrangements are available. Where proposed in advance of completion, a transport assessment will be required to demonstrate that there will be 'minimal impact' or 'nil detriment' to traffic flows on the A14.

**10.9** It is also necessary to consider the wider traffic effects of any proposal, particularly the effects on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road. Consideration of the need for an additional access road in the vicinity of the hospital and business park leading through to the de-trunked A14 is anticipated after the completion of the A14 changes.

**10.10** The timing of retail development has to have regard to plans for Huntingdon town centre, in particular the Chequers Court redevelopment. Retail development must follow an appropriate sequential analysis and be complementary to the vitality and viability of the existing town centre.

## 11 Monitoring

**11.1** The Council produces an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The AMR assesses performance against indicators, which are linked with spatial objectives from the Core Strategy as

well as sustainability appraisal objectives and other adopted policies. If, as a result of monitoring, areas are identified where a policy is not working, or key policy targets are not being met, this may give rise to a review of the area action plan.

**11.2** The following tables show how policies in the area action plan will be monitored by indicators directly related to the current AMR.

**Table 1 Land, Water and Resources**

| Indicator   | Indicator Type                         | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy | Target  | Responsible Agencies  |
|---|--|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Gross new dwellings on previously developed land (PDL)                                    | Core output (H3), significant effects  | 2                            | 1                    | HW4, HW5          | Maximise the re-use of PDL  | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| % of gross new dwellings on PDL   | Core output (H3), significant effects  | 2                            | 1                    | HW4, HW5          | 29% over District as a whole  | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| % of dwellings completed at specified densities (dwellings per hectare = dph)             | Local output, significant effects      | 2                            | 1                    | HW4, HW5          | To achieve net densities of 30+ dph in new housing developments of 9+ dwellings | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| Amount and % of employment floorspace developed on PDL (gross internal floorspace in sqm) | Core output (BD2), significant effects | 2                            | 1                    | HW4, HW5          | Maximise the % of completed employment floorspace on PDL                        | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector                              |

These indicators seek to ensure the best use of land by encouraging the re-use of previously developed land and higher densities of development. The George St/ Ermine St area is entirely made up of previously developed land. The density of development sought ranges from 40 to 80 dph.

**Table 2 Biodiversity**

| Indicator  | Indicator Type                        | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy | Target                                    | Responsible Agencies                             |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| Losses, additions and total change to biodiversity habitat | Core output (E2), significant effects | 3                            | 1, 3, 12             | HW6               | Maintain areas of biodiversity importance | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector |

Policy HW6 provides for an extension to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park which is currently some 70 hectares. The additions are expected to take place over a number of years and monitoring will indicate the ongoing success in adding to the park to provide for biodiversity.

# 11 Monitoring

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**Table 3 Landscape, Townscape and Archaeology**

| Indicator   | Indicator Type                        | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy | Target                                     | Responsible Agencies  |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| Number and % of housing sites (10+ dwellings) with a Building for Life assessment of less than 10, 10 to 13, 14 to 15 and 16 or more  | Core output (H6), significant effects | 4                            | 4, 5, 10, 13         | HW9               | All sites to achieve a minimum score of 10 | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| These indicators require survey to assess the quality of new building with an assessment of 16 or more being the highest standard. The area action plan seeks a high standard of urban design aimed at the creation of an attractive environment. |                                       |                              |                      |                   |  |   |

**Table 4 Climate Change and Pollution**

| Indicator  | Indicator Type                        | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy | Target  | Responsible Agencies  |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Permitted renewable energy capacity (MW)   | Core output (H3), significant effects | 4                            | 7, 10                | HW9               | Maximise the overall provision of renewable energy capacity | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| Completed installed renewable energy capacity (MW)   | Core output (H3), significant effects | 4                            | 7, 10                | HW9               | Maximise the overall provision of renewable energy capacity | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| Renewable energy should be installed where feasible in accordance with government and regional targets aimed at maximising the provision of renewable energy. A renewable energy source is envisaged for the Countryside Centre at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. |                                       |                              |                      |                   |   |   |

**Table 5 Healthy Communities**

| Indicator   | Indicator Type                    | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy | Target   | Responsible Agencies             |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard   | Local output, significant effects | 3                            | 3,11,12              | HW6               | Maximise the amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard | Huntingdonshire District Council |
| Hinchingsbrooke Country Park is currently managed to Green Flag Award standard. The policy seeks to expand the Country Park in order to enhance the facilities of the park, to provide enhanced habitats for greater biodiversity and to provide for growing numbers of visitors. |                                   |                              |                      |                   |  |                                  |

**Table 6 Inclusive Communities**

| Indicator  | Indicator Type                        | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy | Target  | Responsible Agencies  |
|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| Affordable housing completions (gross)   | Core Output (H5), significant effects | 2                            | 15,16                | HW4, HW5          | 40% on proposals of 15 or more homes or 0.5ha or more | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Registered Social Landlords |
| 40% of new qualifying housing developments are expected to be affordable housing in accordance with policy CS4 of the Core Strategy. |                                       |                              |                      |                   |   |   |

**Table 7 Economic Activity**

| Indicator   | Indicator Type                         | Related HW Spatial Objective | Related SA Objective | Related HW Policy    | Target   | Responsible Agencies   |
|---|--|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type (gross and net B1a, B1b, B1c, B2, B8)   | Core output (BD1), significant effects | 2                            | 17, 18               | HW4, HW5             | Maximise the amount of floorspace developed for employment | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector   |
| Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development (gross and net internal floorspace in sqm A1, A2, B1a, D2)   | Core output (BD4), significant effects | 2                            | 14, 17, 18           | HW4, HW5             | No specific target   | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector   |
| Amount of completed floorspace for other use classes (net internal floorspace in sqm A3, A4, C1, C2, D1, Sui generis))  | Local output, significant effects      | 2                            | 14, 17, 18           | HW4, HW5             | Maximise the provision of services / facilities            | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector   |
| Amount of contributions secured for infrastructure requirements   | Local output specific to AAP           | 1,5                          | ...                  | HW1, HW2, HW10, HW11 | To enable infrastructure within anticipated timeframes     | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector   |
| Completion of infrastructure elements   | Local output specific to AAP           | 1,5                          | ...                  | HW1, HW2, HW10, HW11 | Completion within anticipated timeframes                   | Huntingdonshire District Council, Private Sector, Cambridgeshire County Council, Highways Agency |
| These indicators will measure the success of the area action plan in encouraging new business development and establishing the infrastructure needed to support growth. |  |                              |                      |                      |  |  |



## Appendix 1 Infrastructure Requirements

### Proposals associated with A14

**1.1** The Preferred Route for the A14 was announced in 2008. The proposals include that the viaduct over the railway in Huntingdon be removed and a new local road junction/network created in the vicinity of Brampton Road in order to connect into the local road network. Funding is expected from government and developer funding is only likely to be required if some part of the proposals is required to be constructed in advance of the Highways Agency timetable.

**1.2** It is envisaged that some development will go ahead in advance of the completion of the new local road network and provided this is not significant in scale, the impact on the A14 is likely to be negligible. The impact will need to be demonstrated in a Transport Assessment.

### West of Town Centre Link Road

**1.3** Huntingdonshire District Council is seeking housing growth funding for the creation of the new Link Road between George Street/Brampton Road and Ermine Street. The planning application for this is expected to be granted permission prior to the adoption of this area action plan. If approved, part of the funding for the road, estimated in excess of £2 million, could be provided.

**1.4** Normally developers would be expected to pay for the complete road provision, but as it will be part-funded separately, some level of contributions from developers could be allocated to other infrastructure requirements.

### Additional Hinchingsbrooke Link Road

**1.5** A local access road from Hinchingsbrooke, in the vicinity of the Hospital and Views Common to reach the former A14 post 2016 will be investigated and if there is a demonstrated need, funding for such a link from developer contributions will be proposed. One option that will be investigated is a link from the Hinchingsbrooke Business Park from Parkway.

### Buses

**1.6** The guideway for the St Ives to Cambridge guided bus will be completed prior to the adoption of this area action plan. Buses will travel from the Huntingdon Railway Station via the Huntingdon bus station and local roads to join the start of the guideway in St Ives. On-road bus priority measures are proposed along this route. Direct contributions from developers in Huntingdon West are likely to be required for improvements to bus stops and other related works, such as Real Time Information, as set out in the Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy.

**1.7** Within the life of this area action plan, it is possible that further improvements to bus services such as bus priority measures and integrated ticketing will be developed. Appropriate contributions from developers will be sought to help bring about such services.

### Railway Station

**1.8** Continued work will take place to secure more bus services and improved accessibility at the dedicated interchange with the rail station. Additionally, improved information, including Real Time provision, will be sought.

**1.9** Additional car parking to serve the railway station may be proposed privately or through Network Rail and First Capital Connect.

### Public Car Parking

**1.10** Additional public car parking is envisaged on land adjoining the West of Town Centre Link Road as shown on Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses.. The land will need to be secured by the Council and contributions from developers are expected to contribute to the costs of providing this additional public car parking. The cost will include land acquisition plus design and construction costs. Ongoing costs are expected to be met through the application of car parking charges in line with elsewhere in the town.

### Pedestrians and Cyclists

**1.11** Additional pedestrian and cycle linkages are proposed, as shown on Map 4 .Pedestrian and Cycle Links.. Developers are expected to contribute to the costs of establishing these routes. A number of these routes are already detailed in the

Huntingdon & Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy (MTTS) and creating additional paths will help to complete these routes. In addition an improved linkage between Hinchingsbrooke Business Park across Views Common is envisaged and a separate pedestrian/cycle bridge across the railway is to be investigated. Further pedestrian routes within an expanded Hinchingsbrooke Country Park would also be expected.

## Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

**1.12** Contributions from developers in the wider Huntingdon area are expected to improve Hinchingsbrooke Country Park as follows:

1. Lease or purchase of additional land for the Country Park
2. Lease or purchase of land for an overflow car park near Huntingdon Road
3. Improvements to the existing car park
4. Improvement to the countryside centre including renewable energy (such as a wind turbine), insulation and maintenance
5. CCTV and Lighting
6. Interpretation boards, waymarking signs and leaflets
7. Play and recreation facilities
8. Café improvements
9. New toilet block
10. Footpath improvements
11. Ranger staff time

**1.13** There is a need for additional land for recreation and for an overflow car park. Additional and/or improved car parking in the existing car park could help to increase capacity beyond the current 80 spaces. Improvements to the access road could also aid access and egress from the car park but careful design would be needed to ensure the retention of trees.

**1.14** The countryside education centre is used as a community facility for the area but its opening hours are currently very limited. Improvements to insulation and the heating system, perhaps provided by a sustainable energy source such as a wind turbine, will enable the centre to have greater usage over the winter months. With the increase in visitor numbers and the extended hours of usage, additional lighting and

CCTV coverage may also be needed. The visitors centre could also be further improved following the recent café extensions. An additional toilet block will also be needed to meet additional demand.

**1.15** Improvements to the unsurfaced footpath network will increase the overall carrying capacity of the Park and enhance facilities for those with disabilities. A bridge over the Alconbury Brook for pedestrians and cyclists will allow a further circular path network to be expanded, together with improving access to the wider countryside. Facilities for play and recreation such as young children's play equipment and older children's outdoor gym equipment, together with additional seating and barbeque areas will cater for a wide age range of users. Interpretation boards, waymarking signs, bird hides and Ranger staff could also be used to inform visitors about the features of the Park and encourage appropriate recreational activity.

## Other Open Space and Contributions towards Leisure and Sports Facilities

**1.16** Additional areas of open space are proposed in the George St/ Ermine St area as shown on Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses.. These areas are expected to be provided by developers as part of the mixed use developments envisaged in those locations. The Council may adopt these spaces subject to appropriate management funds being provided by the developer. Other contributions may also be required in accordance with adopted local standards and pooled for the creation or improvement of sports facilities to serve Huntingdon.

## Utilities

**1.17** Utilities such as water, electricity and gas may need to be upgraded as a result of new development. A new rising main for water has been identified as a possibility in the 2009 Huntingdonshire Outline Water Cycle Strategy. Developers will be expected to create high quality developments in accordance with the standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes in order to limit the pressure on existing resources. Contributions may be required to facilitate renewable energy, including off-site renewables created through partnerships using pooled funds.

# Appendix 1 Infrastructure Requirements

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## Education

**1.18** Existing education provision will be affected by new housing. Based on current Cambridgeshire County Council calculations a range of possible requirements is identified as follows:

**Table 8 Requirements for New School Places**

| Policies             | New Homes | New Primary places required | New Secondary places required |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| George St/ Ermine St |           |                             |                               |
| Lower estimate       | 170       | 51                          | 34                            |
| Higher estimate      | 230       | 69                          | 46                            |

**1.19** Of the two existing secondary schools, Hinchingsbrooke is operating at capacity and is usually oversubscribed in each admissions round. There is some spare capacity currently at St Peters and the scope to expand the school by an additional form of entry (150 pupils). While Huntingdon continues to be served by two secondary schools the County Council's approach will be to provide for growth by utilising the existing spare capacity at St Peter's School and through the potential to expand it by one form of entry. A review of the secondary school catchment areas in Huntingdon may be required to support this approach. A third secondary school is another option the County will consider.

**1.20** The size of developments proposed is unlikely to warrant any new primary schools. However, with spare capacity in the existing primary schools diminishing, some expansion of primary school provision will be required. The two closest primary schools (Stukeley Meadows and Cromwell Park) have limited spare capacity and the sites do not lend themselves easily to expansion. The County Council will have to assess the potential for expansion of other school sites in Huntingdon and the contribution that new school sites in the larger housing allocation areas can contribute to increasing capacity in the primary sector.

**1.21** Developers are also expected to contribute towards the establishment of child care facilities for 0-4 years old.

## Other Contributions

**1.22** Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy sets out the contributions to infrastructure that may be required. In addition to the items above, contributions could be required for other items. The Council will be developing further guidance dealing with developer contributions.

**1.23** Affordable housing will be sought as set out in Core Strategy policy CS4. The Council currently has a SPD dealing with developer contributions for affordable housing. That SPD will be updated as required.

## Appendix 2 Potential Phasing

### Map 8 .Hinchingbrooke Country Park.

**2.1** Hinchingbrooke Country Park can be improved and extended as funds become available throughout the life of the area action plan between 2010 and 2026. Low cost and urgent improvements are expected in the short term. In the longer term additional land may be leased or purchased as funds become available.

### Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses. – Parcel I (Public car park proposal)

**2.2** It is anticipated that this land would be secured by Huntingdonshire District Council at the same time as land for the West of Town Centre Link Road and so is dependant on funding. Subject to planning approval, it could be formed as a public car park at the same time as the Link Road, possibly as early as 2012, however funding may delay this.

### Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses. – Parcels A, B, D (Residential land proposals)

**2.3** Proposals to redevelop this land could be made pending construction of the West of Town Centre Link Road, anticipated in 2012. The proposals will need to be accompanied by a schedule detailing demolition and decontamination works. Appropriate measures will need to be in place, having consulted with the Environment Agency and the Alconbury and Ellington Drainage Board, regarding Barracks Brook in order to ensure that the risk of flooding is mitigated. Additional open space is anticipated in this area. The anticipated timeframe for development is between 2012 and 2020.

### Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses. – Parcels G and H (Mixed retail and residential proposal)

**2.4** As with the sites above, proposals for this land are dependent on the West of Town Centre Link Road being built, existing buildings demolished and land being decontaminated. Additional open space is also anticipated in this area facing George Street in order to link with Mill Common. An existing pedestrian right of way may need

to be moved and a gas main diverted. An appropriate sequential analysis of sites available within the town centre, compared to this site, will be required for retail development. The timing of development of the Chequers Court area within the town centre, and the effect of retailing in this location on the town centre, will be relevant to applications for retail development on this land as delivery of the Chequers Court redevelopment should not be jeopardised and the town centre must remain vital and viable. The anticipated timeframe for development is between 2012 and 2020.

### Map 7d .Hinchingbrooke Community Campus - Land Use Proposals. – (Employment proposal)

**2.5** Development of this site requires at least part of the 'Views Common Link' which is part of the A14 proposals to be in place. This is currently anticipated in 2016. The Views Common Link could be constructed to Highways Agency standards in advance of 2016 if sought by developers, enabling this site to be developed in advance of that timetable. If proposed for development in advance of 2016 this site would need to be related to development of the Huntingdonshire Regional College site. The anticipated timeframe is between 2012 and 2020.

### Map 6e .George Street/ Ermine Street - Land Uses. – Parcels C, E and F (Employment and mixed town centre use proposals)

**2.6** Development of this land may not be entirely dependent on the West of Town Centre Link Road, but nevertheless is unlikely to come forward in the short term as new buildings are likely to follow the major investment on nearby sites. Parcels C and E are currently in use as the Huntingdon Police Station and there is currently no proposal to bring forward redevelopment. Parcel F was the temporary library and the building could be re-used for employment purposes. In the longer term, anticipated towards the end of the plan period between 2016 and 2026 the sites could be redeveloped with new buildings and activities.

### Map 7d .Hinchingbrooke Community Campus - Land Use Proposals. – (West of railway employment land)

**2.7** Development of this land cannot take place until the railway viaduct is removed, which is the last proposed action of the A14 improvements scheduled for 2016. The land will require new access from Brampton Road and it is likely that development



## Appendix 2 Potential Phasing

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should be related to the Water Tower development on adjacent land. Development is likely to require more favourable economic conditions and is anticipated towards the end of the plan period between 2020 and 2026.

## Appendix 3 Saved Policies to be Superseded

**3.1** This DPD is required to identify those policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 which are currently saved<sup>(2)</sup> that will be superseded by policies contained in this DPD (in line with Regulation 13(5)).

**3.2** Due to the district wide coverage of the remaining saved policies and the limited geographic area covered by this DPD none of the saved policies will be superseded by policies contained in this document.

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2 Those policies the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in the exercise of the power conferred by paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 has directed, for the purposes of the policies specified paragraph 1(2)(a) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 does not apply.

## Appendix 4 Proposals Maps

**4.1** Huntingdonshire District Council is required to maintain an adopted Proposals Map as part of the Local Development Framework. The Proposals Map shows geographically the adopted policies and proposals of Development Plan Documents. The adopted Proposals Map will be revised each time a new DPD is adopted.

**4.2** The current Proposals Map is based on the Proposals Map originally published with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995. It was considered clearer to illustrate designations that are no longer in effect by modifying the Local Plan Proposals Map. The Development Plan also includes saved Minerals and Waste Policies which are illustrated geographically on the Minerals and Waste Saved Policies Proposals Map Insets. These maps are available on the [Council's Website](#).

**4.3** The following maps identify the allocations made by the action plan. Please be aware that these maps will only be to scale if printed at 100%.

Proposals Maps page 1



# Appendix 4 Proposals Maps

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Proposals Maps page 2

## Glossary

### 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. It is defined in PPS3: 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.

### Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Document produced each year to report on progress in producing the *Local Development Framework* and implementing its policies.

### Areas of Strategic Green Space Enhancement

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

### 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'.

### Community Infrastructure

Facilities available for use by the community that provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, leisure, recreational and cultural needs of 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.

### Comparison Floorspace

Shops retailing items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

### 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.

### Convenience Floorspace

Shops retailing everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.

### Core Strategy

The main document in the *Local Development Framework*. It is a *Development Plan Document* containing the overall vision, objectives, strategy and key policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire.

### Development Plan

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. 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), RAMSAR sites 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* 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 areas.

## **Green Infrastructure**

The network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces (including local parks, sports grounds, cemeteries, school grounds, allotments, commons and historic parks and gardens) woodlands (including Ancient Woodlands) and green-way links. It offers opportunities to provide for a number of functions, including recreation and wildlife as well as landscape enhancement.

## **Green corridors**

Linear wildlife and public access corridors that link areas of green infrastructure and green spaces with each other and to settlements, and which also link into the wider countryside.

## **Green spaces**

Publicly accessible spaces, including local parks, sports grounds, cemeteries, school grounds, allotments, commons and historic parks and gardens.

## **Habitat**

The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

## **Infrastructure**

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

## **Local Development Document**

The collective term for policy documents that are part of the *LDF*, including *Development Plan Documents*, *Supplementary Planning Documents* and the *Statement of Community Involvement*.

## **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The collective term for the group of documents including the *Local Development Documents*, the Local Development Scheme and the Annual Monitoring Reports.

## **Local Development Scheme**

Sets out the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing *Local Development Documents*.

## **Mitigation measures**

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

## **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.

## **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.

## **Previously Developed Land (PDL)**

(See definition for *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.

## **Registered Social Landlords**

These are independent housing organisations registered with the Housing Corporation under the Housing Act 1996. Most are housing associations, but there are also trusts, co-operatives and companies.

## **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 Green Space**

These are areas of green space that serve a wider population than just the District, for example Paxton Pits and The Great Fen.

#### **Submission**

Point at which a draft *Development Plan Document* (or the draft *Statement of Community Involvement*) is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

#### **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.

#### **Sustainable Drainage System**

Previously known as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, these cover a range of approaches to surface water drainage management including source control measures such as rainwater recycling and drainage, infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground, vegetated features that hold and drain water downhill mimicking natural drainage patterns, filter drains and porous pavements to allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed and basins and ponds to hold excess water after rain and allow controlled discharge that avoids flooding.

#### **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.

## **Use Class Orders**

Planning regulations outlining a schedule of uses to which a given premises or building can be put. Some changes of use require planning permission.

## **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 building**

A building with net carbon emissions of zero over a typical year. This can be measured in different ways relating to cost, energy or carbon emissions. Reference should be made to the national Code for Sustainable Homes.