

# Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report - Updated for Stage 3

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report - Updated for Stage 3

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## Non-technical Summary

This is the non-technical summary for the draft sustainability scoping report for the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. An explanation of some of the terms used in the document can be found in the 'Glossary'.

### Why do we do sustainability appraisal?

When drawing up new planning documents the effects they will have on the environment and people's quality of life, both now and in the future are some of the most important things to consider. To be sure that the plan does not cause environmental, social or economic problems there is a system of appraisal known as Sustainability Appraisal (SA). This appraisal system is at the heart of the plan production process and is set out in European and British law.

### Sustainable Development

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achieving sustainable development. The Government's view of what sustainable development is is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF identifies the United Nations definition of sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The NPPF also identifies the five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development set out in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy - Securing the Future: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

### How will the appraisal be done?

This is the first stage of appraisal and is known as the scoping stage. The purpose of this stage is to propose and agree the way that the plan is to be drawn up including how it will be appraised in terms of sustainability and also to collect together the necessary information to produce the plan.

The appraisal process is divided into five stages. This first stage, the scoping stage is made up of five tasks:

#### 'A 1: Identifying relevant plans and programmes'

The purpose of this task is to find out how the plan is affected by outside factors, to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed, and to help identify environmental protection objectives.

#### 'A 2: Collecting baseline information'

The purpose of this task is to provide an evidence base for environmental impacts, to predict what could happen without the plan as well as what effects it could have, so that the effects can be monitored and to help in the development of sustainability appraisal objectives.

#### 'A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems'

The purpose of this task is to help focus the sustainability appraisal and streamline the subsequent stages, including analysis of baseline information, setting the sustainability appraisal objectives, prediction of effects and monitoring.

#### 'A 4: Developing the SA framework'

The purpose of this task is to provide a means by which the options and alternatives for the plan can be appraised.

#### 'A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA'

The purpose of this task is to ensure that the sustainability appraisal covers the likely effects of the plan and to ensure that the process is and will be robust and comprehensive.

The next stages of the appraisal cover:

### Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

- B 1: Testing the plan objectives against the SA framework
- B 2: Developing plan options
- B 3: Predicting the effects of the plan and alternatives
- B 4: Evaluating the effects of the plan and alternatives
- B 5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects

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B 6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan
<b>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report</b>
C 1: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report
<b>Stage D: Consulting on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal Report</b>
D 1: Public participation on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal report D 2: Appraising significant changes D 3: Making decisions and providing information
<b>Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the plan on the environment</b>
E 1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring E 2: Responding to adverse effects

Stages B to E will be carried out as part of drawing up and finalising the Local Plan. More information on stages B to E can be found in 2 'Sustainability Appraisal Methodology'. More information on when stages B to E will be carried out can be found in 4 'Next Steps'.

## Identifying relevant plans and programmes

Plans and programmes that were considered to be relevant were reviewed. The key aims from these plans and programmes were identified as:

Topic	Key Aims
<b>General/ Overarching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development plans must promote sustainable development</li> <li>Proposals identified in the Local Plan may need to undergo Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) at later stages of the planning process</li> <li>SA framework should include objectives relating to all three areas of sustainability</li> <li>Sustainability is an underlying principle of the planning system</li> </ul>
<b>Land, Water &amp; Flood Risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conserve and, where possible, enhance the countryside and its resources, including the best and most versatile agricultural land</li> <li>Promote urban regeneration and the re-use of previously developed land</li> <li>Promote demand management and efficient use of water resources</li> <li>Minimise adverse impacts on water quality, the ecology of rivers, and ground water</li> <li>Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation and encourage their efficient and appropriate use</li> <li>Minimise the risk to people and property from flooding</li> <li>Reduce water pollution by nitrates</li> <li>Prevent or reduce effects on the environment, in particular the pollution of surface water, ground water, soil and air, and on the global environment, as well as any resulting risk to human health</li> <li>Make provision in connection with land drainage and flood defence and to make provision with regard to contaminated land so far as it relates to the pollution of controlled waters</li> <li>Manage the risks from flooding and coastal erosion by employing an integrated portfolio of approaches which reflect both national and local priorities</li> <li>Address implications of scarce water resources</li> <li>Protect conservation sites dependent on water</li> <li>Reduce treatment and energy costs for users</li> </ul>

Topic	Key Aims
	<p>Improve understanding of how the water environment and ecology interact</p> <p>Promote the co-location of jobs and homes to help address barriers to investment, facilitating flexible working practices, facilitating the use of sustainable transport modes and minimising journey lengths</p>
<b>Green Infrastructure and Open Space</b>	<p>Ensure that everyone has access to open and green space</p> <p>Provide adequate, attractive, multi-use open space to support improvements in health and well-being</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of green infrastructure</p> <p>Improving quality and quantity of open space</p> <p>Improving accessibility to open space</p>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<p>Protect and enhance biodiversity, natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, including international, national and local designated sites; and protected species and species and habitat types identified as priorities for biological conservation</p> <p>Local Plan will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</p> <p>Provision of local services according to local need and protection of natural environment including green spaces</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>Protect and enhance the landscape, including the countryside, river valleys and other green spaces</p> <p>Maintain and enhance landscape and townscape character</p> <p>Promote landscape protection, management and planning</p>
<b>Heritage</b>	<p>Protect the historic environment and cultural heritage</p> <p>Recognise importance of archaeological heritage</p> <p>Realise the contribution of the historic environment to the economic, social and cultural life of the nation</p>

Topic	Key Aims
<b>Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</b>	<p>Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2025 (UK Carbon Budget) and by 80% by 2050</p> <p>Plan for and respond to climate changes already underway</p> <p>Local Plan must contain policies on climate change</p> <p>Improve the energy performance of buildings and achieve zero carbon homes by 2016</p> <p>Promote and enable the adaptation of the built and natural environment to the effects of climate change</p> <p>Maintain reliability of energy supplies</p> <p>Ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated</p> <p>Avoiding making decisions that make it more difficult to cope with climate change in the future</p> <p>Promote development of decentralised zero and low carbon energy sources and networks</p>
<b>Pollution</b>	<p>Take account of the effects of development on air quality and vice versa, and meet mandatory standards for air quality</p> <p>Avoid, prevent or reduce concentrations of harmful air pollutants</p> <p>Tackle fine particles as a form of pollution</p>
<b>Waste and Recycling</b>	<p>Promote the waste hierarchy: reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy and only then landfill</p> <p>Prevent or reduce effects on the environment, in particular the pollution of surface water, ground water, soil and air, and on the global environment, as well as any resulting risk to human health, from landfilling of waste</p> <p>Prevention or reduction of waste production and its harmfulness</p> <p>Meet landfill directive targets and national targets for recycling and composting of 50% of household waste by 2020</p> <p>Utilise new technology to help reduce adverse environmental affects</p> <p>Ensure suitable provision is made for the sustainable management of waste</p>

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Topic	Key Aims
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a network of waste management facilities having regard to climate change</li> <li>Ensure that all major new developments undertake sustainable waste management practices</li> <li>Encourage waste management practices which minimise, counter or eliminate contributions to climate change</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve health and well-being, and tackle poverty and health inequalities</li> <li>Increase participation in sport and physical activity</li> <li>Ensure that everyone has good access to facilities, including health, community facilities and open space and sports facilities</li> <li>Improve quality of life</li> <li>Promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity</li> <li>Culture should be at the heart of the region's life</li> <li>Every resident or visitor should be able to get involved with cultural activities</li> <li>Promote activity and reduce social exclusion of older people</li> <li>Develop social networks and promote social cohesion</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide for an adequate, available and continuous supply of land for development to meet the accommodation needs of current and future residents including Gypsy and Travellers</li> <li>Make sure there are enough high quality homes both affordable and market</li> <li>Give communities more power on decisions which affect them</li> <li>Improve the existing housing stock by making them more energy efficient</li> <li>Improve housing quality and design</li> <li>Promote the right mix of housing</li> <li>Tackling affordability of housing, access to decent housing and the appropriateness of housing to people's needs</li> <li>Promote provision of affordable housing in villages for people with local connections</li> </ul>

Topic	Key Aims
<b>Deprivation, Crime and Access to Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to services</li> <li>Improve life chances of children from disadvantaged families and support vulnerable people with the transition into adulthood</li> <li>Tackle poverty and reduce income inequalities</li> <li>Ensure that everyone has access to shopping, health, community, leisure and sports facilities</li> <li>Promote crime prevention and reduction of the fear of crime</li> </ul>
<b>Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote access to work, tackle low pay and improve conditions of work</li> <li>Promote Huntingdonshire's role as a world-class economy and an economic driver for the Greater Peterborough and Greater Cambridgeshire area by developing a diverse, competitive, high added value economy</li> <li>Enhance employment opportunities for all</li> <li>Secure accessible, efficient and competitive retail provision and support town centres</li> <li>Achieve sustainable levels of prosperity and growth</li> <li>Drive and support sustainable patterns of economic growth</li> <li>Potential barriers to investment should be recognised and addressed</li> <li>Increase work opportunities in rural areas</li> <li>Encourage better coordination of the way tourism is managed, developed and promoted</li> <li>Promote business support and skills development</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that everyone has access to education and training</li> <li>Promoting education and training</li> <li>Improve life chances of adults through learning and skills development</li> <li>Improve education (and health) outcomes for vulnerable children and young people</li> </ul>

Topic	Key Aims
<b>Transport Infrastructure and Commuting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support principles of good street design</li> <li>Improve the transport infrastructure;</li> <li>Reduce the need to travel and achieve a switch to more sustainable modes of transport, particularly walking and cycling</li> <li>Create a transport system that is accessible to all</li> <li>Develop integrated transport</li> <li>Make travel safer</li> <li>Maintain and operate efficient transport networks</li> <li>Provide a transport system that supports the economy and growing population of Huntingdonshire</li> <li>Achieving more sustainable transport in rural areas</li> </ul>

A list of the plans and programmes that were reviewed is provided in Appendix 1: 'Plans and Programmes Reviewed'.

## Collecting baseline information

### Key Information

- Huntingdonshire covers an area of approximately 913km<sup>2</sup> (350 square miles) and is largely rural in nature
- There is a strong agricultural history with large proportions of land classified as high grade land (grades 1 to 3)
- There is significant military history with a number of former airfields located across the district, which represent the main areas of previously developed land (PDL). Apart from the former airfields, there are few areas of PDL with redevelopment potential
- Parts of eastern England receive less than 700mm of rain per year which makes them some of the driest areas in the country
- Water consumption is increasing - rates for Anglian Water are about 134.6 litres per day per person in metred households and 164.6 litres per day per person in un-metred households. This is above the national average

- There is over 4250ha of open space in the district, the majority of which is natural green space
- The Ouse Washes, Woodwalton Fen and Portholme meadow are the most important nature conservation sites in the district
- The landscape of the district can be characterised as low lying fens in the north-east, undulating claylands in central and southern Huntingdonshire, higher land to the west, the main river valleys of the Great Ouse and, in the north-west, the Nene
- There are over 60 conservation areas in the district along with some 2,198 listed structures
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita in Huntingdonshire in 2008 were 9.0t, compared with 8.2t for Cambridgeshire
- There are four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Huntingdon, St Neots, Brampton and the A14 Hemingford to Fenstanton area designated due to poor air quality associated with congestion on local roads or proximity to the A14
- In 2011 over 57% of the district's household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting
- Life expectancy in the district is higher than the national average in England with males living 79.7 years compared to the national average of 78.3 and females living 83.7 years compared to 82.3 on average
- Population estimates suggest there are approximately 168,000 residents in the district which will rise by about 14.8% to 192,900 in 2033
- There are four market towns of which St Neots is the largest in population terms although Huntingdon is the administrative centre
- There are over 100 villages, many of which are relatively small
- The population density of the district in 2010 was 185 people per km<sup>2</sup>, which at less than half the national density reflects the rural nature of Huntingdonshire
- It is estimated that currently 16.1% of the population are aged 65+ and that by 2033, 26.3% of Huntingdonshire's population will be aged 65+
- Huntingdonshire's residents are predominantly white, with just 2.85% categorised as non-white in the 2001 Census

- In Huntingdonshire the ratio of lower quartile house price to earnings (a measure of housing affordability) was 6.91 for 2009, almost double the 3.5 ratio defined by government as 'affordable'
- The most deprived areas of Huntingdonshire are concentrated in Huntingdon and St Neots with the Huntingdon North Ward being the most deprived area in the district
- The British Crime Survey 2010/11 shows a 12% decrease in the levels of recorded crime comparator offences from 2008/09 to 2009/10 for Huntingdonshire
- In 2008 nearly 50% of all Huntingdonshire parishes had at least one food store and just over 40% of parishes had a primary school
- Households in Huntingdonshire with access to two or more cars or vans is 14% above the national average
- 150ha of land at Alconbury Airfield has been designated as an Enterprise Zone which will provide incentives for employment development
- The overall employment rate was 73% for April 2009 to March 2010, compared to 70% nationally
- Median weekly earnings of Huntingdonshire residents are more than 5% higher than the national average, but median weekly full time earnings in Huntingdonshire, that is those people employed in the district, are nearly 5% below the national average
- In 2005 there were 6,080 VAT registered businesses in the district, 10.6% more than in 2000
- Almost a quarter of people aged 16–74 in Huntingdonshire have no formal qualifications
- There are excellent strategic communication links with the East of England and England as a whole with the A1(M), A14 and East Coast Mainline Railway running through the district
- The most significant destination for out-commuting is Cambridge. St Ives has the highest figure with 10.4% of commuting from the town going to the city

More detail on the baseline information can be found in 'A 2: Collecting baseline information'.

## Identifying sustainability issues and problems

Key sustainability issues and problems have been identified as:

### Land, Water and Flood Risk

- In recent years the proportion of new housing built on brownfield land has increased but is still low
- Most of Huntingdonshire is good quality agricultural land, mostly classed as grade 2 with only small areas classed as grade 4
- Significant supplies of sand and gravel in the district meet the ongoing need for construction. Requirements for managed release of these minerals is set out in county plans
- Water quality in the River Nene and River Great Ouse needs to be protected recognising their importance to the environment for example the Ouse Washes are protected by European legislation
- The district sits within the driest region in the country and water supply needs to be carefully managed
- There is a significant risk of flooding given large areas of low lying land

### Green Infrastructure and Open Space

- There are relatively low levels of households close to accessible green space areas of 2ha+ but high levels are close to some green space
- The Great Fen has been established to promote the establishment of a large area of fen wildlife habitat
- The Great Ouse Valley and Huntingdonshire Fens and Woods are areas of strategic green infrastructure improvement set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy for Cambridgeshire

### Biodiversity

- There are a number of sites designated for their biodiversity value. These may be SSSI designated nationally, County Wildlife Sites, or European sites such as those protected by Ramsar or SPA
- Targets have been set for maintaining and enhancing the range, size/population, and condition of many vulnerable habitats and species in Biodiversity Action Plans



- It is unlikely that all the land which is of value for biodiversity has been adequately mapped and protected to date
- Huntingdonshire's biodiversity resource is vulnerable to new developments and land management practices which could result in habitat loss and fragmentation

## Landscape

- Huntingdonshire has a diversity of landscapes from the flat, expansive fenlands in the north-east to rolling upland landscapes in the west. Streams flow into the fen drainage system to the north or the Ouse Valley to the south. There are four very different market towns and nearly 100 villages expressing a wide variety of architectural styles
- Huntingdonshire's landscape qualities are vulnerable to insensitive new development and land management practices

## Heritage

- There are over 2200 listed buildings and monuments in Huntingdonshire, and some 250 in the 2011 Buildings at Risk register
- Huntingdonshire's cultural and historic attractions, including important historic landscape areas, attract large numbers of visitors each year and perform an important economic role

## Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

- The County's Climate Change and Environment Strategy sets out the need for local government to act on reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- The quickest and easiest way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from energy use is to use more efficient technologies and buildings, and to change wasteful behaviour
- Significant levels of carbon emissions are from traffic
- There is significant untapped renewable energy potential but there may be environmental effects associated with the establishment of technologies such as wind farms

## Pollution

- The most significant air quality issues arise from traffic and congestion. There are air quality management areas identified in St Neots, Huntingdon and along the A14 as a result of traffic
- Air pollution can also be caused by emissions from industry, agriculture and households
- Light and noise pollution arising from human activity can reduce tranquillity

## Waste and Recycling

- Across the county large amounts of waste are sent to landfills and recycling centres. Recycling can help to reduce the environmental effects of landfills and prolong their lifespans
- Construction waste is a more significant contributor to waste here than in slower growing districts

## Health and Wellbeing

- While Huntingdonshire's population is generally healthy and wealthy, life expectancy is not as good as neighbouring South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire
- Some 60% of the district's population live outside the market towns and can suffer from isolation

## Population and Housing

- Huntingdonshire's population has increased significantly over the last 30 years and is situated within a housing market area which is growing at a rate above the national average. Over the last 10 years, Huntingdonshire's population has increased at about half the average rate of Cambridgeshire authorities (5% rather than 10%)
- Provision of an appropriate range and choice of housing for the growing population is difficult given current market conditions. Planning policies and development management are required to accommodate the population in a sustainable way (providing services and infrastructure)

## Deprivation, Crime and Access to services

- There are a small number of areas in Huntingdon and St Neots which rank highly on indices of deprivation
- Proximity and availability of space at key services such as GPs, schools, libraries, and leisure centres helps to improve quality of life. According to the Place Survey 2008 facilities and services that are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live for Cambridgeshire residents are public transport, affordable decent housing, shopping facilities and low level of crime

### **Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism**

- There seems to be sufficient land and buildings for employment in total but there are shortages of certain types in some locations
- There have been some successes in the promotion of specific business sectors over the last 30 years
- High streets suffer from competition from out of town retailing, the internet and larger centres outside of the district
- The designation of the enterprise zone at Alconbury airfield

### **Education**

- Huntingdonshire's educational achievement in 2009 at GCSE level was in line with the county average and slightly better than the national average. However it was not as good as neighbouring South Cambridgeshire
- There are a diverse range of training opportunities available within the district and county but there is a growing need for more schools and other educational establishments

### **Transport Infrastructure and Commuting**

- The strategic road network has issues with capacity, especially the A14
- The rail network also has issues with capacity and railway stations are located only at Huntingdon and St Neots

- Accessibility in St Ives has improved as a result of the opening of the Guided Busway in 2011
- Although there is a high proportion of the population finding local work particularly in Huntingdon and St Neots, commuting out of the district is significant particularly for better paid work

Ways in which the sustainability appraisal framework could reflect these issues was also looked at to help with developing the sustainability appraisal framework. More information on the sustainability issues can be found in 'A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems'.

## **Developing the sustainability appraisal framework**

In drawing up the sustainability appraisal framework objectives were considered to be:

### **Land, Water and Flood Risk**

1. Minimise development on greenfield land, maximise development on previously developed land or with the lowest agricultural value
2. Protect water resources (both quality and quantity)
3. Manage and minimise all forms of flood risk (taking into account climate change)

### **Green Infrastructure and Open Space**

4. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open and natural green space and promote the strategic green infrastructure network and links to it

### **Biodiversity**

5. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and habitats

## **Landscape**

6. Protect, maintain and enhance landscape and townscape character and the sense of place of our settlements

## **Heritage**

7. Protect, maintain and enhance heritage assets, whether they are designated and not

## **Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy**

8. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and improve energy efficiency

## **Pollution**

9. Improve air quality
10. Avoid unnecessary light, noise and visual pollution

## **Waste and Recycling**

11. Reduce waste production and increase reuse, recycling and composting

## **Health and Well-being**

12. Promote built environments that encourage and support physical activity, including extending and improving access to facilities
13. Promote accessibility of cultural activities

## **Population and Housing**

14. Ensure all groups in society have access to decent, appropriate and affordable accommodation

## **Deprivation, Crime and Access to Services**

15. Redress inequalities related to gender, age, disability, race, faith, sexuality, location and income

16. Reduce and prevent crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime
17. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities including promotion of multi-purpose design and efficient use of these resources

## **Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism**

18. Improve access to satisfying work, appropriate to skills, potential and place of residence
19. Positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth by improving the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and viability of the local economy

## **Education**

20. Ensure that the educational needs of the growing population are served locally while improving uptake of learning and training opportunities

## **Transport Infrastructure and Commuting**

21. Reduce the need to travel and promote necessary infrastructure improvements and sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling, and public transport)

A series of decision aiding questions have been drawn up for each objective. The decision aiding questions have been specifically worded so that the appraisal can be applied to the three different types of policy that will be part of the Local Plan. This means that there is at least one decision aiding question for strategic, site specific and development management policies for each objective. The full sustainability appraisal framework, including all the decision aiding questions, can be found in 'A 4: Developing the SA framework'.

## Consulting on the scope of the sustainability appraisal

The council is required to consult on the scope of the SA with the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage, often referred to as the SA Bodies and did so between 24 February 2012 and 30 March 2012. So that the scoping report is as robust as possible and to promote participation in production of the Local Plan the consultation was open for anyone to make comments.

The comments received have been used to amend this scoping report (feeding back into tasks A 1 to A 4). Stage A will be completed with the publication of this final scoping report.

More information can be found in 'A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA'. A summary of the comments received is presented in Appendix 2: 'Summary of Consultation and Amendments'. The full comments can be viewed via the council's [consultation portal](#).

## Next steps

The methodology contained in this scoping report will be used to complete the sustainability appraisal process as part of the production of the Local Plan:

Stages 'B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects' and 'C: Preparing the sustainability appraisal report' will be produced as part of drawing up the draft Local Plan. Stage 'D: Consulting on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal Report' will be started with consultation on the draft Local Plan and will continue through the publication of the Proposed Submission Local Plan and through the examination process. Stage 'E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the plan on the environment' will start with preparation of the Proposed Submission Local Plan and continue through the examination process and will then continue after the adoption of the Local Plan with the Annual Monitoring Report.

More information can be found in 4 'Next Steps'.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 When drawing up new planning documents the effects they will have on the environment and people's quality of life, both now and in the future are some of the most important things to consider. To be sure that the plan does not cause environmental, social or economic problems at the heart of the plan production process there is a system of appraisal known as Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- 1.2 European legal requirements for new planning documents require an assessment of the plan's impact on the environment to be undertaken. This process is known as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SA and SEA are carried out together as part of the preparation of planning documents and are collectively known as the SA Process.
- 1.3 The first stage of producing the plan is a scoping stage. This is necessary to propose and agree the way that the plan is to be drawn up including the methodology for the SA Process and to collect together the necessary information to produce the plan.
- 1.4 A thorough understanding of the context of existing plans and policies and of the current baseline situation is needed in order to be able to predict the effects the plan may have and to identify key issues that will need to be addressed. This draft scoping report for the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 sets out how we intend to draw up the plan, focusing on the SA appraisal stages involved as well as the baseline information and plan context.

### The Local Plan

- 1.5 The Local Plan will set out the planning policy for Huntingdonshire. It will include the strategy for spatial development of Huntingdonshire up to 2036; the council's policies for managing development in the district; and sites for achieving the development requirements.

- 1.6 In 2011 a draft Scoping Report was prepared for the Planning Proposals DPD (Planning Proposals DPD: Scoping Report 2011<sup>(1)</sup>) and consulted upon. This scoping report uses that draft document as a base but reviews all stages completed for it and expands the scope to cover the remit of the Local Plan.
- 1.7 The purpose of the Local Plan is to provide a spatial strategy for development in Huntingdonshire and to provide a responsive and flexible supply of land for housing and other uses. It is both strategic and site specific and so the SA process will tackle these two aspects so that each is assessed appropriately.
- 1.8 It is required to be in general conformity with national planning policy, principally the National Planning Policy Framework. The Local Plan will act as a sound basis for local people to build upon with Neighbourhood Plans if they wish to do so<sup>(2)</sup>.
- 1.9 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update for Market Housing (SHLAA 2010) and the draft Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA 2011) form the main basis for sites that will be considered for allocation in the Local Plan. Neither the SHLAA or ELAA are policy documents but the SHLAA is a requirement under current government guidance in order to identify potential land for residential development.
- 1.10 An Environmental Capacity study is currently being prepared. The study will consider the capacity of the spatial planning areas and settlements in the district in strategic environmental terms looking at landscape impact, land classification and other constraints at a settlement scale. It will also include sustainability appraisal of sites from the SHLAA and ELAA.

### The Duty to Cooperate

- 1.11 As part of changes recently introduced by government the council now has a duty to cooperate with a range of public bodies. The duty requires the council to work with other public bodies where issues extend beyond

1 Available from the council's [website](#)

2 See the Localism Act, published November 2011

# 1 Introduction

the district, sometimes referred to as 'larger than local'. The council is actively working with the other planning authorities in Cambridgeshire through the recently established Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Planning Unit. The unit is seeking to coordinate efforts to address issues that affect more than one of the planning authorities. The council is and will continue to work as necessary with other public bodies that the duty extends to, including other neighbouring councils in Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire.

- 1.12** The duty to cooperate is identified at various points throughout this scoping report, identifying where issues extend beyond the district and ways in which these issues could be tackled in work with other public bodies.

## The Role of Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.13** The requirement to carry out SA derives from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The requirement to produce a SEA comes from the European SEA Directive<sup>(3)</sup>. This scoping report incorporates both the requirements of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Therefore, where reference is made to "SA process" within this document it refers to the combined process of SA and SEA.
- 1.14** The methodology for the SA process takes into account the Government's Plan Making Manual advice on Sustainability Appraisals<sup>(4)</sup> and incorporates requirements set out in Government guidance on SEA<sup>(5)</sup>.

## Sustainable Development

- 1.15** The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Government's view of what constitutes sustainable development is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF identifies the United Nations definition<sup>(6)</sup>

of sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The NPPF also identifies the five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development set out in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy - Securing the Future: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

## The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 1.16** At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

### For plan-making this means that:

- Local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
  - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

3 European Directive 2001/42/EC

4 See <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageId=152450>

5 A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005)

6 Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly

## How the SA will influence the Local Plan

**1.17** It has always been the council's view that SA is an integral part of the plan production process and is part and parcel of good planning; this is necessary to ensure that development occurring within the district takes the most sustainable form possible in environmental, social and economic terms. Although the council has achieved, to some degree, the successful integration of SA with plan production in the past, it is clear that there will, almost inevitably, be room for improvement in integration. As a result the council is determined to continue with the 'mainstream' approach to SA as part of the production of the Local Plan so that the SA and plan production will not be considered as separate entities.

## Other Appraisals and Assessments

**1.18** There are a range of appraisals and assessments associated with the production of the Local Plan. Where it is considered appropriate these other appraisals and assessments will be combined with the sustainability appraisal or completed at the same time.

**1.19** Probably the most important other assessment will be the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), sometimes known as Appropriate Assessment. The HRA looks at the impact that the Local Plan is likely to have on European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites). HRA is a two stage process that starts with a screening stage. If significant impacts on European sites cannot be ruled out by the screening stage a more detailed Appropriate Assessment will be required. The Appropriate Assessment will look at ways that significant effects can be avoided or mitigated against. HRA is required to be a separate process to sustainability appraisal.

# 2 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

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## 2 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

**2.1** The purpose of this stage is to formulate a methodology for SA and to complete the necessary steps to enable the council to draw up the Local Plan and undertake the SA. The council proposes a methodology for the SA process that is based on the tasks and stages set out in the government's guidance on SEA<sup>(7)</sup>. The stages and tasks covered by this Scoping Report are set out below (Stage A).

**Table 1 Stage A - Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope**

Tasks (Relevant sections of the SEA directive)
<p><b>'A 1: Identifying relevant plans and programmes' (Annex I, (a) and (e))</b> The purpose of this task is to establish how the plan is affected by outside factors, to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed, and to help identify environmental protection objectives.</p>
<p><b>'A 2: Collecting baseline information' (Annex I, (b) and (c))</b> The purpose of this task is to provide an evidence base for environmental impacts, prediction of what will happen without the plan as well as what effects it could have, monitoring and to help in the development of SA objectives.</p>
<p><b>'A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems' (Annex I, (a) and Annex II, (1))</b> The purpose of this task is to help focus the SA and streamline the subsequent stages, including baseline information analysis, setting the SA objectives, prediction of effects and monitoring.</p>
<p><b>'A 4: Developing the SA framework' (Enables completion of Annex I, (f))</b></p>

Tasks (Relevant sections of the SEA directive)
<p>The purpose of this task is to provide a means by which the environmental performance of the plan or programme and alternatives can be assessed.</p>
<p><b>'A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA' (Article 5(4))</b> The purpose of this task is to ensure that the SA covers the likely significant environmental effects of the plan and to ensure that the SA process is and will be robust and suitably comprehensive in order to support production of the plan.</p>

**2.2** Tasks A 1 to A 4 are not intended to be completed in a purely linear process as they will inform each other. The comments made during task A 5 have been used to amend this scoping report (feeding back into tasks A 1 to A 4) and complete stage A.

### Stages B to E in the SA/ SEA Process

**2.3** Stages B to E in the SA/SEA process, set out below, will be carried out as part of the plan production process. Stage E will lead to indicators that will be reported on in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) as part of the monitoring of the effectiveness of the Local Plan. More information on when stages B to E will be carried out can be found in 4 'Next Steps'.

**Table 2 Stages B to E in the SA/ SEA process**

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects
<p><b>B 1: Testing the plan objectives against the SA framework (Annex I, (f))</b> The purpose of this task is to identify potential synergies or inconsistencies between the objectives of the plan and the SA objectives.</p>
<p><b>B 2: Developing plan options (Article 5(1) and Annex I, (h))<sup>(1)</sup></b> The purpose of this task is to develop and refine options.</p>

7 A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (DCLG, 2005)



### **B 3: Predicting the effects of the plan and alternatives (Annex I, (f))<sup>(1)</sup>**

The purpose of this task is to predict the significant environmental effects of the plan and alternatives.

### **B 4: Evaluating the effects of the plan and alternatives (Annex I, (f))<sup>(1)</sup>**

The purpose of this task is to evaluate the predicted effects of the plan and alternatives in order to assist in the refinement of the plan.

### **B 5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects (Annex I, (g))<sup>(1)</sup>**

The purpose of this task is to ensure that adverse effects are identified and potential mitigation measures are considered.

### **B 6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan (Annex I, (i))**

The purpose of this task is to detail the means by which the environmental performance of the plan can be assessed.

## **Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report**

### **C 1: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report (Article 5(1) and Annex I, (f) to (j))**

The purpose of this task is to present the predicted effects of the plan, including alternatives, in a form suitable for public consultation and use by decision makers.

## **Stage D: Consulting on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal Report**

### **D 1: Public participation on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal report (Article 6(1) and 6(2))**

The purpose of this task is to give the public and Consultation Bodies an opportunity to express their opinions on the findings of the Environmental Report and to use it as a reference point in commenting on the plan. To gather more information through the opinions and concerns of the public.

### **D 2: Appraising significant changes (Annex I, (f))**

The purpose of this task is to ensure that the environmental implications of any significant changes to the draft plan are assessed and taken into account.

### **D 3: Making decisions and providing information (Article 8 and 9)**

The purpose of this task is to provide information on how the Sustainability Appraisal Report and consultees' opinions were taken into account in deciding the final format of the plan to be adopted.

## **Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the plan on the environment (Article 10)<sup>(2)</sup>**

### **E 1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring**

The purpose of this task is to track the environmental effects of the plan to show whether they are as predicted; to help identify any adverse effects.

### **E 2: Responding to adverse effects<sup>(2)</sup>**

The purpose of this task is to prepare for appropriate responses where adverse effects are identified.

1. Tasks B 2, B 3, B 4 and B 5 are not intended to be completed in a purely linear process as they will inform each other
  2. Stage E will help considerations of whether or not to review the plan and will feed in to future sustainability appraisal processes for future plans
- 2.4** Fulfilling the requirements of the SEA Directive is identified in brackets after the stage or task title.

# 3 The Scoping Process

## 3 The Scoping Process

**3.1** This chapter sets out the work completed for tasks A 1 to A 4 of the scoping process as outlined in 2 'Sustainability Appraisal Methodology'.

### A 1: Identifying relevant plans and programmes

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C	Stage D	Stage E
<b>A 1: Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives</b>				
A 2: Collecting baseline information				
A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems				
A 4: Developing the SA framework				
A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA				

**3.2** The purpose of this task is to establish how the plan is affected by outside factors, to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed, and to help identify environmental protection objectives.

**3.3** For the production of the Local Plan to be effective a wide range of plans and programmes need to be taken into account. Such plans and programmes contain objectives and specific policy requirements that need to be addressed. Identifying and reviewing these documents is an important element of the SA process, as it can help to shape the objectives against which emerging policies should be appraised, as well as pointing to particular issues and problems that should be tackled.

**3.4** This review uses the previously produced draft scoping report for the Planning Proposals DPD as a base but expanded to look at policies, plans, programmes and objectives that could affect the Local Plan. The following list was compiled through a review of best practice work of other local authorities, advice from council officers, and previous consultation (see Summary of Previous Consultation) on that draft scoping report. The policy context for the Local Plan is significantly different to that of the Planning Proposals DPD. There are also significant changes happening at a national level with the replacement of planning policy guidance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the abolition of regional strategies. The policy context has therefore been comprehensively reviewed to take these and other changes into account, and to remove from the list those policies that are outdated or less central to the development of the Local Plan.

**3.5** The review of the relevant plans and programmes has considered only those plans and programmes most relevant to the production of the Local Plan. Where plans and programmes are identified at an international, national or county/regional level but their aims and objectives have been interpreted at a more local level in another plan or programme they have been identified but only the local plan or programme has been considered in detail. The documents reviewed are listed in Appendix 1: 'Plans and Programmes Reviewed'. The appendix sets out details of the potential implications of those plans and programmes for the appraisal process and the possible responses that the Local Plan could incorporate.

## Key Messages from the review of relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives

Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>General/ Overarching</b>	<p>Development plans must promote sustainable development</p> <p>Proposals identified in the Local Plan may need to undergo Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) at later stages of the planning process</p> <p>SA framework should include objectives relating to all three areas of sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability is an underlying principle of the planning system</p>	<p>Localism Act 2011</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework</p> <p>The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011</p> <p>East of England Plan &gt; 2031</p> <p>Scenarios for housing and economic growth – Cambridgeshire sub-area profile</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Adopted Core Strategy 2009</p> <p>Planning Act 2008</p> <p>Growing Success - Huntingdonshire Council Corporate Plan (HDC, 2008)</p> <p>Growing Our Communities: Huntingdonshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2028</p> <p>Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (HM Government, 2007)</p> <p>Securing the Future: Sustainable Development Strategy for the UK (HM Government, 2005)</p> <p>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (HM Government, 2004)</p> <p>The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004 No.1633)</p> <p>Sustainable Communities Plan: Building for the Future (ODPM 2003)</p> <p>Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (EERA 2003)</p>

# 3 The Scoping Process

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Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Land, Water &amp; Flood Risk</b>	<p>Conserve and, where possible, enhance the countryside and its resources, including the best and most versatile agricultural land</p> <p>Promote urban regeneration and the re-use of previously developed land</p> <p>Promote demand management and efficient use of water resources</p> <p>Minimise adverse impacts on water quality, the ecology of rivers, and ground water</p> <p>Safeguard mineral resources from sterilisation and encourage their efficient and appropriate use</p> <p>Minimise the risk to people and property from flooding</p> <p>Reduce water pollution by nitrates</p> <p>Prevent or reduce effects on the environment, in particular the pollution of surface water, ground water, soil and air, and on the global environment, as well as any resulting risk to human health</p> <p>Make provision in connection with land drainage and flood defence and to make provision with regard to contaminated land so far as it relates to the pollution of controlled waters</p> <p>Manage the risks from flooding and coastal erosion by employing an integrated portfolio of approaches which reflect both national and local priorities</p> <p>Address implications of scarce water resources</p> <p>Protect conservation sites dependent on water</p> <p>Reduce treatment and energy costs for users</p> <p>Improve understanding of how the water environment and ecology interact</p> <p>Promote the co-location of jobs and homes to help address barriers to investment, facilitating flexible working practices, facilitating the use of sustainable transport modes and minimising journey lengths</p>	<p>EC Water Framework Directive (2000/86/EEC)</p> <p>EC Directive 1991/271/EEC on Urban Waste Water Treatment (as amended)</p> <p>European Directive Nitrates (91/676/EEC)</p> <p>The Nitrate Pollution Prevention (Amendment) Regulations 2009</p> <p>Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC</p> <p>Water Act 2003</p> <p>Flood and Water Management Act 2010</p> <p>Flood Risk Regulations 2009</p> <p>Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006</p> <p>Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)</p> <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> <p>Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England</p> <p>Making Space for Water (DEFRA 2004)</p> <p>Sustainable Construction in Cambridgeshire - A Good Practice Guide (2006)</p> <p>Surface Water Management Plan for Cambridgeshire (2011)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (HDC 2008)</p> <p>The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (2002)</p> <p>The Cambridgeshire Development Study Final Report (2009)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Update (2009)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste LDF</p>

Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Green Infrastructure and Open Space</b>	<p>Ensure that everyone has access to open and green space</p> <p>Provide adequate, attractive, multi-use open space to support improvements in health and well-being</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of green infrastructure</p> <p>Improving quality and quantity of open space</p> <p>Improving accessibility to open space</p>	<p>The Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000</p> <p>Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)</p> <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> <p>Woodland for Life: The Regional Woodland Strategy for the East of England</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Strategic Open Space Study and User Survey (2004)</p> <p>The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)</p> <p>Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (PMP for HDC 2006)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (HDC 2008)</p> <p>Open Space Strategy for Huntingdonshire 2010-2015</p> <p>Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (2008)</p>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<p>Protect and enhance biodiversity, natural habitats and wild fauna and flora, including international, national and local designated sites; and protected species and species and habitat types identified as priorities for biological conservation</p> <p>Local Plan will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</p> <p>Provision of local services according to local need and protection of natural environment including green spaces</p>	<p>EC Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive)</p> <p>EC Directive 1979/409/EEC (The Birds Directive)</p> <p>Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (The Ramsar Convention)(as amended)</p> <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> <p>Working with the Grain of Nature: A Biodiversity Strategy for England (2002)</p> <p>The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994 and updates)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plans (various dates)</p> <p>EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds: Directive 2009/147/EC</p> <p>Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006</p> <p>Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)</p> <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> <p>Investing in the East of England's Natural Assets: state, value and vision (2009)</p> <p>Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Woodland for Life: The Regional Woodland Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (2008)</p> <p>Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy (2009)</p>

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Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>Protect and enhance the landscape, including the countryside, river valleys and other green spaces</p> <p>Maintain and enhance landscape and townscape character</p> <p>Promote landscape protection, management and planning</p> <p>Development that is well design and which people will want to live and work in</p>	<p>European Landscape Convention 2004</p> <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> <p>Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (The Ramsar Convention 1971)</p> <p>European Landscape Convention 2006</p> <p>Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006</p> <p>Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)</p> <p>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</p> <p>Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Woodland for Life: The Regional Woodland Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (2008)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)</p> <p>The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth (2008)</p>
<b>Heritage</b>	<p>Protect the historic environment and cultural heritage</p> <p>Recognise importance of archaeological heritage</p> <p>Realise the contribution of the historic environment to the economic, social and cultural life of the nation</p>	<p>European Convention on the protection of Archaeological Heritage 1992 (Valetta Convention)</p> <p>The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979</p> <p>Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Statement on the Historic Environment of England 2010</p>

Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</b>	<p>Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2025 (UK Carbon Budget) and by 80% by 2050</p> <p>Plan for and respond to climate changes</p> <p>Local Plan must contain policies on climate change</p> <p>Improve the energy performance of buildings and achieve zero carbon homes by 2016</p> <p>Promote and enable the adaptation of the built and natural environment to the effects of climate change</p> <p>Maintain reliability of energy supplies</p> <p>Ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated</p> <p>Avoiding making decisions that make it more difficult to cope with climate change in the future</p> <p>Promote development of decentralised zero and low carbon energy sources and networks</p>	<p>Kyoto Protocol</p> <p>European Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings 2002/91/EC</p> <p>Climate Change Act 2008</p> <p>Planning Act 2008</p> <p>Climate Change Adaptation By Design (2007)</p> <p>Allowable Solutions for Tomorrows New Homes (2011)</p> <p>Carbon Compliance: Finding and Recommendations (2011)</p> <p>UK Climate Change Programme (2006)</p> <p>Building a Greener Future: Towards Zero Carbon Development (2008)</p> <p>Code for Sustainable Homes (2008)</p> <p>UKCP09 Climate Projections for the East of England (2009)</p> <p>Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>A Shared Vision The Regional Economic Strategy for the East of England (2008)</p> <p>Living with Climate Change in the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Placing Renewables in the East of England (2008)</p> <p>East of England Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Capacity Study (2011)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Renewable Infrastructure Framework (CRIF)</p> <p>Climate Change and Environment Strategy: Meeting the Challenges in Cambridgeshire (2008)</p> <p>Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub-Region (2004)</p> <p>Sustainable Construction in Cambridgeshire - A Good Practice Guide (2006)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (2008)</p>
<b>Pollution</b>	<p>Take account of the effects of development on air quality and vice versa, and meet mandatory standards for air quality</p> <p>Avoid, prevent or reduce concentrations of harmful air pollutants</p> <p>Tackle fine particles as a form of pollution</p>	<p>European Air Quality Framework Directive (2008/50/EC)</p> <p>The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010</p> <p>The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland and Wales 2007</p> <p>Joint Air Quality Action Plan for the Cambridgeshire Growth Area (2009)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (2008)</p>

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Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Waste and Recycling</b>	<p>Promote the waste hierarchy: reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy and only after that send waste to landfill</p> <p>Prevent or reduce effects on the environment, in particular the pollution of surface water, ground water, soil and air, and on the global environment, as well as any resulting risk to human health, from landfilling of waste</p> <p>Prevention or reduction of waste production and its harmfulness</p> <p>Meet landfill directive targets and national targets for recycling and composting of 50% of household waste by 2020</p> <p>Utilise new technology to help reduce adverse environmental effects</p> <p>Ensure suitable provision is made for the sustainable management of waste</p> <p>Develop a network of waste management facilities having regard to climate change</p> <p>Ensure that all major new developments undertake sustainable waste management practices</p> <p>Encourage waste management practices which minimise, counter or eliminate contributions to climate change</p>	<p>EC Framework Directive for Waste 1975/442/EEC (as amended)</p> <p>EC Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC</p> <p>European Waste Framework Directive (2006/12/EC)</p> <p>Household Waste Recycling Act 2003</p> <p>Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006</p> <p>Waste Strategy for England and Wales 2007</p> <p>Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (2003)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents, Core Strategy and Site Specific Proposals (various dates)</p> <p>Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (2008)</p>
<b>Health and Well-being</b>	<p>Improve health and well-being, and tackle poverty and health inequalities</p> <p>Increase participation in sport and physical activity</p> <p>Ensure that everyone has good access to facilities, including health, community facilities and open space and sports facilities</p> <p>Improve quality of life</p> <p>Promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity</p> <p>Every resident or visitor should be able to get involved with cultural activities</p> <p>Promote activity and reduce social exclusion of older people</p> <p>Develop social networks and promote social cohesion</p> <p>Support the provision of community facilities including meeting places, village halls etc</p>	<p>Equalities Act 2010</p> <p>Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (2008)</p> <p>Promoting and creating built or natural environments that encourage and support physical activity (2008)</p> <p>A Better Life: The role of Culture in the Sustainable Development of the East of England (2006)</p> <p>Regional Social Strategy 2nd Edition (2007)</p> <p>Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (2006)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Standards Report (2008)</p> <p>Local Investment Framework (2009)</p> <p>Plugging Health into Planning: evidence and practice (2011)</p>



Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Population and Housing</b>	<p>Provide for an adequate, available and continuous supply of land for development to meet the accommodation needs of current and future residents including Gypsies and Travellers</p> <p>Make sure there are enough high quality homes both affordable and market</p> <p>Give communities more power on decisions which affect them</p> <p>Improve the existing housing stock by making them more energy efficient</p> <p>Improve housing quality and design</p> <p>Promote the right mix of housing</p> <p>Tackling affordability of housing, access to decent housing and the appropriateness of housing to people's needs</p> <p>Promote provision of affordable housing in villages for people with local connections</p>	<p>Demographic Change and the Environment, The 29th Report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (2011)</p> <p>Evaluating requirements for market and affordable housing; Housing Affordability: a fuller picture; Housing requirements and the impact of recent economic and demographic change (National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit, various dates)</p> <p>Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (2005)</p> <p>Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity (2005)</p> <p>Validation of Growth Scenarios for the Review of the RSS for the East of England Cambridgeshire - technical study &amp; interim findings (2008)</p> <p>Regional Scale Settlement Strategy (2009)</p> <p>The Cambridgeshire Development Study Final Report (2009)</p> <p>Cambridge Sub Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment</p> <p>Rural Cambridgeshire Ensuring a Vibrant Future A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015 (2010)</p> <p>HDC Housing Strategy 2006-2011 (2006)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update Part A Market Housing &amp; Part B Rural Exceptions Housing (2010 and 2011)</p> <p>Living Working Countryside: The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing (2008)</p>
<b>Deprivation, Crime and Access to Services</b>	<p>Improve access to services</p> <p>Improve life chances of children from disadvantaged families and support vulnerable people with the transition into adulthood</p> <p>Tackle poverty and reduce income inequalities</p> <p>Ensure that everyone has access to shopping, health, community, leisure and sports facilities</p> <p>Promote crime prevention and reduction of the fear of crime</p>	<p>Freedom of Information Act 2000</p> <p>Human Rights Act 1998</p> <p>Safer Places, the Planning System and Crime Prevention (2004)</p> <p>Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity (2005)</p> <p>A Better Life: The role of Culture in the Sustainable Development of the East of England (2006)</p> <p>Regional Social Strategy 2nd Edition (2007)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2016 (LTP3)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire's Vision 2007-2021 County Wide Sustainable Community Strategy</p> <p>Rural Cambridgeshire Ensuring a Vibrant Future (2010)</p> <p>A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015</p> <p>Local Investment Framework (2009)</p>

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Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report - Updated for Stage 3

Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism</b>	<p>Promote access to work, tackle low pay and improve conditions of work</p> <p>Promote Huntingdonshire's role as an economic driver for the Greater Peterborough and Greater Cambridgeshire area by developing a diverse, competitive, high added value economy</p> <p>Enhance employment opportunities for all</p> <p>Secure accessible, efficient and competitive retail provision and support town centres</p> <p>Drive and support sustainable patterns of economic growth</p> <p>Potential barriers to investment should be recognised and addressed</p> <p>Increase work opportunities in rural areas</p> <p>Encourage better coordination of the way tourism is managed, developed and promoted</p> <p>Promote business support and skills development</p>	<p>The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (2002)</p> <p>Cambridge Sub-region Long Term Delivery Plan (2007)</p> <p>Validation of Growth Scenarios for the Review of the RSS for the East of England Cambridgeshire - technical study &amp; interim findings (2008)</p> <p>East of England Strategic Employment Sites Study(2009)</p> <p>East of England Forecasting Model: six monthly reports, latest from autumn 2010</p> <p>A Shared Vision The Regional Economic Strategy for the East of England (2008)</p> <p>The Cambridgeshire Development Study Final Report (2009)</p> <p>Cambridge Cluster at 50 - The Cambridgeshire Economy: retrospect and prospect (2011)</p> <p>Economic Impact of Tourism - Huntingdonshire (2007)</p> <p>Response to Regional Scale Settlement Study (2009)</p> <p>Rural Cambridgeshire: Ensuring a Vibrant Future - A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015</p> <p>Greater Cambridge Sub Regional Economic Strategy 2009 - 2012</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Local Economic Assessment (2011)</p> <p>Greater Cambridge and Peterborough Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2007)</p> <p>Draft Employment Land Availability Assessment</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Local Economy Strategy 2008-2015</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Retail Studies/ Development Advice (various dates)</p>
<b>Education</b>	<p>Ensure that everyone has access to education and training</p> <p>Promote education and training</p> <p>Improve life chances of adults through learning and skills development</p> <p>Improve education (and health) outcomes for vulnerable children and young people</p>	<p>Human Rights Act 1998</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Children's Trust Plan for 2011-2014</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Education Organisation Plan (forthcoming)</p> <p>Sustainable School Travel Strategy (2007)</p>

Topic	Key Aims	Key documents <sup>(1)</sup>
<b>Transport Infrastructure and Commuting</b>	Support principles of good street design Improve the transport infrastructure Reduce the need to travel and achieve a switch to more sustainable modes of transport, particularly walking and cycling Create a transport system that is accessible to all Develop integrated transport Make travel safer Maintain and operate efficient transport networks Provide a transport system that supports the economy and growing population of Huntingdonshire Achieving more sustainable transport in rural areas	Towards a Sustainable Transport System (2007) Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World (2007) Manual for Streets (2007) Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 A428 Upgrade Caxton Common - A1/Black Cat Roundabout Economic Impact Report (2008) Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (2003) Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2016 (LTP3) Rural Cambridgeshire: Ensuring a Vibrant Future - A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015 Local Investment Framework (2009)

1. For full titles and summaries of aims and objectives please see Plans and Programmes Reviewed

### Continual Review

**3.6** The council recognises that relevant plans and programmes can emerge throughout the plan production process. It is particularly true at the current time with recent and proposed changes to the planning process. With these points in mind the council will keep a 'watching brief' on plans and programmes that emerge during the production of the Local Plan and will add to, or replace the plans and programmes reviewed to ensure that they are relevant. Updates will be identified at convenient points in the plan production process.

# 3 The Scoping Process

## A 2: Collecting baseline information

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C	Stage D	Stage E
A 1: Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives				
<b>A 2: Collecting baseline information</b>				
A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems				
A 4: Developing the SA framework				
A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA				

**3.7** The purpose of this task is to provide an evidence base for environmental impacts, prediction of what will happen without the plan as well as what effects it could have, monitoring and to help in the development of SA objectives.

**3.8** Baseline information provides the starting point for predicting and monitoring effects of plans as well as what is likely to happen without the plan and helps to identify problems and potential solutions for dealing with them. Sufficient information about the current and likely states of the plan area is required to allow the plan's effect to be accurately predicted. Collection of baseline data also enables the identification of key sustainability issues affecting the district which are useful in developing SA objectives. The following section sets out baseline information which corresponds with the SEA topics identified in the SEA guidance<sup>(8)</sup> and the environmental, social and economic issues on which the SA Objectives are based.

### Key Information

- Huntingdonshire covers an area of approximately 913km<sup>2</sup> (350 square miles) and is largely rural in nature
- There is a strong agricultural history with large proportions of land classified as high grade land (grades 1 to 3)

- There is significant military history with a number of former airfields located across the district, which represent the main areas of previously developed land (PDL). Apart from the former airfields, there are few areas of PDL with redevelopment potential
- Parts of eastern England receive less than 700mm of rain per year which makes them some of the driest areas in the country
- Water consumption is increasing - rates for Anglian Water are about 134.6 litres per day per person in metered households and 164.6 litres per day per person in un-metered households. This is above the national average
- There is over 4250ha of open space in the district, the majority of which is natural green space
- The Ouse Washes, Woodwalton Fen and Portholme meadow are the most important nature conservation sites in the district
- The landscape of the district can be characterised as low lying fens in the north-east, undulating claylands in central and southern Huntingdonshire, higher land to the west, the main river valleys of the Great Ouse and, in the north-west, the Nene
- There are over 60 conservation areas in the district along with some 2,198 listed structures
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita in Huntingdonshire in 2008 were 9.0t, compared with 8.2t for Cambridgeshire
- There are four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Huntingdon, St Neots, Brampton and the A14 Hemingford to Fenstanton area designated due to poor air quality associated with congestion on local roads or proximity to the A14
- In 2011 over 57% of the district's household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting
- Life expectancy in the district is higher than the national average in England with males living 79.7 years compared to the national average of 78.3 and females living 83.7 years compared to 82.3 on average

- Population estimates<sup>(9)</sup> suggest there are approximately 168,000 residents in the district which will rise by about 14.8% to 192,900 in 2033
- There are four market towns of which St Neots is the largest in population terms although Huntingdon is the administrative centre
- There are over 100 villages, many of which are small
- The population density of the district in 2010 was 185 people per km<sup>2</sup>, which is less than half the national density and reflects the rural nature of Huntingdonshire
- It is estimated<sup>(10)</sup> that currently 16.1% of the population are aged 65+ and that by 2033, 26.3% of Huntingdonshire's population will be aged 65+
- Huntingdonshire's residents are predominantly white, with just 2.85% categorised as non-white in the 2001 Census
- In Huntingdonshire the ratio of lower quartile house price to earnings (a measure of housing affordability) was 6.91 for 2009, almost double the 3.5 ratio defined by government as 'affordable'
- The most deprived areas of Huntingdonshire are concentrated in Huntingdon and St Neots with the Huntingdon North Ward being the most deprived area in the district
- The British Crime Survey 2010/11 shows a 12% decrease in the levels of recorded crime compared to 2008/09 for Huntingdonshire
- In 2008 nearly 50% of all Huntingdonshire parishes had at least one food store and just over 40% of parishes had a primary school
- Households in Huntingdonshire with access to two or more cars or vans is 14% above the national average
- 150ha of land at Alconbury Airfield has been designated as an Enterprise Zone which will provide incentives for employment development
- The overall employment rate was 73% for April 2009 to March 2010, compared to 70% nationally

- Median weekly earnings of Huntingdonshire residents are more than 5% higher than the national average, but median weekly full time earnings in Huntingdonshire, that is those people employed in the district, are nearly 5% below the national average
- In 2005 there were 6,080 VAT registered businesses in the district, 10.6% more than in 2000
- Almost a quarter of people aged 16–74 in Huntingdonshire have no formal qualifications
- There are excellent strategic communication links with the East of England and England as a whole with the A1(M), A14 and East Coast Mainline Railway running through the district, but there are issues of congestion
- The most significant destination for out-commuting is Cambridge. St Ives has the highest figure with 10.4% of commuting from the town going to the city

**3.9** Baseline information is presented here in topics following the order established in 'A 1: Identifying relevant plans and programmes'. There are many different links between these topics and it would be impossible to identify all of them but it is hoped that this topic based approach will give an idea of the interconnected nature of the three aspects of sustainability.

## Land

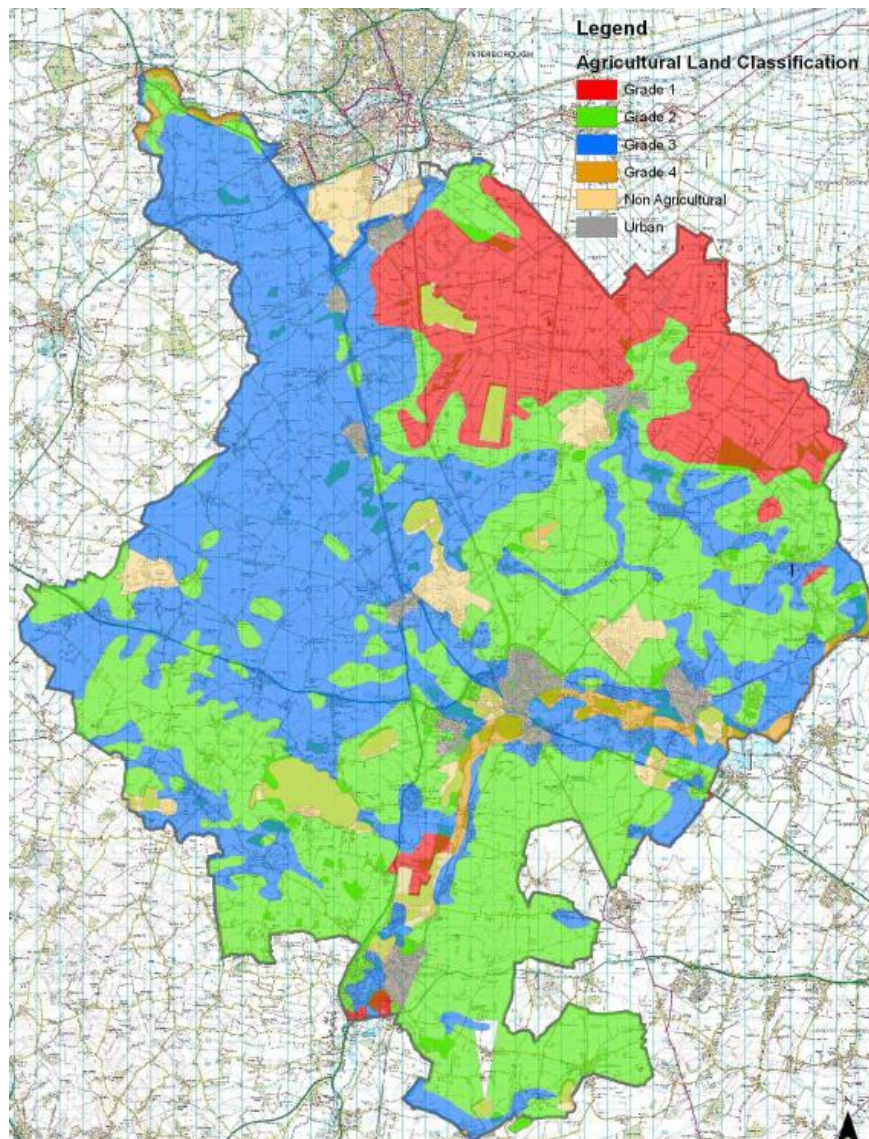
**3.10** Huntingdonshire is a largely rural district with just 6% classified as urban. This reflects the size of the district, at 913km<sup>2</sup> (about 350 square miles) it is one of the largest in the country and that none of the settlements are particularly large; the biggest - St Neots covers an area of some 8.8km<sup>2</sup>.

9 ONS 2010 mid year estimates

10 ONS 2010 mid year estimates

# 3 The Scoping Process

Figure 3.1 Agricultural Land Classification across the district



**3.11** Huntingdonshire’s agricultural land is almost entirely of good quality; 98% of all agricultural land in the district is classed as grades 1, 2 or 3, with 15% classed as grade 1. Grade 1 land occurs mainly in the Fens, in the north east of the district, although there are pockets along the Ouse Valley. The land north of Huntingdon and land south of the A14 is predominantly grade 2. From the Nene Valley in the north of Huntingdonshire south to the A14 corridor and extending from the district’s western boundary to the A1 the land is classed almost entirely as grade 3.

**3.12** Due to the agricultural heritage and limited nature of heavy industry there are few areas of Previously Developed Land (PDL). There are however a number of former airfields located around the district. Two of these, Alconbury airfield and RAF Upwood, are redundant. Part of Alconbury airfield was designated as an Enterprise Zone in 2011 and a planning permission dating from 2003 allowed for warehouse and storage development reflecting its proximity to the trunk road network and the East Coast Mainline Railway. An application for residential and employment development at RAF Upwood was dismissed at appeal in 2010. Together, Alconbury airfield and RAF Upwood make up 79% of the total area of PDL in the district. RAF Brampton will become redundant and available for development in 2013 and an urban design framework for it was adopted by the council in 2011.

Indicator	District data <sup>(1)</sup>	County data	UK data	Our Target	Trend
% of gross new dwellings on PDL	38.4%	57.17%	80% (2009)	29%	Up (37.6% in 2010)

1. Data source: Cambridgeshire County Council (Research and Monitoring)

**3.13** In 2010/11 more than a third of dwellings built were on PDL, below the national and regional averages, but above the local target ([AMR 2011](#)). The PDL housing supply trajectory in the AMR 2011 expects PDL development to be relatively constant for the next five years in terms of number of homes. However, during the same period house building is expected to initially decrease but then increase substantially so as a

percentage PDL is expected to increase in the short term but decrease in the medium term. The decrease in the medium term is expected to take the percentage below target for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

### Water

- 3.14** Currently there is limited information about water resource availability. The Huntingdonshire Outline Water Cycle Strategy (OWCS) looks at water resources including water supply, waste water networks and treatment and other aspects such as flooding. It concludes that there should not be serious problems in terms of water supply but that there will be areas where waste water treatment is likely to come under stress due to development over the plan period. A stage 2 water cycle strategy is currently being undertaken and its results will be used to inform locations and sites for development.
- 3.15** Met Office data shows that much of eastern England receives less than 700mm of rain per year and includes some of the driest areas in the country. The East of England region is also defined by the Environment Agency as seriously water stressed.
- 3.16** Water usage in households is continuing to increase. Data from the two local water companies shows that water usage is at or above national averages.
- 3.17** The issue of water quality is also an important consideration in determining the viability of future development in the district. Unless properly planned for, development could result in a deterioration of the water quality of Huntingdonshire's rivers. The OWCS provided a high level examination of the water infrastructure required to facilitate the levels of new development within the Core Strategy. The stage 2 water cycle strategy is needed to investigate the impact of increased loads having to be treated by Waste water Treatment Works. The EU Water Framework Directive incorporates a requirement for member states to ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development actions. The stage 2 water cycle strategy will be able to assess whether this would occur and, if required, it could investigate the technical solutions that would be available.

Estimated household water consumption (litres per head per day)		Target	Trend	Data source
Cambridge Water area (water only)	Metered: 130.8 Unmetered: 154.3	Reduce consumption rates	Up (Metered 128.7, Unmetered 150.3, 2009/10)	OFWAT: Service and delivery – performance of the water companies in England and Wales
Anglian Water area (water and sewerage)	Metered: 134.6 Unmetered: 164.6		Up (Metered 132.9, Unmetered 162.6, 2009/10)	
UK data	Metered: 128.0 Unmetered: 154.8	-	-	

- 3.18** Water quality was identified as a key issue for impacts on Portholme, Fenland and Orton Pit SACs, Nene Washes SPA and Ouse Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar site in the Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment. Due to the adoption of certain recommendations it was possible to say that the Core Strategy would not lead to adverse effects on European sites, however effects on water quality are a significant concern for the Local Plan.

### Flood Risk

- 3.19** Much of the district lies between the two large floodplains of the rivers Nene to the north and the Great Ouse that runs through the central areas of the district. Many of the major settlements are located adjacent to the River Great Ouse and its tributaries, including Huntingdon, St Ives, Godmanchester, St Neots, Alconbury and Brampton. Flood risk from these two rivers is managed by the Environment Agency. Flooding across the district varies in nature from the well defined valleys of the uplands, such as Bury Brook and the Ouse Tributaries to the large low lying floodplains of the Great Ouse and the Nene and the low lying areas of the Fens, much of which is at or below sea level, which is managed by the Internal Drainage Boards/ Middle Level Commissioners.

# 3 The Scoping Process

**3.20** The topography of the district makes understanding the nature and extent of flood risk and planning for it complex. The many different sources of flood risk also make it difficult to predict the nature and extent of flooding. To help the council plan land allocations for future development a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update (SFRA 2010) has been produced. The SFRA shows the annual probability of flooding, taking into consideration the effect of existing flood defences. It also predicts the effect climate change will have.

**3.21** Development both within the floodplain and in areas not at direct risk has had the effect of increasing the magnitude and frequency of flooding and has increased the number of people and properties under threat. Development in the floodplain reduces the storage capacity in times of flood and diverts excess flood water elsewhere, whilst hard engineering features (including flood defences) have the effect of channelling flood flows downstream. Cambridgeshire County Council are developing the Cambridgeshire Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management 2012 - 2015, which will set out how flood risk is expected to be managed for the county up to 2015.

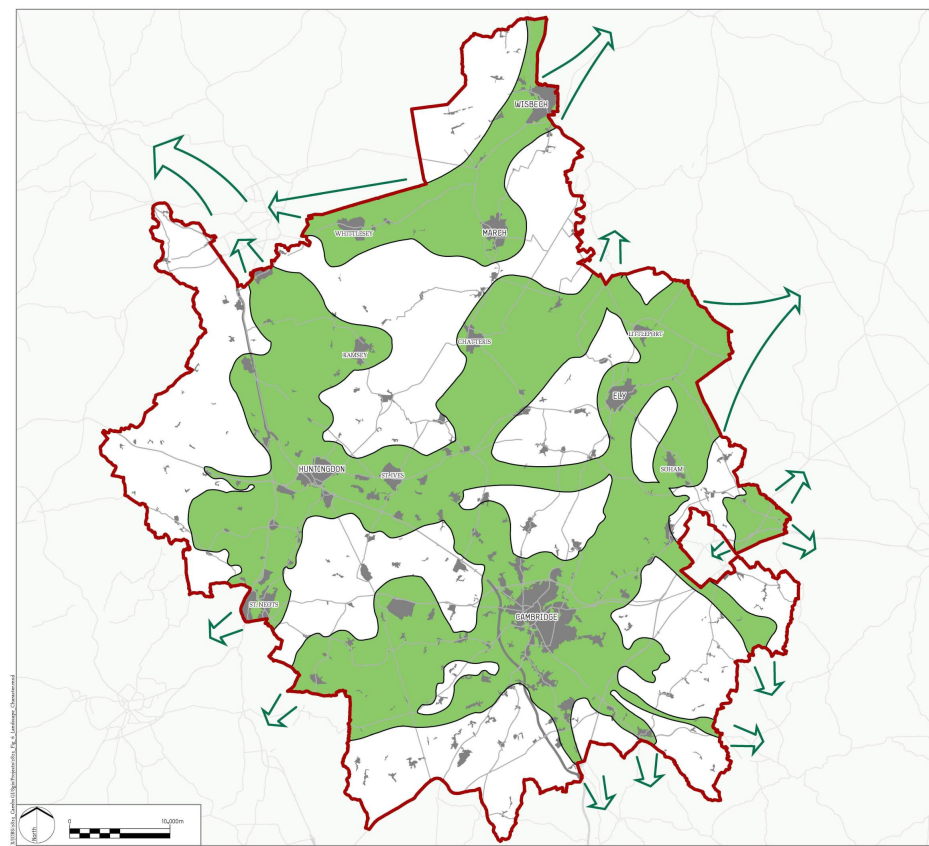
**3.22** Development can also indirectly increase risk of flooding by increasing the rapidity of surface water run off due to the increase in impermeable surfaces. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) can help to mitigate these effects by promoting natural infiltration, however their success affected by ground conditions and they are not appropriate in certain types of soils. The county council have developed the Cambridgeshire SuDS Design and Adoption Manual, that will be available shortly, to help developers integrate SuDS into their developments.

### Green Infrastructure

**3.23** Green Infrastructure offers opportunities to provide for a range of functions, including recreation and wildlife as well as landscape enhancement. Green infrastructure is essential to enhancing biodiversity by creating new habitats and helping to protect against habitat fragmentation.

**3.24** The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy is a source of information that seeks to enhance, reinstate and create green infrastructure and a network of corridors, including Public Rights Of Way (PROWs) which connect key areas across Cambridgeshire. The network will allow sites important for biodiversity to be connected helping to prevent fragmentation and encouraging the spread of wildlife at the same time as creating opportunities for countryside recreation including walking and cycling.

Figure 3.2 Cambridgeshire Strategic Green Infrastructure Network





### Open Space

**3.25** The availability of publicly accessible open space provides valuable opportunities for informal recreation and sport and is important in helping people to lead healthy lifestyles. Huntingdonshire has a relatively high proportion of strategic open space with the majority of the district having in the region of 10ha of accessible strategic open space per 1000 population<sup>(11)</sup>. However, this is more concentrated along the River Great Ouse where there are significantly more green infrastructure sites over 20ha. Significant areas of expansion of strategic green space are identified within the Core Strategy which offer potential for improved informal recreation and biodiversity conservation and enhancement.

**3.26** In 2006 a study reviewed open space and recreation facilities across the district<sup>(12)</sup> and found that overall, the majority of residents are satisfied with the provision in the district; however, it highlighted geographical distribution as a concern, particularly given the expected population increase and identified areas where there is a deficit in provision.

**3.27** In 2010 the council completed an Open Space Strategy<sup>(13)</sup> which provides an up to date overview of open space provision across the district to complement and update the Audit. It also seeks to establish a clear framework for promoting, protecting and improving open space provision.

**3.28** The audit carried out as part of the Open Space Strategy identifies a total of 608 open spaces located across the district. For the purposes of the Strategy, and in accordance with PPG17<sup>(14)</sup> the audit classified open spaces according to their primary purpose. The table below sets out in brief the area covered and the percentage coverage of these sites. This shows that there is in excess of 42 million m<sup>2</sup> of open space in Huntingdonshire.

**3.29** Natural open space has the highest quantity of provision, accounting for two thirds of the district total. This proportion is heavily influenced by the size of Grafham Water, a site which, on its own, accounts for over 8 million m<sup>2</sup> of open space.

### Open Space Provision in Huntingdonshire<sup>(1)</sup>

Main Category	Sub Category	Number of Sites	Total Area (m <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>(2)</sup>	% of Total Open Space
Informal	Parks and Gardens	22	1,947,411	4.6%
	Natural Open Space	75	28,540,524	67.1%
	Amenity Green Space	142	1,146,827	2.7%
Provision for Children and Young People		114	754,080	1.8%
Outdoor Sports Facilities		110	8,890,090	20.9%
Allotments and Community Gardens		38	592,023	1.4%
Green Corridors		14	147,958	0.3%
Civic Spaces		7	7,056	0.02%
Cemeteries and Churchyards		86	477,563	1.1%
Total		608	42,503,532	100%

1. Reproduced from page 14 of the Open Space Strategy
2. based on 'primary purpose' classification

11 Accessible Green Infrastructure by Ward 2004, Green Infrastructure Strategy (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2006)

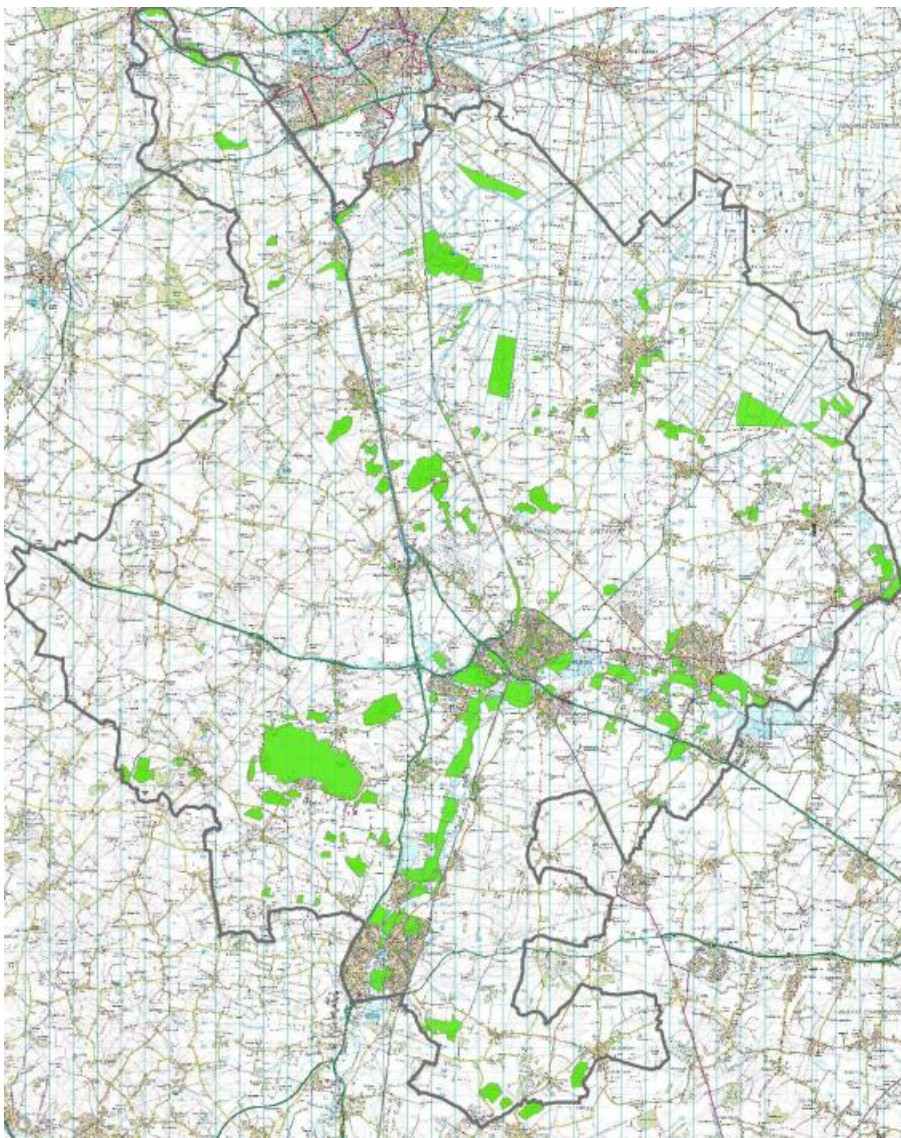
12 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Need Audit (PMP 2006)

13 Open Space Strategy for Huntingdonshire 2010-2015

14 PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002), now replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework

# 3 The Scoping Process

**Figure 3.3 Distribution of Open Space across the district**



**3.30** Approximately half the district's population is located within the four Market Towns. Of these, St Neots has the highest quantity of open space, followed by Huntingdon. The audit also emphasises that whilst three of the four market towns have a range of open space provision, in contrast Ramsey has no green corridors or civic space. Open space in Ramsey is dominated by outdoor sports provision. Although Ramsey has the lowest absolute amount of open space, it has a higher amount per resident than St Ives.

**3.31** The Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) was developed in the early 1990s and was based on research into minimum distances people would travel to the natural environment. Natural England reviewed the standard in 2008 with the "Nature Nearby" report, published in March 2010.

**3.32** ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have accessible natural green space of at least:

- 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- 20 hectare within two kilometres of home;
- 100 hectare within five kilometres of home; and
- 500 hectare within ten kilometres of home; plus
- a minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population

**3.33** Huntingdonshire performs better than the Cambridgeshire averages at all ANGSt levels except for households within 300m of a site greater than 2ha. It also has a lower percentage of households that meet none of the standards.

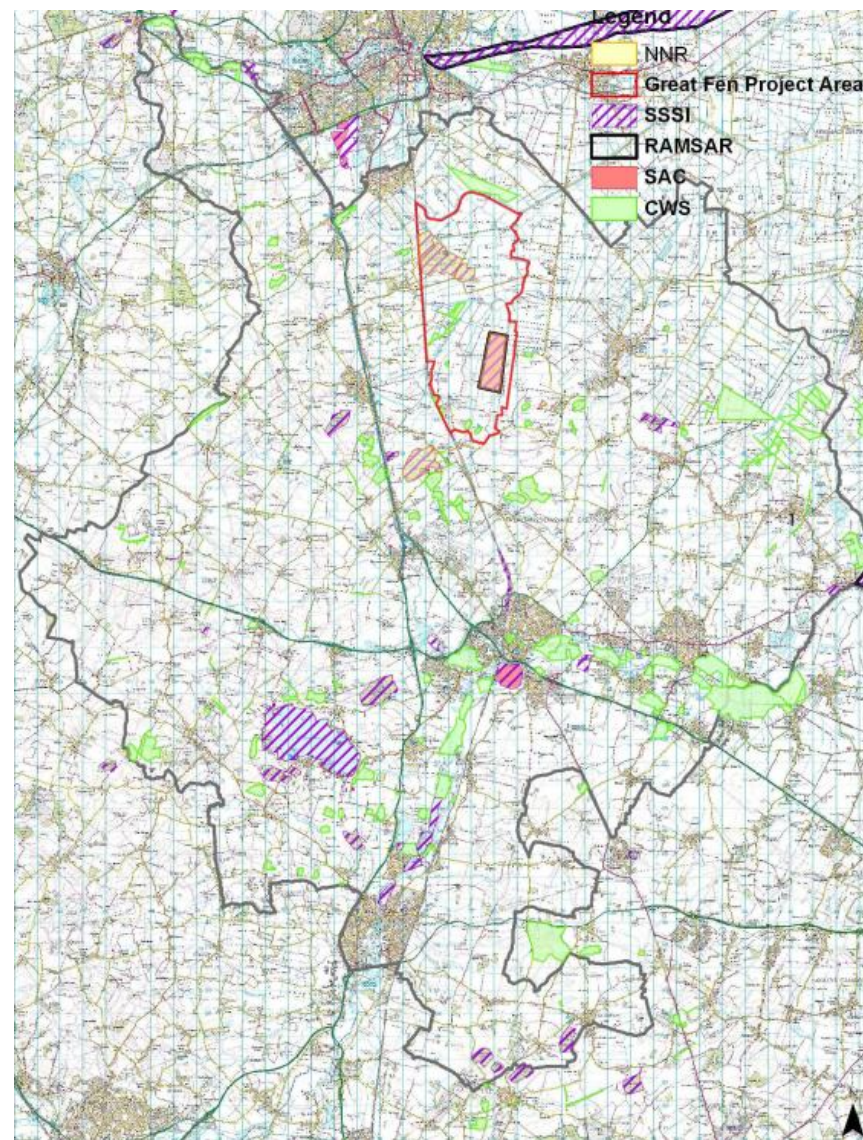
	Number of households <sup>(1)</sup>	% of households within					
		300m of a 2ha+ site	2km of a 20ha+ site	5km of a 100ha+ site	10km of a 500ha+ site	meeting all ANGSt	meeting none of ANGSt
Huntingdonshire	70,390	18.4	73.0	73.0	45.7	11.0	6.8
Cambridgeshire averages	334,157 (total)	20.0	62.0	58.3	30.8	5.5	17.3

1. Estimate as at 2005

## Biodiversity

- 3.34** Huntingdonshire contains a large number of sites that are important for biodiversity including Ramsar sites which are of international significance such as the Ouse Washes, which is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Other significant sites protected under European Legislation include the Fenland SAC and Portholme Meadow SAC.
- 3.35** The Great Fen, which includes areas designated as Ramsar, SAC and SSSI, is a visionary plan to transform more than 3000ha of largely arable land into an area of wildlife rich and publicly accessible fen landscape. It encompasses the two National Nature Reserves (NNRs) of Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen.
- 3.36** The district also has another two National Nature Reserves (NNRs) at Upwood Meadows and Monks Wood as well as 28 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and currently some 134 County Wildlife Sites (CWSs). There is no statutory protection for both NNRs and CWS under UK law however, NNRs are a selection of the very best SSSIs and so are afforded protection from that designation. There are also a number of Local Nature Reserves such as Paxton Pits, across the district and Protected Road Side Verges; both of which are designated under the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949.

Figure 3.4 Nature Designations across the district



# 3 The Scoping Process

## Woodland

**3.37** Woodland in Huntingdonshire is concentrated towards the centre of the district around Wennington, in the south east around Waresley, and in the area around Grafham Water. Many of the larger blocks of deciduous woodland are ancient woodland (land that has been continually wooded since at least AD1600), and many are protected and managed as Nature Reserves or County Wildlife Sites. Ancient woods are uniquely valuable. Their wildlife communities are generally richer than those of recent woods, having developed over long periods of time and they contain a high proportion of rare and vulnerable species. With only 2.4% of the land area in Britain covered by ancient woodland it is therefore essential that this habitat be protected.

**3.38** Ancient woods are also treasure troves of historical features such as bronze and iron age earthworks, Saxon range boundaries, ancient park boundaries, ridge and furrow, park pales and woodbanks, all of which give a picture of past land use, management practices, and industrial history. It is impossible to replace ancient woodland as this habitat has evolved over centuries and it is impossible to replace the ecological evolution by planting a new site or attempting to relocate them.

## Wetlands

**3.39** Wetlands are important habitats within Huntingdonshire. Since drainage only a few pockets of wet fen remain at Holme and Woodwalton Fens, now part of the Great Fen. Woodwalton Fen is a Ramsar site, a SAC and both are National Nature Reserves and are rich habitats supporting aquatic and marginal plant species, reed beds, wet woodland species and a diversity of bird and animal life.

**3.40** Huntingdonshire also contains some areas of open water. The largest is Grafham Water, a reservoir which is part managed by the County Wildlife Trust and designated as a SSSI. Other large areas include former gravel workings along the Ouse Valley, which have flooded and been restored as nature reserves or fisheries. These former gravel workings contribute to both the landscape character of the Ouse Valley and wetland resource of the area.

**3.41** Despite this apparent wealth of habitats, the general picture across Huntingdonshire is less positive. Intensive agriculture, urbanisation and other human activities have all contributed to this process; for example there have been significant losses in hedgerow and pond habitats and a decline in bird species. The percentage of SSSIs in the district rated as in 'favourable' or 'unfavourable recovering' condition has increased from 2009/10 to 2010/11. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership has formulated action plans for important habitats and species which identify measures needed to increase the variety and vitality of habitats and species in the county, and some progress is being made towards achieving the associated targets.

SSSI condition	District data	East of England data	UK data	Target	Trend	Data sources
Favourable or Unfavourable Recovering	93.4%	94,045ha, 77%	80% (2008)	95% (UK, by 2010)	Up (84.5% in 2010)	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (CPERC), Natural England
Unfavourable no change or Unfavourable declining	6.3%	28,278ha, 23%	20% (2008)	-	Down (15.3% in 2010)	
Destroyed/ part destroyed	0.3%	Not available			No change	

## Landscape

**3.42** The landscape of Huntingdonshire includes a diversity of landscapes, four very different market towns and some 100 villages with a variety of architectural styles and materials. The Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment identified nine landscape character areas in total, although in broad terms four types of landscape dominate:

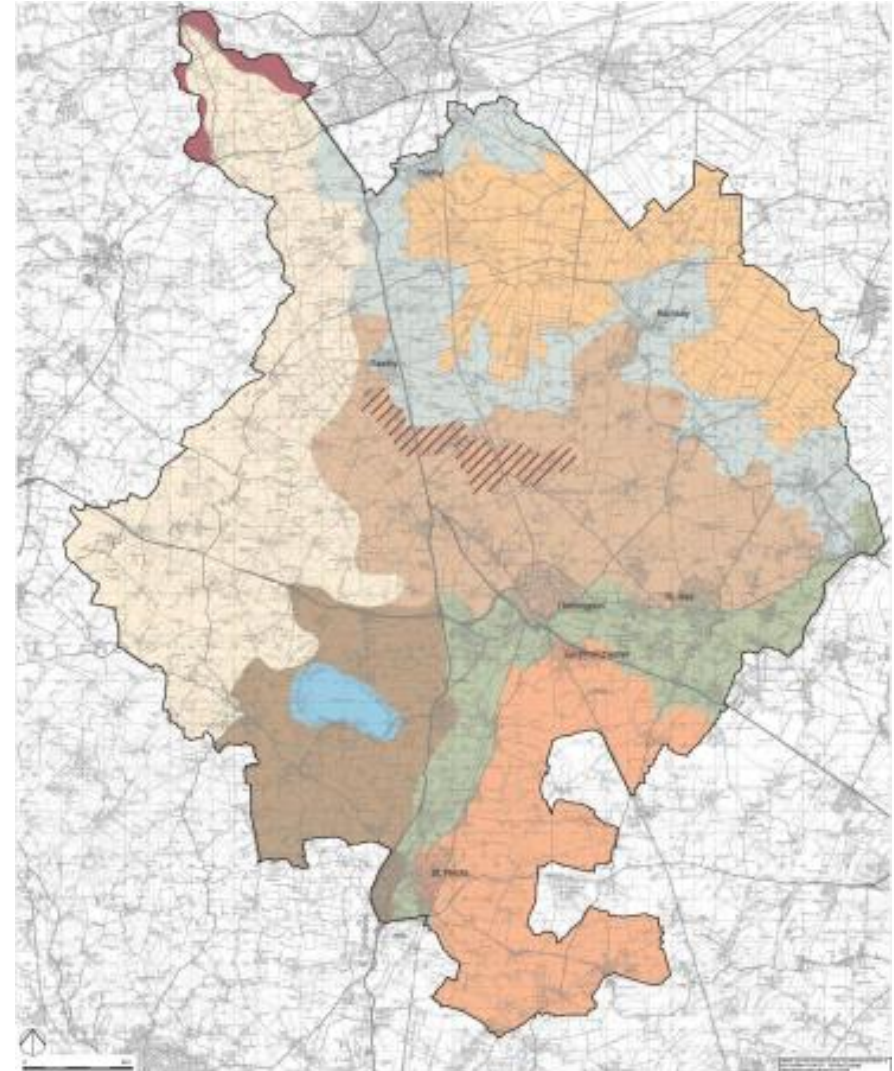
- The low lying fens in the north-east of the district

- The undulating claylands that comprise much of central and southern Huntingdonshire
- Higher land to the west, rising up to 70m AOD (in the Huntingdonshire Wolds)
- The main river valleys of the Great Ouse and, in the extreme north-west, the Nene

**3.43** The identification of landscape character areas is an approach which protects the distinctive features of each type rather than favouring a particular selection and provides a clear criteria for making judgements. The Local Plan will seek to ensure that both the quality and distinctive characteristics of these areas are conserved and enhanced through the allocation process and as subsequent development occurs.



**Figure 3.5 Landscape Character Areas**



# 3 The Scoping Process

## Heritage

- 3.44** Huntingdonshire contains extensive archaeological remains dating from successive waves of settlement, and reflecting its diversity of landscape types with the Fens and the river valleys having been particular areas of activity. Roman towns existed at Godmanchester and Water Newton, along the line of the Roman Road (Ermine Street) which runs across the district from south east to north west. Ramsey Abbey was established on a peninsula in the fen in the tenth century, and smaller monastic houses in St Ives, St Neots and Huntingdon had a major impact on the growth of these towns. The main threats to these remains are agriculture and development. This makes it particularly important that provision is made for appropriate excavation, analysis, recording and preservation in areas of archaeological potential.
- 3.45** Despite the growth that has taken place across the district, many of Huntingdonshire's smaller villages retain some of their historic form. Nucleated forms, with development clustered around a church and/or village green, and linear patterns are both common. Hamlets are comparatively rare in Huntingdonshire, but isolated farms are scattered across the area. The district contains over 60 conservation areas, many of them covering extensive areas along with some 2,198 listed structures. These areas and structures form a significant and vital part of the area's heritage, although some 10% of listed structures in Huntingdonshire are judged to be 'at risk'<sup>(15)</sup>. English Heritage maintains the Heritage at Risk Register, which includes 4 listed buildings (Grade I and II\* only) and 8 scheduled monuments "at risk" in the district<sup>(16)</sup>. The district also has five registered parks and gardens (one at grade II\* and four at grade II) along with 82 scheduled ancient monuments.

## Climate Change

- 3.46** Climate change is possibly the greatest environmental threat facing the world today and is widely accepted as being caused by human activity. Higher global temperatures will bring changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels and the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. The main human influence on climate change is emissions of key greenhouse gases particularly carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides.
- 3.47** Challenges associated with climate change facing Huntingdonshire include adapting to the increased risk of flooding and, conversely, droughts brought on by extreme weather conditions. An increased risk of flooding has implications for the district as many parts are low lying and many areas, including the towns of Huntingdon, Godmanchester, St Ives and St Neots lie within the valley of the River Great Ouse. Parts of the district have experienced significant flood events in recent times. Flooding can cause damage to buildings resulting in homelessness and closure of local businesses, and traffic management issues which impact upon the local economy. Drought conditions have implications for the availability of water for domestic and economic activity. It can also cause damage to buildings as clay contracts and land shifts, potentially a problem for much of Huntingdonshire.
- 3.48** Such changes in weather are likely to lead to a reduction in crop yields of traditional crops, which may lead to farmers what they grow. We may also see some species of plant and animals migrating north or dying out with native species possibly being replaced by migrating exotic species.
- 3.49** The council's Environment Strategy identifies reducing carbon dioxide emissions as a key priority and looks to tackle the issue in four ways; becoming more energy efficient; increasing the proportion of energy produced and used that originates from renewable sources; encouraging

15 245 as identified in Buildings At Risk Register (HDC Spring 2011)

16 The register can be accessed via the [English Heritage website](#)

the use of more sustainable modes of travel and effectively minimise the impact of transport emissions; and ensuring buildings, services and the community are able to adapt to climate change.

**3.50** There was a 7.2% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita in Huntingdonshire between 2005 and 2008 to 9.0t CO<sub>2</sub><sup>(17)</sup>. This compares with Cambridgeshire which saw a 6.8% reduction over the same period to 8.2t CO<sub>2</sub>. However the Huntingdonshire figure is still higher than the county figure.

**3.51** The production and use of buildings accounts for a significant proportion of the UK's carbon emissions. Traditional building materials, such as bricks and concrete, are non-renewable, require significant amounts of energy when produced and can lead to significant amounts of waste. The Code for Sustainable Homes, is the national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes. One of its aims is to reduce carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable. A 1 to 6 star rating system is used to communicate the overall sustainability performance of new homes. It supports the Government's target that by 2016 all new homes will be built to zero carbon standards. It is a mandatory requirement for new homes to be assessed against the Code.

### Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

**3.52** Increasing the proportion of renewable energy sources will reduce carbon dioxide emissions from energy production. Significant increases in renewable sources are expected over the next few years. A capacity study has been completed for the East of England<sup>(18)</sup> which looks at the potential for renewable and low carbon energy development across the East of England. The study shows that the East of England is not going to reach the regional targets for renewable energy generation set for 2015 and 2020. It concludes that although there is theoretically a huge capacity for generation from renewable and low carbon sources due mainly to the potential capacity of wind turbine development, only a small fraction will

be possible due to landscape and cumulative impacts along with public attitudes. The study sees potential for energy generation in Cambridgeshire to come from a combination of sources but mainly wind turbines and energy from waste sources such as straw.

**3.53** The Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF)<sup>(19)</sup> looks in detail at the potential for renewables infrastructure including decentralised energy networks in Cambridgeshire. The CRIF aims to serve as an evidence base for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy by identifying the renewable energy Infrastructure needed to meet low-carbon development aims, allowing the collection of developer contributions as part of the funding solution for such projects. It also aims to inform production of development plans alongside other evidence based work, with the aim of creating the policy platform for renewable energy infrastructure investment; to inform the proposed Community Energy Fund (CEF), identifying opportunities for more flexible sources of low carbon infrastructure investment and to complement the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), which is bringing forward and reducing the risk of renewable energy projects to enable investment.

**3.54** The CRIF report has identified that with the range of renewable energy technologies available there is the opportunity for Cambridgeshire to be a leader for clean energy projects, goods and services. The deployment potential for the CRIF lead scenario identifies a combination of over 1 gigawatt of renewable and low carbon energy that could generate around 26% of Cambridgeshire's energy demand in 2031. The analysis has demonstrated that there is potential for Huntingdonshire being highest at 29%. The scale of investment is significant at over £2.3bn and up to £6bn in projects giving a potential return on investment of over 7%. The employment opportunities associated with this level of deployment are also great: up to 11,500 jobs. This supports an argument for developing a major 'Cleantech' cluster in Cambridgeshire. The CRIF also demonstrates the wide range of opportunities that exist in the county for

17 NI 186 Per capita reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by Local Authority Area

18 East of England Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Capacity Study (AECOM, 2011)

19 Final Report: Finance, Delivery and Engagement was published on 1 February 2012

# 3 The Scoping Process

developing offsite 'allowable solutions' that enable property developers to meet their carbon obligations in a cost-effective way. This, in turn, helps to improve the viability of new build development and supports continued growth in the country.

- 3.55** The St Neots Energy Study<sup>(20)</sup> looked at the potential for the use of renewable energy, district heating (DH) and energy use for St Neots and the strategic expansion to the east of the railway. The study concluded that there are real opportunities for developing a low carbon DH scheme. However, it warned that the success of a DH scheme would be heavily dependent on bringing together a number of parties including HDC, developers, and local residents and businesses, and making use of the planning system to maximise the benefits from new development.

## Pollution

- 3.56** In Huntingdonshire road transport accounts for the main source of air pollution<sup>(21)</sup>. Although air quality is generally good there are particular areas where some of the national air quality objectives are not being met. There are four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Huntingdon, St Neots, Brampton and the A14 Hemingford to Fenstanton area designated due to poor air quality associated with congestion on local roads or proximity to the A14. These areas will be subject to the implementation of measures to improve air quality. A joint Air Quality Action Plan produced through partnership between Huntingdonshire, Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire district level councils and Cambridgeshire County Council was produced in 2009 and submitted to DEFRA in 2010. It sets out the nature of air quality problems across the south of Cambridgeshire, assesses the causes and solutions in some detail and sets out clear priority areas for action over a five year period.

## Waste and Recycling

- 3.57** In recent years the council has had a very good record of encouraging residents to recycle. In 2011 over 57% of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting. This is significantly higher than the national average of 31%. The recycling rate for the district is already exceeding the 2016 target set by central government.
- 3.58** There is a need for more commercial and industrial capacity in Huntingdonshire as identified in the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Site Specific Proposals.

## Health and Well-being

- 3.59** Residents of Huntingdonshire can expect to live longer; figures for 2007-2009 indicate that life expectancy from birth in the district is higher than the national average in England for both males and females (within the district both males and females can expect to live 16 months longer than the national average with males living 79.7 years compared to 78.3 and females living 83.7 years compared to 82.3 on average<sup>(22)</sup>).
- 3.60** An important factor when considering availability of health services is their distance and accessibility to all settlements including those villages in more rural areas. However, the historical pattern of development in the district means that a significant proportion of the population live in outlying villages. For residents of these villages, particularly if they have mobility issues, access to healthcare can be difficult. The main focus of secondary care facilities within the district is Hinchbrooke Hospital in Huntingdon. Those resident in the north of the district are served by Peterborough and Stamford hospitals. Commissioning of healthcare is being transferred to GPs working in local commissioning groups by April 2013. Two groups will cover the district - Hunts Care Partners and Hunts Health, both of whom will commission hospital, community and mental health services

20 St Neots Energy Study (AECOM for HDC, 2009)

21 (Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment, pp18 2008 HDC <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk>)

22 Further information can be found in the Department of Health's 'Health Profile 2011', which is available on the [council's website](#)



for patients in their area and will publicise locally derived priorities to best reflect the needs of people in their local areas. Responsibility for health improvement services will be transferred to local authorities<sup>(23)</sup>.

**3.61** Residents of Huntingdonshire enjoy a relatively good standard of health and also have a perception of being in good health. In Huntingdonshire 73.37% of respondents to the 2001 Census described their health as being 'good' in the preceding 12 months, 5% higher than the national average for England. There are however, variations in health and the perception of health across the district with north Huntingdon being an area where relatively high numbers are reported to be suffering from poor health.

**3.62** The accessibility of other community facilities, including museums, libraries and village hall facilities are also important in maintaining and improving peoples well-being and quality of life.

### Population

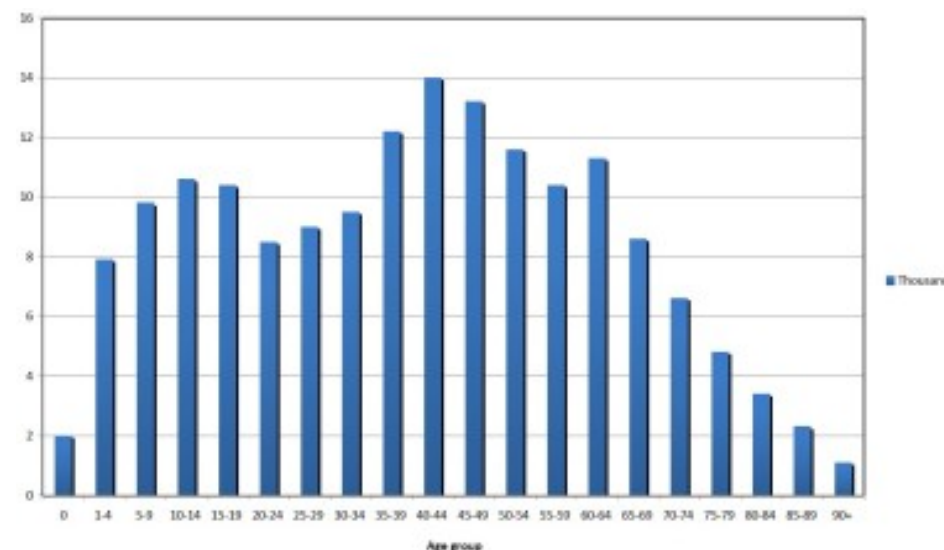
**3.63** An estimated 168,000 people live in Huntingdonshire<sup>(24)</sup> which is expected to rise to 192,900 in 2033<sup>(25)</sup>. The district's residents account for approximately 28% of the population of Cambridgeshire. Huntingdonshire is the largest district in Cambridgeshire by both land area and population.

**3.64** In 2010 in Huntingdonshire, the population density was 185 people per square km. This compares with 305 in the East of England and 401 in England and reflects the rural nature of a large part of the district.

**3.65** Almost one third of Huntingdonshire's population live in Huntingdon (13.5%) and St Neots (17.8%)<sup>(26)</sup>. 10% live in St Ives and 5.4% in Yaxley with 5.1% in Ramsey.

**3.66** Huntingdonshire's residents are predominantly white, with just 2.85% categorised as non-white in the 2001 Census. This is considerably lower than the national average of 9.08%. Since the 1991 Census, the percentage of non-white people in the district has increased slightly from 2.36%. However, the total number of non-white residents has increased by more than 30 percent to nearly 4,500 people.

**Figure 3.6 Huntingdonshire population structure**



**3.67** Just over a quarter (27.8%) of Huntingdonshire residents are aged between 45 and 64 years<sup>(27)</sup>. This is higher than the national average of 25.3% and has implications for the development of appropriate services to cater for an ageing population over the course of the plan period. This is demonstrated by the fact that in the 2010 mid year estimates 16.1% of

23 Further information can be found at [NHS Cambridgeshire's website](http://www.nhs.uk)

24 ONS 2010 mid year estimates

25 ONS 2008 based population projections

26 CCC Mid 2010 Population estimates

27 ONS 2010 mid year estimates

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the population are aged 65+, slightly lower than the national average of 16.5%, but by 2033 this age group is projected to represent 26.3% of the population of Huntingdonshire. The continued growth in Huntingdonshire's population and the demographic profile of the existing population will require significant investment in primary care premises, especially in areas affected by significant new development, as well as focusing provision of health care within the community.

### Housing

**3.68** Making housing more affordable is a key national priority, especially in the current economic climate. The housing market has fluctuated significantly over the last few years with the highest prices being achieved in 2007 and then dropping to a low in 2008/2009.

**3.69** House price to income ratio is a measure of housing affordability. The average house price in Huntingdonshire (December 2009 to May 2010) was £216,000 and the ratio of lower quartile house price to earnings was 6.91 for 2009<sup>(28)</sup>. Within Huntingdonshire, housing was least affordable in Elton and Folksworth followed by Ellington, Kimbolton and Staughton and the Hemingfords. Housing was most affordable in Upwood and the Raveleys, however the house price to income ratio in this ward was 5.1, which is still significantly above the 3.5 ratio defined by government as 'affordable'.

**3.70** Huntingdonshire is one of the more affordable districts in Cambridgeshire and is slightly more affordable than Cambridge City and Fenland, for two and four bed properties<sup>(29)</sup>. In Cambridgeshire social renting is generally the cheapest tenure while open market purchase is the most expensive. Private renting accounts for just over one in ten households in Huntingdonshire (10.84%) while owner occupied accommodation accounts for 76.16% compared to a national average of 68.72%<sup>(30)</sup>.

**3.71** Information from Cambridgeshire's Economic Assessment 2010 shows that Huntingdonshire is the only Cambridgeshire district to have seen a steady increase in the number of dwelling completions each year from 2001 to 2010. All other districts saw a fall in the annual number of dwellings completed between 2008 and 2010.

**3.72** The government released a draft Planning Policy Statement on Gypsy and Traveller Sites in April 2011. It is expected that guidance will be amended and incorporated into the National Planning Policy Framework. The Local Plan approach to Gypsy and Traveller sites will be considered in light of the finalised policy. Evidence of the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites has been produced in a 2006 Accommodation Assessment for a Cambridge sub-regional area, an issues document produced by the council in 2009, and an update to the Accommodation Needs Assessment in October 2011.

### Deprivation

**3.73** The 2004 national Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) have been supplemented at a county level by Cambridgeshire County Council<sup>(31)</sup>. The county council's work identifies that the most deprived areas of Huntingdonshire are mainly concentrated in Huntingdon and St Neots with the Huntingdon North Ward being the most deprived area in the district.

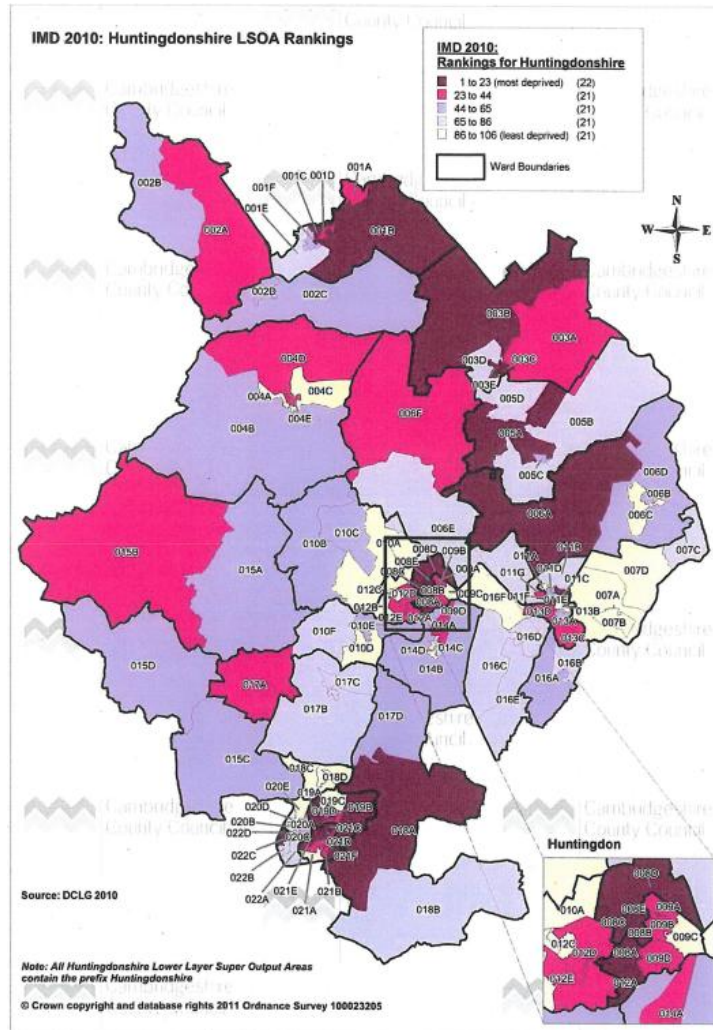
28 Cambridgeshire's Economic Assessment: Huntingdonshire Profile 2010 CCC

29 Further information can be found in chapter 21 of the Cambridge Sub-Region's Strategic Housing Market Assessment on the [Cambridgeshire Horizons website](#)

30 Further information can be found in 'Huntingdonshire Today', which is available on the [council's website](#)

31 Deprivation in Cambridgeshire Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010, Brief Report (CCC Research Group, March 2011)

Figure 3.7 Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010



## Crime

**3.74** The levels of crime experienced within Huntingdonshire are relatively low. The British Crime Survey 2010/11<sup>(32)</sup> shows a 12% decrease in the levels of recorded crime comparator offences from 2008/09 to 2009/10. This represents the biggest decrease in Cambridgeshire which recorded a decrease of about 10% for the same time period. Nevertheless, crime remains an issue within the district and one which the Local Plan will seek to tackle. Crime is also responsible for a significant proportion of carbon emissions and crime reduction should be considered as part of efforts to tackle climate change.

## Access to Services

**3.75** Local shops, schools and other services play an important role in promoting communities' sustainability by helping to meet everyday needs and reducing the need to travel. For the purposes of the council's policy approach key services and facilities are considered to include local shops, post offices, public houses, places of worship, education facilities, filling stations, public halls and health care facilities.

**3.76** The latest data from 2008 showed that nearly 50% of all parishes have at least one food store and just over 40% of parishes have a primary school. In order to take into account any recent changes in rural service provision; especially changes and losses of post offices, the council has had regard to Cambridgeshire ACRE 's Rural Services Survey published in December 2011. A questionnaire was sent out to all parishes in Cambridgeshire asking for information on availability of services and facilities. Some 75% of parishes in Huntingdonshire responded, and the district council intends to survey those parishes that did not respond in order to gain a full result for the district. The council will seek to use information from this survey to help plan for rural communities. There appears to be no correlation between the loss of services and levels of housing development in villages, as losses have occurred whether or not building has taken place. Increased personal mobility and the dominance of supermarkets and town centre shops seem to be more important factors.

32 Further information is available from the [Home Office](#)

# 3 The Scoping Process

- 3.77** Minimising the need to travel and promoting opportunities to make necessary journeys by public transport are crucial aspects of sustainable development. Private car ownership in Huntingdonshire is higher than the national average, reflecting the relatively rural nature of most of the district, and the consequent dependence on private cars for personal transport. The most frequent bus services operate within and between Market Towns where there are greater concentrations of potential passengers. The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway opened in summer 2011, providing a reliable and frequent public transport link connecting Huntingdon and St Ives with Cambridge.
- 3.78** Due to the rural nature of the district, for those living outside of the main settlements, there is a high reliance on private cars for transport, which is reflected in car ownership levels which are above the national average. This dependence on cars means that those without access to car transport can be significantly disadvantaged. The percentage of households in Huntingdonshire that have access to two or more cars or vans is significantly higher at 14% above the national average. The district's rural areas generally have higher levels of vehicle ownership than urban wards. Huntingdon has the highest percentage of households with no cars at 20%, followed by St Neots with 17.4%. This compares to St Ives and Ramsey; neither of which have convenient access to a railway station, with 15.8% and 15.2% of households with no cars respectively<sup>(33)</sup>.
- 3.79** Accessibility to key services and facilities by sustainable modes is an important consideration in the planning of new development. In 2010 79% of all new homes (gross completions) were within 30 minutes travel time of key services (including GP surgeries) by public transport<sup>(34)</sup>. This is by far the highest percentage in Cambridgeshire apart from Cambridge City.

## Employment

- 3.80** On 17 August 2011 the government accepted a bid from the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership for an enterprise zone at Alconbury Airfield. The enterprise zone provides incentives for employment development on 150ha of land mostly in the western portion of the airfield. The designation of the enterprise zone triggered review of all adopted development plan documents for Huntingdonshire and was a significant factor in the council's decision to produce the Local Plan.
- 3.81** The enterprise zone bid anticipated the building of about 37,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment development being comprised of a mix of B1 Business, B2 General Industrial and sui generis uses by 2015. It envisaged development including a mix of high specification business and manufacturing units and low rise office. It envisaged designs that will offer uninterrupted floorspace affording occupiers flexibility between office and production areas and units that would allow for future expansion and would be specifically targeted at the needs of advanced manufacturing and high-tech incubators.
- 3.82** Employment in Huntingdonshire has been relatively buoyant with an overall employment rate of 73% for April 2009 to March 2010 compared to 70% nationally<sup>(35)</sup>. The large settlements contain the greatest concentrations of jobs: Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives together accounted for 60% of employment in the district in 2001. Office floorspace is concentrated in Huntingdon, which in 2001 accounted for 60%, followed by St Ives with 17%. Huntingdon is also the main location for industrial and warehouse premises, although nearly a quarter of the district's factory stock is located in St Neots.
- 3.83** As well as containing the greatest concentrations of jobs, conversely, the settlements of Huntingdon and St Neots also contain the highest concentrations of unemployment. People who have had clerical,

33 Huntingdonshire Spatial Strategy Options Report, Final Assessment (Atkins, June 2008), table 2.1 'Population and Car Ownership' pp9

34 AMR 2010

35 <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>

elementary or no previous job experience form the largest occupational groups among those that are unemployed. The claimant count unemployment rate in the area remains low at 1.4% compared to the UK average of 2.5%. Only the Huntingdon North ward has a rate higher than this figure.

- 3.84** Average earnings within the district are higher than the regional and national average and have continued to increase steadily since 2002. Household income is the highest in the west and south of the district, with pockets of low income in Huntingdon and St Neots.
- 3.85** Median weekly earnings of Huntingdonshire residents in employment are more than 5% higher than the national average. Economic activity is particularly high, with all wards in the district having a higher level than the national average. The median household income in Huntingdonshire is £31,600 which is £1,600 above the county median.
- 3.86** This contrasts with the fact that median weekly full time earnings in Huntingdonshire, that is those people employed in the district, are nearly 5% below the national average and around 8% lower than the county wide average. The median figure for the district in 2006 was £432.20 per week, which is 2.6% lower than the 2005 figure. The national figure increased by 4.9% in this period. These figures relate to workplace data and figures for Huntingdonshire residents are higher due to higher wages earned by people living in the district and commuting to better paid jobs outside the area.
- 3.87** The recession has impacted upon employment and incomes. It is expected that unemployment will continue to rise while incomes will fall in the immediate future.

### Business

- 3.88** The business sectors with the largest number of VAT-registered businesses in the district are 'real estate, renting and business activities', 'wholesale, retail and repairs' and 'construction'. There has been an

increase in the number of VAT-registered businesses in the district over the last five years, with a total of 6,080 businesses registered in 2005 – 10.6% more than in 2000. This is nearly twice the UK figure during this period (5.7%) and more than 2% higher than the county wide increase.

- 3.89** The sectors employing the largest numbers of Huntingdonshire's workforce are 'manufacturing', 'wholesale/retail and repair of motor vehicles', 'real estate, renting and business activities', 'public administration and defence' and 'health and social work'.
- 3.90** The main occupations of Huntingdonshire's workforce are 'managers and senior officials', 'associate professional and technical occupations', 'administrative and secretarial occupations', 'skilled trades occupations' and 'elementary occupations'.

### Retail

- 3.91** Retail activity in Huntingdonshire is dominated by the market towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey. These are the only settlements in the district to contain centres with a variety of shops and services. Huntingdon has the main town centre within the district, with a comparison goods turnover of approximately £137.31m, and a market share of 20.9 per cent. St Neots town centre is second but has a turnover which is only half that of Huntingdon (£68.71m). St Ives is third with a turnover of £48.01m, and is followed by the Stukeley Road Retail Park in Huntingdon, with a turnover of £31.81m. Ramsey is significantly lower with £6.35m. Yaxley and Sawtry by contrast have turnovers of less than £3m<sup>(36)</sup>.
- 3.92** In terms of vacancy levels the district's two main shopping destinations appear to be relatively resilient to the effects of the recession. Huntingdon's retail vacancy rates are just above the national average and St Neots is significantly below the national average.

36 Huntingdonshire Retail Development Advice Volume 1: Main Report (Roger Tym and Partners March 2010)

# 3 The Scoping Process

**3.93** Around 49% of spending on comparison goods by district residents is spent outside of Huntingdonshire. This spending goes to higher order centres such as Peterborough, Cambridge and Bedford. This indicates that the main town centres of Huntingdon and St Neots do not offer a good level of diversity to meet needs. Huntingdon's primary qualitative deficiency in terms of comparison goods is the fashion sector with a failure to attract the higher end market providers.

**3.94** Nevertheless, the two main shopping destinations have been assessed to be comparatively healthy in their retail offer, both comparison and convenience, albeit with the need for improvement. Development proposals including those in Huntingdon to the west of the town centre (the area covered by the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan) offer opportunities as do other development areas identified in St Neots and Huntingdon. The development of a large foodstore as part of the Northern Gateway development in Ramsey in 2009 has improved Ramsey's retail offer and St Ives continues to have a higher end and more localised retail offer.

## Tourism

**3.95** Huntingdonshire has many assets which serve to attract tourists to the district however, tourism within the district is not as strong as in other parts of the county such as Cambridge City. The diversity of Huntingdonshire's attractions and the rural nature of the district means that they are widely spread and are comparatively modest in scale. Of particular note are the natural assets such as the River Great Ouse which attracts many water based activities. There are numerous marinas located around the district which promote water recreation and a number of festivals which are focused on the river and attract many visitors.

**3.96** The Great Fen is a unique project of landscape restoration of national significance. There are many strategic drivers associated with the project but, of particular note, is the contribution it can make to the local economy and, in particular the regeneration of Ramsey. The Great Fen is a key project that will serve to promote the district's eco-tourism sector.

**3.97** The Huntingdon Race Course is a significant attraction which hosts a number of national horse racing events each year.

## Education

**3.98** Almost a quarter of people aged 16–74 in Huntingdonshire have no formal qualifications and this remains lower than the county and national average. The level of qualification attained by the people of Huntingdonshire is close to the national average.

**3.99** There are six wards with a higher level of people with no qualifications than the national average. The two wards with the highest levels are Huntingdon North and Ramsey. There are eight wards with lower levels of people with qualifications at level 2 or higher (5+ A\*-C grade GCSEs and above) than the national average, also including Ramsey and Huntingdon North wards.

## Transport Infrastructure

**3.100** The transport network across Huntingdonshire is dominated by the north-south corridor of the A1(M), the east-west A14(T) route and the East Coast Mainline Railway, which runs parallel with the A1(M). The A14 corridor was identified as one of six priority transport corridors in the East of England<sup>(37)</sup>, following an investigation of the direct costs of transport congestion (ie lost travel time) and the foregone wider economic benefits (ie agglomeration and labour force impacts).

**3.101** The two main roads, particularly the A14, experience traffic levels in excess of their design capacity and users experience congestion and significant variation in travel times as a result. The withdrawal of the Ellington to Fen Ditton improvement scheme in the Government Spending Review in October 2010 has meant that there is no current scheme to tackle this congestion. As part of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in November 2011, the 'A14 Challenge' was announced, together with a £20m package of short-term measures. The Challenge will look at alternative options to tackle the issues considered as part of the previous scheme and the

37 Transport and the Economy in the East of England - the Transport Economic Evidence Study (TEES) (East of England Development Agency, Sept 2008)

Department for Transport is seeking to present a more cost-effective package of measures, including funding options, by Summer 2012. However, it is likely that any options emerging will only be considered by Government as part of its 2015 Spending Review. The £20m short-term measures will look at targeted options that can be delivered prior to 2015 to provide immediate relief at congestion hot spots between Spittals Interchange, Huntingdon and Girton Interchange, Cambridge as well as other relief measures on this section.

- 3.102** Improvements will also be needed to the junctions on the A428 and other traffic management measures to mitigate the impact of development related traffic arising from housing commitments to the east of St Neots.
- 3.103** Huntingdon has the highest average traffic flow per kilometre of road of all urban centres within Cambridgeshire<sup>(38)</sup>.
- 3.104** Improvements to the passenger capacity of the East Coast Mainline Railway have been scheduled with many peak time trains carrying additional carriages and extensions having been made to a number of platforms at stations along the Peterborough to Kings Cross section of the line.
- 3.105** The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway provides an alternative to private car travel to Cambridge. The busway connects central Cambridge, Addenbrooke's and Trumpington with St Ives, Huntingdon and Somersham. The busway services provide a step change in the quality and quantity of public transport and create enhanced travel choice. The busway opened in August 2011 and immediately proved to be a success. By the end of 2011 the services had carried one million passengers. This suggests that first year patronage will be around 2.5 million passengers, some 40% greater than predicted. Future growth in demand will partly depend on the growth of housing in the corridor, but further enhancements to services are planned including enlargement of park and ride facilities.

Traffic levels on the A14 and adjacent roads are being monitored for evidence of the anticipated longer term modal switch from car to the busway.

### Commuting

- 3.106** Of those people who work in the district, 22.8% commute in. A significant level of people in employment in Huntingdonshire work from home (9.8%), the largest proportion of which are small employers and own account workers.
- 3.107** The relative size of each market town and access to services roughly corresponds with its levels of internalisation - the proportion of residents that live and work within that settlement. As can be seen in the table below, Huntingdon has the highest internalisation followed by St Neots. Ramsey and St Ives are both considerably lower<sup>(39)</sup>.

### Internalisation of Huntingdonshire towns

	Total Commuting	Trips Internalisation	% Internalisation
Huntingdon	16941	8908	52.6%
Ramsey	4307	1528	35.5%
St Ives	8962	3032	33.8%
St Neots	16327	7718	47.3%

- 3.108** The slightly higher level of internalisation experienced by Ramsey compared to St Ives could be due to St Ives' proximity to and transport links with Cambridge making commuting to jobs in the city a more viable option; approximately 10.4% of total commuting trips from St Ives are made to Cambridge. This is significantly higher than the other towns with Huntingdon having the next most commuting trips to Cambridge at just

38 Cambridgeshire Local Economic Assessment (Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership, February 2011) Huntingdonshire Profile  
 39 Full data can be found in Huntingdonshire Spatial Strategy Options Assessment, Final Report (Atkins, 2008), table 2.3 'Internalisation', pp11

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4.4%. Lower levels of commuting to London for both Ramsey and St Ives show that, although London is often thought of as a significant commuting destination, Cambridge is the most significant destination.

	Total Commuting	To Cambridge	To Cambridge %	To London	To London %
Huntingdon	16941	741	4.4%	794	4.7%
Ramsey	4307	141	3.3%	84	2.0%
St Ives	8962	930	10.4%	180	2.0%
St Neots	16327	582	3.6%	666	4.1%

## Data Limitations

**3.109** Much of the data presented is either collected by external bodies or collected in partnership between them and the district council. Therefore the council has limited control over the temporal and spatial scope of the data collected and whether data collection methods may change in the future. These factors may limit the ability to make reliable comparisons. There are some gaps in the data collected as not all information is available at the local level for recent time periods. This will be added to as the plan production process and as future Annual Monitoring Reports are published. A significant new source of data that will become available is the 2011 Census. Other sources will become available during the plan production process and so in the future, it may be necessary to alter the SA framework depending on the baseline information available at the time.



## A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C	Stage D	Stage E
A 1: Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives A 2: Collecting baseline information <b>A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems</b> A 4: Developing the SA framework A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA				

**3.110** The purpose of this task is to help focus the SA and streamline the subsequent stages, including baseline information analysis, setting the SA objectives, prediction of effects and monitoring.

### Key sustainability issues and problems

**3.111** Huntingdonshire's role within the county, greater Peterborough and greater Cambridgeshire and the East of England is complex and has a significant bearing on the Local Plan. It is important that the needs of the population - including future residents - are met in terms of their housing, employment and infrastructure requirements. However these needs must be met in a sustainable way that mitigates the negative impacts and accentuates the positive ones.

**3.112** Climate change is a major issue affecting Huntingdonshire and the situation is predicted to get worse during the life of the plan. Reducing Huntingdonshire's greenhouse gas emissions and breaking the link between economic growth and increasing emissions are key requirements for a sustainable plan. The effects of climate change on the district are potentially wide-ranging. Risk of increased flooding is a particular concern and it is vital that the location and design of new developments and infrastructure take account of this.

**3.113** Huntingdonshire has seen much faster economic and housing growth than much of Cambridgeshire and the East of England, despite the economic recession. Huntingdonshire has seen increasing redevelopment of brownfield land in recent years however greenfield development has and will continue to be dominant.

**3.114** Despite Huntingdonshire's relative prosperity, deprivation remains an issue with some areas of Huntingdon and St Neots experiencing conditions that are significantly below average for the district. Poor educational attainment, poor health, low levels of physical activity, limited employment opportunities and low levels of income are interrelated. Huntingdonshire has on average lower pay for those working in the district than for much on Cambridgeshire, linked to this there are significant numbers of people who commute out of the district to higher paid work, mainly in Cambridge but also in London. House prices are more affordable than for much on Cambridgeshire but they are still well above what is considered affordable.

**3.115** Huntingdonshire has a unique landscape setting and rich cultural heritage. The district has a significant network of strategically important open spaces and green corridors associated with bodies of water; Grafham Water, the river Great Ouse and the lakes east of St Ives are part of a continuous green infrastructure corridor that runs through the central belt of the district. A significant addition to the green infrastructure network in the form of the Great Fen, which is a national scale landscape restoration project, will be a major boost to green infrastructure in the district. As the district grows to accommodate an increasing population it is imperative that these cultural assets, local distinctiveness and biodiversity resources are maintained and protected.

**3.116** The table below summarises the main issues that the Local Plan needs to address.

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## Key sustainability issues and problems and how the Local Plan could address them

Key sustainability issues and problems	How they could be reflected in the SA framework
<p><b>Land, Water and Flood Risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In recent years the proportion of new housing built on brownfield land has increased but is still low</li> <li>• Most of Huntingdonshire is good quality agricultural land, mostly classed as grade 2 with only small areas classed as grade 4</li> <li>• Significant supplies of sand and gravel in the district meet the ongoing need for construction. Requirements for managed release of these minerals is set out in county plans</li> <li>• Water quality in the River Nene and River Great Ouse needs to be protected, recognising their importance to the environment, for example the Ouse Washes, which the Great Ouse flows into are designated as SAC, SPA and Ramsar and so are protected by European legislation</li> <li>• The district sits within the driest region in the country and water supply needs to be carefully managed</li> <li>• There is a significant risk of flooding given large areas of low lying land.</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting the use of previously developed land</li> <li>• using land efficiently</li> <li>• sustaining the resource available for supplying food and other public benefits</li> <li>• recognising the ongoing need for sand and gravel quarries</li> <li>• supporting the viability and diversity of rural economies (links with Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism)</li> <li>• reducing water pollution</li> <li>• protection of the natural environment (links with Green Infrastructure and Open Space)</li> <li>• using water sustainably</li> <li>• protecting water supply areas</li> <li>• lessening the effects of flooding and droughts</li> <li>• Avoid the sterilisation of mineral reserves</li> <li>• Promote the efficient use of mineral resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Green Infrastructure and Open Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are relatively low levels of households close to accessible green space areas of 2ha or more but high levels are close to some green space</li> <li>• The Great Fen has been established to promote the establishment a large area of fen wildlife habitat</li> <li>• The Great Ouse Valley and Huntingdonshire Fens and Woods are areas of strategic green infrastructure improvement set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy for Cambridgeshire</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting provision of accessible natural green space and other forms of open space (links with Health and Well-being)</li> <li>• managing and conserving the natural environment (links with Land, Water and Flood Risk)</li> <li>• promoting the strategic green infrastructure network and links to it</li> </ul>
<p><b>Biodiversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a number of sites designated for their biodiversity value. These may be SSSI designated nationally, County Wildlife Sites, or European sites such as those protected by Ramsar or SPA</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protection and enhancement of biodiversity for both species and habitats and in both designated and non-designated areas</li> </ul>

Key sustainability issues and problems	How they could be reflected in the SA framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets have been set for maintaining and enhancing the range, size/population, and condition of many vulnerable habitats and species in Biodiversity Action Plans</li> <li>• It is unlikely that all the land which is of value for biodiversity has been adequately mapped and protected to date</li> <li>• Huntingdonshire’s biodiversity resource is vulnerable to new developments and land management practices which could result in habitat loss and fragmentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing public awareness and involvement in protection and enhancement</li> <li>• reversing habitat fragmentation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huntingdonshire has a diversity of landscapes from the flat, expansive fenlands in the north-east to rolling upland landscapes in the west. Streams flow into the fen drainage system to the north or the Ouse Valley to the south. There are four very different market towns and nearly 100 villages expressing a wide variety of architectural styles</li> <li>• Huntingdonshire’s landscape qualities are vulnerable to insensitive new development and land management practices</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protection of important natural landscapes</li> <li>• enabling wider awareness and appreciation of landscape</li> <li>• maintenance and strengthening of townscape character and the sense of place of our settlements</li> <li>• building understanding of how landscape and townscape character can be affected by development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Heritage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are over 2200 listed buildings and monuments in Huntingdonshire, and some 250 in the 2011 Buildings at Risk register</li> <li>• Huntingdonshire’s cultural and historic attractions, including important historic landscape areas, perform important roles in terms of social and environmental benefits such as defining and adding to local distinctiveness and enhancing the quality of life</li> <li>• Huntingdonshire’s cultural and historic attractions, including important historic landscape areas, attract large numbers of visitors each year and perform an important economic role</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conservation and enhancement of the historic environment</li> <li>• recognition of the importance of archaeological heritage</li> <li>• preservation of heritage assets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County’s Climate Change and Environment Strategy indicates sets out the need for local government to act on reducing greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>• The quickest and easiest way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from energy use is to use more efficient technologies and buildings, and to change wasteful behaviour</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building wider awareness and appreciation of actions that can be taken to tackle climate change</li> <li>• improving energy efficiency of buildings including supporting the achievement of zero carbon homes by 2016</li> <li>• promoting the location of new activities where the need to travel is minimised</li> </ul>

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Key sustainability issues and problems	How they could be reflected in the SA framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant levels of carbon emissions are from traffic</li> <li>• There is significant untapped renewable energy potential but there may be environmental effects associated with the establishment of technologies such as wind farms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhancing our ability to adapt to the impacts of climate change</li> <li>• helping the transition to a low carbon economy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pollution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most significant air quality issues arise from traffic and congestion. There are air quality management areas identified in St Neots, Huntingdon and along the A14 as a result of emissions from traffic</li> <li>• Air pollution can also be caused by emissions from industry, agriculture and households</li> <li>• Light and noise pollution arising from human activity can reduce tranquillity</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tackling poor air quality particularly in the air quality management areas</li> <li>• avoidance, prevention or reduction in harmful pollution</li> <li>• promotion of the use of products designed to make no or the smallest possible contribution (by the nature of their manufacture, use or disposal) to increasing pollution hazards</li> <li>• Minimisation of further light pollution</li> <li>• Promotion of built forms that minimise additional noise pollution</li> </ul>
<p><b>Waste and Recycling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across the county large amounts of waste are sent to landfills and recycling centres. Recycling can help to reduce the environmental effects of landfills and prolong their lifespans</li> <li>• Construction waste is a more significant contributor to waste here than in slower growing districts</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotion of the use of products designed to make no or the smallest possible contribution (by the nature of their manufacture, use or disposal) to increasing waste hazards</li> <li>• reduce waste production and increase reuse, recycling and composting</li> <li>• promotion of sustainable management of waste</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and Well-being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While Huntingdonshire’s population is generally healthy, life expectancy is not as good as neighbouring South Cambridgeshire or East Cambridgeshire</li> <li>• Some 60% of the district’s population live outside the market towns and can suffer from isolation</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotion and creation of built environments that encourage and support physical activity (links with Green Infrastructure and Open Space)</li> <li>• extending and improving access to sports and recreation facilities</li> <li>• promoting the accessibility of cultural activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Population and Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huntingdonshire’s population has increased significantly over the last 30 years and is situated within a housing market area which is growing at a rate above the national</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing housing supply including affordable housing</li> </ul>

Key sustainability issues and problems	How they could be reflected in the SA framework
<p>average. Over the last 10 years, Huntingdonshire's population has increased at about half the average rate of Cambridgeshire authorities (5% rather than 10%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of an appropriate range and choice of housing for the growing population is difficult given current market conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning for demographic change and the consequent housing requirements</li> <li>• promoting improvements in housing quality</li> <li>• promoting a mix of housing types and sizes, including Gypsy caravan pitches, that meets people's needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deprivation, Crime and Access to services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a small number of areas in Huntingdon and St Neots which rank highly on indices of deprivation</li> <li>• Proximity and availability of key services such as GPs, schools, libraries, and leisure centres helps to improve quality of life. According to the Place Survey 2008 the facilities and services that are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live for Cambridgeshire residents are public transport, affordable decent housing, shopping facilities and low level of crime</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• redressing inequalities related to gender, age, disability, race, faith, sexuality, location and income</li> <li>• promoting multi-purpose design and use of social and community facilities to support neighbourhood vitality and make efficient use of these resources</li> <li>• promoting social cohesion</li> <li>• promoting the prevention of crime and reduction of the fear of crime</li> <li>• reducing and preventing anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>
<p><b>Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There seems to be sufficient land and buildings for employment in total but there are shortages and surpluses of certain types in some locations</li> <li>• There have been some successes in the promotion of specific business sectors over the last 30 years</li> <li>• High streets suffer from competition from out of town retailing, the internet and larger centres outside of the district</li> <li>• The designation of the enterprise zone at Alconbury airfield</li> <li>• Positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting a low carbon and resource efficient economy (links with Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy)</li> <li>• promoting the rural economy and tourism</li> <li>• understanding of strengths and opportunities to enable economic growth</li> <li>• enabling provision of retail facilities to meet residents needs</li> <li>• promoting vital and viable town centres</li> </ul>
<p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huntingdonshire's educational achievement in 2009 at GCSE level was in line with the county average and slightly better than the national average. However it was not as good as neighbouring South Cambridgeshire</li> <li>• There are a diverse range of training opportunities available within the district and county but there is a growing need for more schools and other educational</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that the educational needs of the growing population are served locally</li> <li>• improving uptake of learning and training opportunities</li> </ul>

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Key sustainability issues and problems	How they could be reflected in the SA framework
<p>establishments because new developments create the need for increased school provision</p>	
<p><b>Transport Infrastructure and Commuting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategic road network has issues with capacity, especially the A14</li> <li>• The rail network also has issues with capacity and railway stations are located only at Huntingdon and St Neots</li> <li>• Accessibility in St Ives has improved as a result of the opening of the Guided Busway in 2011 and there is capacity for more use of the Busway</li> <li>• Although there is a high proportion of the population finding local work particularly in Huntingdon and St Neots, commuting out of the district is significant particularly for better paid work</li> </ul>	<p>SA framework objectives could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting the location of new activities where the need to travel is minimised (links with Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy)</li> <li>• promoting sustainable modes of travel (e.g. walking, cycling, rail and bus), travel safety, and improvements in street design</li> <li>• maintaining public rights of way and promoting the provision of new routes for cycling and pedestrian movement</li> </ul>

## A 4: Developing the SA framework

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C	Stage D	Stage E
A 1: Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives A 2: Collecting baseline information A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems <b>A 4: Developing the SA framework</b> A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA				

- 3.117** The purpose of this task is to provide a means by which the environmental performance of the plan or programme and alternatives can be assessed.
- 3.118** The SA framework is a key component in the SA process. It is a recognised way for allowing the social, economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan and alternatives to be tested. In developing the SA objectives regard needs to be had to the topics listed in the SEA Regulations, but they should be informed by the previous tasks and focus on the key issues in the local area.
- 3.119** The SA framework will be used for appraising the objectives, overall strategy and strategic policies of the Local Plan as well as the site specific and development management policies. It will achieve this through the use of tiered decision aiding questions. In this way the appraisal can be focused on each type of policy. In some cases the objective may not be applicable, for example for site specific policies, in which case the framework contains the explanation of why this is considered to be the case.

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SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
<b>Land, Water and Flood Risk</b>			
1. Minimise development on greenfield land, maximise development on previously developed land or land with the lowest agricultural value	<p>Will it enable the use of land that has previously been developed in preference to land that has not been developed? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote development in locations where higher densities are appropriate? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote development in locations that are grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural) in preference to higher grades? (Yes +, No -)</p>	<p>Is more than half the site PDL? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Is more than half the site located on grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural) (+), Grade 2 (~), or Grade 1 (X)<sup>(40)</sup>?</p> <p>Is the site in an area where higher density development is appropriate? (Yes +, Partly ~ No -)</p>	<p>Will it promote the use of land that has previously been developed? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote the use of land that is classified as grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural)? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote development at higher densities where it is appropriate? (Yes +, No -)</p>
2. Protect water resources (both quality and quantity)	<p>Will it direct development away from waterways that are sensitive to changes in water quality? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it direct development towards locations where water treatment capacity exists or can be added to effectively? (Yes +, No -)</p>	<p>What impact will development have on water resources? (no adverse impacts identified +, measures may be required to ensure no adverse impacts ~, measures will be required to ensure no adverse impacts -)</p>	<p>Will it promote a reduction in water consumption? (Yes +, No -)</p>

40 See notes on site assessment and significant constraints below



SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
3. Manage and minimise all forms of flood risk (taking into account climate change)	Will it minimise risk to people and property from flooding, now and in the future? (Yes +, No -)	<p>Is more than half the site located in flood zone 1 (+), flood zone 2 (~), flood zone 3a (with climate change allowance) (-), or functional floodplain (X)<sup>(41)</sup>?</p> <p>Is less than half the site located in the rapid inundation zone? (Yes +, No -)?</p> <p>Can the site incorporate SuDS? (Yes +, there are issues that may affect their incorporation ~, No -)</p>	<p>Will it ensure that development has taken flood risk into account, both in terms of risk to the development and to displaced risk? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote the use of SuDS and reduced runoff rates? (Yes +, No -)</p>
<b>Green Infrastructure and Open Space</b>			
4. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open and natural green space and promote the strategic green infrastructure network and links to it	Will it direct development to areas which are either well served by open space or publicly accessible green space or have the capacity for providing more open space or publicly accessible green space? (Yes +, No -)	<p>Is the site within 300m of an area of accessible natural green space over 2ha<sup>(42)</sup>? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Does the site present opportunities to link into and/or form part of the Green Infrastructure Network? (Yes +, limited or small scale opportunities ~, No -)</p>	<p>Will it promote an increase in the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote an increase in households that have easy access to natural green space? (Yes +, No -)</p>
<b>Biodiversity</b>			

41 See notes on site assessment and significant constraints below

42 Natural England ANGSt 'local' standard

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SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
5. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and habitats	Will it protect, restore, create or enhance habitats? (Yes +, No -)	<p>Is the site a designated nature site (Yes X)<sup>(43)</sup>, immediately adjacent to a designated nature site (-) or within 2km of a Ramsar, SAC or SPA, 1km of a SSSI or NNR or 200m of a CWS? (Yes to any ~, No to all +)</p> <p>Are protected species known to exist on the site (Yes -) or is there potential for protected species to exist on the site<sup>(44)</sup>? (Potential ~, unlikely +)<sup>(45)</sup></p>	<p>Will it promote the conservation of species, the reversal of their decline, and the enhancement of diversity? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote the protection of sites designated for their nature conservation value? (Yes +, No -)</p>
<b>Landscape</b>			
6. Protect, maintain and enhance landscape and townscape character and the sense of place of our settlements	<p>Will it promote development of a type and scale which recognises and responds to the valued characteristics of landscape character types? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote development of a type and scale which recognises and responds to the valued characteristics of existing townscapes? (Yes +, No -)</p>	Will development have a significant impact on the surrounding townscape or landscape? (Positive impact +, Negligible impact ~, and Detrimental impact -)	<p>Will it promote the protection of the diversity and distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it improve the quality of urban, architectural and landscape design? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it seek to minimise the potential adverse visual effects of development? (Yes +, No -)</p>
<b>Heritage</b>			

43 See notes on site assessment and significant constraints below

44 with reference to the Natural England's Decision Tree

45 subject to appropriate surveys being carried out

SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
7. Protect, maintain and enhance heritage assets, whether they are designated or not	Will it promote development which preserves and enhances the district's heritage? (Yes +, No -)	Will development impact on heritage assets or their settings? (Positive impact +, Negligible impact ~, and Detrimental impact -)	Will it promote the protection of heritage assets (including designated and non-designated) and their settings? (Yes +, No -)
<b>Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</b>			
8. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and improve energy efficiency	<p>Will it lead to development that can take advantage of or enable opportunities for decentralised low carbon energy sources or networks? (Yes +, Uncertain ~, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote the location of significant areas of growth where the need to travel is minimised due to the mix of employment and housing? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote actions to tackle climate change both through adaptation and mitigation? (Yes +, No -)</p>	Can development take advantage of existing or planned opportunities for decentralised low carbon energy sources or networks? (Yes +, Uncertain or too small a scale ~, No -)	<p>Will it promote actions to tackle climate change both through adaptation and mitigation? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it promote an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources? (Yes +, No -)</p>
<b>Pollution</b>			
9. Improve air quality	Will it recognise and tackle the causes of air pollution, particularly from traffic? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site outside (Yes +, No -) or adjacent (~) to an air quality management area?	Covered by DAQ for SA objective 10
10. Avoid unnecessary light, noise and visual pollution	Will it promote the retention of the quiet rural character of the district? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site located in such a position that development is unlikely to cause widespread light, noise or other forms of pollution? (Yes +, No -)	Will it seek to ensure that development is not affected by or causes unreasonable impacts from light, noise, air or other forms of pollution? (Yes +, No -)
<b>Waste and Recycling</b>			

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SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
11. Reduce waste production and increase reuse, recycling and composting	Will it direct development away from areas of search for waste purposes designated in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste LDF? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site outside areas of search for waste purposes designated in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste LDF? (Yes +, No -)  Will development reduce waste production and increase reuse, recycling and composting? (positive effect +, no effect or neutral ~, negative effect -)	Will it promote the reduction of waste throughout the lifetime (construction, use and redevelopment) of development? (Yes +, No -)
<b>Health and Well-being</b>			
12. Promote built environments that encourage and support physical activity, including extending and improving access to facilities	Covered by DAQ for SA objective 4	Is the site within 500m of an existing area of open space? (Yes +, Potentially on-site + or ~ <sup>(1)</sup> , No -)  Is the site within 800m of an outdoor sports facility? (Yes +, Potentially on-site <sup>(1)</sup> ~, No -)	Will it enable people to lead healthy lifestyles, including travel choices? (Yes +, No -)
13. Promote accessibility of cultural and social activities	Will it promote accessibility to cultural or social activities? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site within 800m of a facility where cultural or social activities can be accessed? (Yes +, Potentially on-site <sup>(1)</sup> or uncertain ~, No -)	Will it promote accessibility of cultural or social activities? (Yes +, Uncertain ~, No -)
<b>Population and Housing</b>			
14. Ensure all groups in society have access to decent, appropriate and affordable accommodation	Will it promote a growth in the provision of housing to meet needs (including for affordable and traveller accommodation)? (Yes +, No -)	Will the site provide an increase in residential accommodation? (Yes +, Possible but uncertain ~, No -)	Will it support the provision of housing that will meet identified needs (including for affordable and traveller accommodation)? (Yes +, Uncertain ~, No -)

SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
<b>Deprivation, Crime and Access to Services</b>			
15. Redress inequalities	Will it help reduce poverty and social exclusion for those areas and groups most affected? (Yes +, No -)	Will development address a particular housing equality issue? (Yes +, Unlikely -)	Will it promote accessibility for all members of society, including the elderly and disabled? (Yes +, No -)
16. Reduce and prevent crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	Will it promote a reduction in levels of crime or the fear of crime? (Yes +, No -)	Will development help to make the area safer? (Yes +, uncertain ~, No -)	Will it promote development that is designed to reduce and prevent crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime (Yes +, Uncertain ~, No -)
17. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities including promotion of multi-purpose design and use and efficient use of these resources	Will it facilitate access to basic services? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site within 400m of a food shop? (Yes +, Potentially on-site ~ <sup>(1)</sup> , No -)  Is the site within 1km of a GP surgery/ health centre? (Yes +, Potentially on-site ~ <sup>(1)</sup> , No -)	Will it promote accessibility of services? (Yes +, No -)
<b>Employment, Business, Retail and Tourism</b>			
18. Improve access to satisfying work, appropriate to skills, potential and place of residence	Will it match areas of population growth to employment growth in a manner which facilitates easy access to jobs? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site within 2km of a major concentration of employment opportunities and/or potential employees? (Yes +, Potentially on-site ~ <sup>(1)</sup> , No -)	Will it promote access to employment? (Yes +, No -)
19. Positively and pro-actively encourage sustainable economic growth by improving the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and viability of the local economy	Will it enhance Huntingdonshire as a business location and encourage inward investment? (Yes +, No -)	Will the site provide opportunities for investment to create additional jobs? (Yes +, uncertain ~, No -)	Will it support economic activity in sectors targeted for growth or in the rural economy? (Yes +, No -)  Will it enable existing businesses to grow? (Yes +, No -)

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SA Objective	Decision Aiding Questions for use in appraising options for		
	The Strategy	Sites	Development Management Policies
			Will it support the vitality and viability of established retail and service centres? (Yes +, No -)
<b>Education</b>			
20. Ensure that the educational needs of the growing population are served locally while improving uptake of learning and training opportunities	Will it help improve the availability of training and education opportunities? (Yes +, No -)	Is the site within 600m of a primary school? (Yes +, Potentially on-site ~ <sup>(1)</sup> , No -)	Will it promote easy access to training and education? (Yes +, No -)
<b>Transport Infrastructure and Commuting</b>			
21. Reduce the need to travel and promote necessary infrastructure improvements and sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling, and public transport)	<p>Will it reduce the need to travel? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it match areas of growth to those with better or improving transport infrastructure? (Yes +, No -)</p>	<p>Is the site within 400m of a bus stop? (Yes +, Potentially on-site ~<sup>(1)</sup>, No -)</p> <p>Is the site free of known major transport infrastructure constraints? (Yes +, Uncertain ~, No -)</p> <p>Will the site support a mix of uses such as housing, employment, retail and/or community facilities? (Yes +, No -)</p>	<p>Will it help improve cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it improve accessibility by means other than the car? (Yes +, No -)</p> <p>Will it support and improve community and public transport? (Yes +, No -)</p>

1. Reference to the council's Developer Contributions SPD with respect to scale of development will be had with the score based on the likelihood of provision on site

**3.120** The SA framework is set out according to each SA Topic addressed e.g. Land, Water and Flood Risk. Each topic has a number of SA objectives which are the overall sustainability goals that have been derived from the analysis carried out in task 'A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and

problems'. Each SA objective is accompanied by a series of decision aiding questions which will be used to appraise local plan policies depending on whether they are strategic, site allocation or development management policies. For more information about the tasks associated with the appraisals please refer to 2 'Sustainability Appraisal Methodology'.

**3.121** How the scoring system should be applied is identified for each decision aiding question. The questions have been worded to try to limit the number of instances where an 'uncertain' result is possible. It was considered that if an 'uncertain' result were to be included in the scoring system for all questions, appraisals could be undermined by a high proportion of 'uncertain' results. In this way a clear appraisal result can be gained and quantifiable differences between options clearly identified. The inclusion of a commentary for each decision aiding question will enable factors considered in the decision making process to be identified. The answers are not intended to be added up to a score, but instead the options should be compared on an objective by objective basis. This will mean that the overall summary and conclusions will be influenced by the number of positive and negative assessments identified but will be of a qualitative rather than quantitative nature.

**SA appraisals will use the following system to identify what effects the option being appraised will have for each decision aiding question:**

+++	The likely effects of this option are considered to be positive. The '++' and '+++' scores are intended to help enable differentiation between multiple options where positive impacts are consider likely.
++	
+	
~	The likely effects of this option are considered to be neither positive nor negative, or where effects are uncertain.
-	The likely effects of this option are considered to be negative.
X	(Sites only) A significant environmental constraint has been identified and the site will not be considered suitable for allocation.

**3.122** The decision aiding questions have been tested through a series of trial appraisals. Through the testing process the questions have been refined to ensure that they help differentiate between sites. As an example an early question was drafted as 'Is the site a designated nature site (yes -) or within 2km of a designated site? (Yes ~, No +)'. When testing this question it became apparent that only a very small number of sites would not be within 2km of a designated site. It was therefore decided to amend the question so that the 2km distance was only used for the most important category of Ramsar, SAC and SPA sites, a distance of 1km would be used for nationally important sites (SSSIs and NNRs) and a distance of 200m would be used for site of local importance (CWS etc). This was considered to be a balanced approach giving a fair reflection of the importance of designated sites while giving a meaningful way to differentiate between sites.

### Site Assessment and Significant Constraints

**3.123** The assessment of sites as set out in the methodology of the Environmental Capacity Study has a two phase assessment process. The first phase looks at the land surrounding each settlement to identify areas of greatest and least environmental constraint and sensitivity. At this settlement level land within the functional floodplain, a designated nature site or grade 1 agricultural land is identified as being subject to a significant environmental constraint and considered to offer no capacity for development. This has implications for the SA of sites, specifically the appraisal with regards to three of the decision aiding questions in that:

- **For SA Objective 1** the question 'Is more than half the site located on grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural), Grade 2, or Grade 1?'
- **For SA Objective 3** the question 'Is more than half the site located in flood zone 1, flood zone 2, flood zone 3a (with climate change allowance) or functional floodplain?'
- **For SA Objective 5** the question 'Is the site a designated nature site, immediately adjacent to a designated nature site or within 2km of a Ramsar, SAC or SPA, 1km of a SSSI or NNR or 200m of a CWS?'

# 3 The Scoping Process

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**3.124** Because of the two phase process used in the ECS appraisals for most sites for these decision aiding questions will be broadly positive or neutral as any sites with significant constraints would have been discounted before being fully appraised. A different process was used for additional sites and so it was decided that a change to the scoring scheme was necessary in order to identify those new sites that have significant constraints. The scoring scheme for these questions was modified to include a 'X' result.



## A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA

Stage A	Stage B	Stage C	Stage D	Stage E
A 1: Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives A 2: Collecting baseline information A 3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems A 4: Developing the SA framework <b>A 5: Consulting on the scope of the SA</b>				

- 3.125** The purpose of this task is to ensure that the SA covers the likely significant environmental effects of the plan and to ensure that the SA process is and will be robust and suitably comprehensive in order to support production of the plan. Consultation is an important part of producing the Local Plan and the council is committed to engaging during the process in ways that give people opportunities to get involved. Details of how the council intends to engage during the production of the Local Plan can be found in the Statement of Community Involvement, which is available on the council's [website](#).
- 3.126** The council is required to consult on the scope of the SA with the following three bodies:
- Environment Agency
  - Natural England
  - English Heritage
- 3.127** So that the scoping report is as robust as possible and to promote engagement in the Local Plan the consultation will be open for anyone to make comments.
- 3.128** Consultation on this scoping report took place between 24 February 2012 and 30 March 2012. The consultation was run through the council's [consultation portal](#), where all comments can be viewed. A summary of the comments made is available in Appendix 2: 'Summary of Consultation and Amendments'.

- 3.129** Consultation is a two way process and so comments received have been used to amend this scoping report (feeding back into tasks A 1 to A 4).

### Previous Consultation

- 3.130** As identified in 1 'Introduction' this Scoping Report is based on the Planning Proposals Scoping Report. Consultation for the Planning Proposals Scoping Report ran from 7 February 2011 to 14 March 2011 inclusive. A summary of the issues raised is available in Appendix 2: 'Summary of Consultation and Amendments'. Full comments can be reviewed on the council's [consultation portal](#). Comments from that consultation were taken into account prior to the drafting of this Scoping Report.

# 4 Next Steps

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## 4 Next Steps

**4.1** This scoping report has now had amendments that are necessary following consultation, the methodology will be used to complete the SA/SEA process as part of the production of the Local Plan:

### To be produced as part of drawing up the draft Local Plan:

- Testing the plan strategy against the SA framework (B 1)
- Developing plan options (B 2)
- Predicting the effects of the plan including alternatives (B 3)
- Evaluating the effects of the plan including the alternatives (B 4)
- Mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects (B 5)
- Proposing measures to monitor the environmental effects of plan implementation (B 6)
- Preparing the sustainability appraisal report (C 1)
- Public consultation on the draft plan and the sustainability appraisal report (D 1)

### To be produced alongside the Proposed Submission Local Plan:

- Appraising significant changes (D 2)
- Making decisions and providing information (initial coverage) (D 3)
- Developing aims and methods for monitoring (E 1)
- Responding to adverse effects (E 2)

### To be produced when the Local Plan is adopted:

- Assessing significant changes (if any are made through the submission and examination stages) (D 2)
- Making decisions and providing information (additional coverage) (D 3)
- Developing aims and methods for monitoring (if required following the submission and examination stages) (E 1)
- Responding to adverse effects (if required following the submission and examination stages) (E 2)

**4.2** For more information about these stages see Table 2 'Stages B to E in the SA/ SEA process'.

**4.3** A draft plan will be prepared through engagement with interested parties, during 2012. The council hopes to be able to publish the proposed submission version of the Local Plan early in 2013.

**4.4** For more information about the timetable for production of the Local Plan please refer to the council's Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS can be downloaded from the council's [website](#).

**4.5** For more information about the methods of engagement that the council will use during the production of the Local Plan please refer to the council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The council has recently revised its SCI and can be downloaded from the council's [website](#).

## Appendix 1: Plans and Programmes Reviewed

**1.1** The following tables set out the plans and programmes that have been reviewed. They set out the key aims, objectives, targets or indicators of the plan or programme. As identified in 'A 1: Identifying relevant plans and programmes' the most local and relevant plans and programmes have been considered. Where higher level plans and programmes have been identified but a more local plan or programme exists that covers the same topic the link is identified.

International and European Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
EU Sixth Environmental Action Programme	Sets the priorities for Sustainable Development and priority areas for action: Tackling climate change; Nature and biodiversity; Environment and health; and Sustainable use of natural resources
Aarhus Convention 1998: The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters > Freedom of Information Act 2000	Establishes the right of everyone to receive environmental information that is held by the public sector. The right to participate from an early stage in environmental decision making. The right to challenge public decisions that have been made without respecting these rights
<a href="#">European Directive Nitrates (91/676/EEC)</a> > The Nitrate Pollution Prevention (Amendment) Regulations 2009 (Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2008)	Reduce water pollution by nitrates. The Environment Agency identifies Nitrate Vulnerable Zones and establishes and implements an action programme with this aim
<a href="#">European SEA Directive (2001/42/EEC)</a> > The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004 No.1633)	Requires assessment of the effect of projects on the environment

International and European Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
<a href="#">European Air Quality Framework Directive (2008/50/EEC)</a> > The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010	Avoid, prevent or reduce concentrations of harmful air pollutants and limit values and/or alert thresholds set for ambient air pollution levels. Targets set for specific oxides
<a href="#">European Directive 97/11/EC</a> (amending Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment) > The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011	Requires assessment of the effect of projects on the environment (EIA)
<a href="#">Valetta Convention</a> (European Convention on the protection of Archaeological Heritage) 1992 > The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	Recognises importance of and clarifies definition of archaeological heritage
<a href="#">Landfill Directive (99/31/EC)</a>	To provide for measures, procedures and guidance to prevent or reduce effects on the environment, in particular the pollution of surface water, ground water, soil and air, and on the global environment, including the greenhouse effect, as well as any resulting risk to human health, from landfilling of waste, during the whole life-cycle of the landfill.
European Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings 2002/91/EC	Promote the improvement in energy performance of buildings. Established through Code for Sustainable Homes & BREEAM. Baseline set by Part L of Building Regulations
European Biodiversity Strategy, February 1998 > Working with the Grain of Nature: A Biodiversity Strategy for England (DEFRA 2002) (and also Volume 1 Report on Progress	Emphasises the important role of spatial planning in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

# Appendix 1: Plans and Programmes Reviewed

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International and European Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
2002-2006), The UK Biodiversity Action Plan > Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plans (CCC, Various dates)	
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC > Water Act (2003), Flood and Water Management Act 2010	Sets out measures and objectives to reduce water pollution, use water in a sustainable way and lessen the effects of floods and droughts
European Waste Framework Directive (2006/12/EC) > Waste Minimisation Act 1998, Household Waste Recycling Act 2003	The prevention or reduction of waste production and its harmfulness by; the development of technologies more sparing in their use of resources: the use of products designed so as to make no or the smallest possible contribution, by the nature of their manufacture, use or disposal, to increase the amount or harmfulness of waste and pollution hazards; the development of appropriate techniques for the final disposal of dangerous substances contained in waste destined for recovery; and the recovery of waste by means of recycling, reuse or reclamation with a view to extracting raw materials; or the use of waste as a source of energy.
EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive, 1992)	Conserve fauna and flora and natural habitats of EU importance. Establish a network of protected areas to maintain both the distribution and abundance of threatened species and habitats
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) (Ramsar Convention)	Intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources
Kyoto Protocol > Climate Change Act 2008	Reduce greenhouse gases by 5% of 1990 levels by 2008-12. UK has an agreement to reduce emissions by 12.5% below 1990 levels by 2008/12 and a national goal of a 20% reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions below 1990 levels by 2010

International and European Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
<a href="#">European Spatial Development Perspective (EC, 1999)</a>	To work towards a balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union.
Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds: Directive 2009/147/EC	Relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring wild birds in Europe. It covers the protection, management and control of these species and lays down rules for their exploitation.
European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe 2006)	Promotes landscape protection, management and planning and European co-operation on landscape issues. The Framework set out in the Convention is being implemented through Action Plans created by Natural England, English Heritage and DEFRA with input from other partners eg Forestry Commission and Local Authorities to review policies on Landscape

National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Climate Change Adaptation By Design (TCPA, 2007)	Aims to communicate the importance of adapting to some degree of inevitable climate change, and to show how adaptation can be integrated into the planning, design and development of new and existing communities. It considers how adaptation options are influenced by geographical location and the scale of development. It seeks to ensure a better understanding of climate risks while demonstrating effective adaptation strategies through case studies from around the world.
Sustainable energy by design (TCPA, 2006)	Aims to show how sustainable energy can be integrated into the planning, design and development of new and existing communities. It promotes opportunities for sustainable energy and considers the role of the planning system, communities, other stakeholders and delivery bodies

# Plans and Programmes Reviewed Appendix 1:

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National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Defining a Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard for Zero Carbon Homes (Zero Carbon Hub, 2009)	Seeks to examine the energy efficiency metrics and standards which will realise the ambition of the highest practical energy efficiency level realisable in all dwelling types as part of the framework for achieving zero carbon homes by 2016
Nature Nearby, Accessible Greenspace Guidance' (Natural England, 2010)	Details Natural England's standards for accessible natural greenspace (ANGSt), a set of benchmarks that should be used to ensure new and existing residential development has access to nature.
Allowable Solutions for Tomorrows New Homes (Zero Carbon Hub, 2011)	Aims to ensure that the third part of the Zero Carbon hierarchy, Allowable Solutions, are operated within a practical framework that provides verifiable carbon emission savings, encourages innovation and supports localism wherever possible.
Carbon Compliance: Finding and Recommendations (Zero Carbon Hub, 2011)	Recommends an appropriate national Carbon Compliance limit, to form part of the overall definition of a zero carbon home which will apply in regulations from 2016. The report sets out key results from modelling and reality checking which indicates the limits of what is generally feasible using today's knowledge of design and technology. The report also considers the costs, from a range of perspectives, including society, the householder and the developer.
Cost of Building to the Code for Sustainable Homes (DCLG, 2011)	The study seeks to: Identify the solutions that home builders typically adopt to achieve credits under the various Code issues and the associated costs; Understand the approaches typically taken by home builders to achieve each Code level and how these approaches are influenced by the characteristics of a development; Understand the additional costs that home builders have typically incurred in achieving each Code Level, how these costs vary between dwelling types and on the nature of the development; Identify how Code costs have changed since its introduction and provide insights into how they might change in the future.

National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (HM Government, 2004)	Introduces the system of development plan documents as part of the Local Development Framework. Introduces regional spatial strategies as replacements for structure plans and regional planning guidance.
Demographic Change and the Environment, The 29th Report (Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, 2011)	Investigates the effects of projected increases in the total population; the changing age structure of the population; changes in household size and composition; the distribution of population between urban and rural areas; and the regional distribution of population and the regional variation in demographic change on the environment.
Evaluating requirements for market and affordable housing; Housing Affordability: a fuller picture; Housing requirements and the impact of recent economic and demographic change (National Housing and Planning Advisory Unit, Various dates)	A series of studies that examine some of the key issues local authorities need to consider when analysing their local housing markets, and developing their housing and planning policies
Vision statement on the Historic Environment of England (2010)	Establishes the vision that the value of the historic environment is recognised by all who have the power to shape it; that Government gives it proper recognition and that it is managed intelligently and in a way that fully realises its contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the nation.
Plugging Health into Planning: evidence and practice (2011)	Draws together an evidence base for integrating health into spatial planning and illustrates it with a range of practice examples from around England. Its purpose is to help practitioners ensure that the planning functions they deliver provide the most beneficial outcomes for the health and wellbeing of the community.

# Appendix 1: Plans and Programmes Reviewed

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National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Living Working Countryside: The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing (2008)	The objective of this report is to help ensure the planning system brings a positive, lasting legacy of places in which people actually want to live. It suggests changes to the planning system necessary to deliver vibrant communities with a distinct identity, in keeping with the character of their surroundings, and which enhance the local landscape and biodiversity.
Planning Act 2008 (HM Government, 2008)	Introduces the system for nationally significant infrastructure planning alongside further reforms to the Town and Country Planning System including the addition of a duty on councils to take action on climate change in their DPDs and the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy
Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (HM Government, 2007)	Principal aim of Act is to promote sustainability of local communities through a number of measures including provision of local services, decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and provision of affordable housing
Human Rights Act 1998 (HM Government 1998)	Primary legislation covering human rights which sets out basic civil and political rights of individuals. Includes the right to peaceful enjoyment of a dwelling, to privacy and protection of privacy by law. Freedom of opinion and expression.
Securing the Future: Sustainable Development Strategy for the UK (HM Government, 2005)	Principal aim is to enable everyone to satisfy their basic needs without compromising the needs of future generations. Guiding principles: Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance; Using sound science responsibly.
UK Climate Change Programme (HM Government, 2006)	Sets out the Government's commitments both at domestic and international levels to meet the challenge of climate change. At local government level this includes a drive to promote additional action for local authorities on climate change

National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Climate Change Act 2008 (HM Government, 2008)	Long term binding framework to tackle climate change. Sets out a new approach to tackling climate change including: Setting ambitious, legally binding targets; Taking powers to help meet those targets; Strengthening the institutional framework; Enhancing the UK's ability to adapt to the impact of climate change; and Establishing clear and regular accountability to UK Parliament. Key aim of the Act is to improve carbon management helping the transition towards a low-carbon economy through the setting of carbon emission targets
Planning and Energy Act 2008 (HM Government, 2008)	Builds on policies and provisions in Climate Change Programme. Allows local authorities to include policies and proposals that will secure energy efficiency improvements in excess of Part L Building Regulations including: A proportion of energy used in development in their area to be energy from renewable sources; A proportion of energy used in development in their area to be low carbon; and Development in their area to comply with energy efficiency standards that exceed the energy requirements of building requirements
Working with the Grain of Nature: A Biodiversity Strategy for England (DEFRA 2002) (and also Volume 1 Report on Progress 2002-2006)	Sets out the national approach to conserving biodiversity and identifies particular measures to help the protection of England's biodiversity. Volume 1 sets out progress towards meeting the aims set out in the Strategy
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (HM Government, 2006)	Principal aims: To ensure that all communities, people and businesses have better access to support, advice and services; and to better protect the countryside and open space through a more coherent approach to managing and conserving the natural environment
The Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000 (HM Government, 2000)	To create new statutory right of way on certain types of open land, modernise public rights of way system and strengthen nature conservation legislation

# Plans and Programmes Reviewed Appendix 1:

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National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) (HM Government, 1981)	Aims to prevent loss of flora and fauna by making it illegal to intentionally damage wild plants and animals or their habitats
Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (SI 2716) as amended by Conservation of Habitats Species Regulations 2010	Sets targets for SSSIs and Regulation 48 requires screening of projects with respect to the need for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).
Towards a Sustainable Transport System Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World (DfT 2007)	Sets transport goals for delivering CO <sub>2</sub> reductions and economic growth including: Maximise competitiveness and productivity of the economy; Address climate change by cutting CO <sub>2</sub> emissions and greenhouse eg providing greener alternatives for travel; Protect people's safety, security and health eg through promoting cycling and walking; Improve quality of life through a healthy natural environment; and Promote greater equality of opportunity
Environment Agency 'Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater' (EA)	To provide a framework for the statutory role of protecting groundwater; encourage co-operation between bodies with statutory responsibilities for the protection of groundwater; promote policies so that land users and potential developers may anticipate how the EA is likely to respond to a proposal or activity
Waste Strategy for England and Wales 2007 (DEFRA 2007)	Emphasises the waste hierarchy and sets requirements to meet landfill directive targets as well as a national target for recycling and composting of 50% of household waste by 2020
The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland and Wales 2007 (DEFRA 2007) > Joint Air Quality Action Plan for the Cambridgeshire Growth Area (HDC, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge	Sets out a way forward for work and planning issues on air quality. Sets out air quality standards and objectives to be achieved. Identifies new national policy measures. Introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles

National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, 2009)	
Building a Greener Future: Towards Zero Carbon Development, Policy Document 2008; Code for Sustainable Homes	Sets out Governments targets for achieving zero carbon homes by 2016 and the assessment of new homes in sustainability terms.
Water Act (HM Government, 2003)	To make provision in connection with land drainage and flood defence and to make provision about contaminated land so far as it relates to the pollution of controlled waters.
<a href="#">The Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food (2002)</a>	Key Principles include; Support the viability and diversity of rural and urban economies and communities; Enable viable livelihoods to be made from sustainable land management; Respect and operate within the biological limits of natural resources (especially soil, water and biodiversity); Achieve consistently high standards of environmental performance by reducing energy consumption, by minimising resource inputs, and use renewable energy wherever possible; and achieve consistently high standards of animal health and welfare; and sustain the resource available for growing food and supplying other public benefits over time, except where alternative land uses are essential to meet other needs of society.
The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994 and updates)	A detailed plan for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity resources. Seeks to increase public awareness of, and involvement in, conserving biodiversity and to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity on a European and global scale.
<a href="#">Safer Places, the Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM/Home Office, 2004)</a>	Promotes crime prevention and reduction of the fear of crime as part of sustainable development

# Appendix 1: Plans and Programmes Reviewed

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National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
<a href="#">Manual for Streets (DCLG/DfT 2007)</a>	Sets out principles for good street design covering: streets in context; the design process - from policy to implementation; layout and connectivity; quality places; Street users needs; street geometry; Parking; traffic signs and markings; street furniture and street lighting; and materials, adoption and maintenance.
Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future - Creating a Low Carbon Economy (DTI 2003) - Relevant? Since Climate Change Act	Principal aim: to ensure that energy, the environment and economic growth are properly and sustainably integrated. To be achieved through the following goals: cut UK's carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050; to maintain reliability of energy supplies; to promote competitive markets in the UK; and to ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated.
Sustainable Communities Plan: Building for the Future (ODPM 2003)	Principal aim: to ensure that the economic, social and environmental development of communities respects the needs of future communities. To be achieved through the following objectives: Establishing new growth areas, providing a step change in housing supply, delivering decent housing and protecting the local environment
Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (ODPM 2005)	Sets out long term reform to housing market which includes the following aims: to make sure there are enough high quality homes across the spectrum (affordable and market); to help more people own their own home; to create sustainable and mixed communities in rural and urban areas with the jobs services and infrastructure they need to survive; provide for those who choose alternative forms of accommodation eg Gypsy and Travellers; and protect and enhance the environment, our historic towns and the countryside.
Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity (ODPM 2005)	Aims to promote prosperity for all and help local people create communities they feel proud of through two main principles: the need to give communities more power on decisions which effect them; and the importance of working at the right level to get things done

National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (Fields In Trust, 2008)	Sets out guidance for provision of outdoor sports and play facilities
Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2008)	Set out the Government's vision for sustainable delivery of secure water supplies and an improved and protected water environment.
Promoting and creating built or natural environments that encourage and support physical activity NICE public health guidance 8 (NICE, 2008)	Sets out 7 recommendations to help promoting and creating built and natural environments that encourage and support physical activity.
Making Space for Water (DEFRA, 2004)	Aims to manage the risks from flooding and coastal erosion by employing an integrated portfolio of approaches which reflect both national and local priorities, so as: to reduce the threat to people and their property; and to deliver the greatest environmental, social and economic benefit, consistent with the Government's sustainable development principles. To secure efficient and reliable funding mechanisms that deliver the levels of investment required to achieve the vision of this strategy.
Towards a Sustainable Transport System (DoT, 2007)	Has three aims; it describes how the Government is responding to the recommendations made in the Eddington study to improve transport's contribution to economic growth and productivity, and how it is ensuring that transport will play its part in delivering the overall level of reductions in carbon emissions recommended by the Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change. Secondly, it sets out the Department for Transport's ambitious policy and investment plans for the period to 2013-14. And finally, it proposes a new approach to longer term transport strategy, building on the model recommended by Sir Rod Eddington, and explains how we will engage with passengers, users, the transport industry and other stakeholders as we develop and implement that process.



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National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Childcare Act 2006	Formalised the important strategic role that local authorities play in the planning and commissioning of early years provision. The Act takes forward some of the key commitments from the 'Ten-year childcare strategy', published in 2004, and sets out a number of statutory duties that local authorities must fulfil. The duties that accompanied the Childcare Act 2006 were further clarified in statutory guidance published in 2010, building upon the 'Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009'.
Standards and Framework Act 1998	Introduced a wide range of duties and responsibilities for local authorities, schools and governing bodies, including: the introduction of a limit on Infant Class size, subsequently determined as being 30 pupils within a single class to one teacher; the requirement to rationalise school places in line with guidance produced by the Secretary of State; the introduction of the Code of Practice (Admissions Code) issued by the Secretary of State to underpin admission arrangements nationwide; and the requirement to enable parents to express a preference for the school they wished their children to attend.
Learning and Skills Act 2000, Education Act 2002	Introduced proposals for city academies. These were developed further in the 'Education Act 2002'. Academies, as they have since become known, are independent state schools which receive their funding directly from Central Government, and which have greater flexibility over curriculum, contracts of employment and staff pay than other schools in the public sector.
Education Act 2005, Education and Inspections Act 2006	Made provision for Federations between schools and a competition process to be undertaken by local authorities prior to establishing new secondary schools. Subsequently placed requirements on local authorities to: - exercise their duties to ensure that the provision of education promotes high standards, ensures fair access to educational opportunity and promotes the fulfilment by every child of their educational potential; - secure diversity in the provision of schools and increase the opportunities for parental choice;

National Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
	and to - give considerations to parental representations. It also extended the new school competition requirement to include primary and special schools.

Regional Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
London-Stansed-Cambridge Sub-regional Study: Spatial Options Explored (Various, 2002)	To provide advice and guidance to the East of England Regional Planning body and the Mayor of London on future strategic land-use development and transport options for the area. It formulates and tests a number of different spatial development frameworks and thereby provides tools and information to allow the strategic partners to fully explore the options for the area.
Cambridge Sub-region Long Term Delivery Plan (Deloitte for Cambridgeshire Horizons, 2007)	Has four main areas of focus; looking at infrastructure requirements up to 2021; strengthening the approach to funding infrastructure; considering potential longer term requirements to 2031; and considering a broad implementation framework
A428 Upgrade Caxton Common - A1/Black Cat Roundabout Economic Impact Report (Mott MacDonald, 2008)	A technical report on the wider economic impacts of upgrading the A428 between Caxton Common and A1/Black Cat roundabout (the Scheme). It comes to the conclusion that the dualling of the A428 will generate significant economic benefit and is good value for money.
Validation of Growth Scenarios for the Review of the RSS for the East of England Cambridgeshire - technical study & interim findings (SQW, 2008)	Provides technical input to a validation exercise of six growth scenarios, together with three 'baseline' forecasts for the review of the East of England Plan.
East of England Strategic Employment Sites Study (Ove Arup and Partners, 2009)	The study seeks to review the existing and planned strategic employment sites in the region and to set out a new approach to the future definition, prioritisation and delivery

# Appendix 1: Plans and Programmes Reviewed

## Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report - Updated for Stage 3

Regional Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
	of such sites and an understanding of likely future demand, including potential locations where new sites might be needed.
Investing in the East of England's Natural Assets: state, value and vision (Natural England, 2009)	This brings together a selection of evidence about the natural environment in the East of England, drawing on Natural England's national State of the Natural Environment 2008 report and other sources of regional data.
Regional Scale Settlement Strategy (Arup, 2009)	Looks at the case for and potential locations of new regional scale settlements. Concludes that Alconbury airfield has potential as the location for a new settlement
UKCP09 Climate Projections for the East of England (UKCIP, 2009)	Comprehensive climate projections for the East of England
East of England Forecasting Model: six monthly reports, latest from autumn 2010 (Inspire East, 2010)	Provides a view of future trends in the region's economy to 2031. It draws on the most up-to-date published information, supplemented by local intelligence and the professional judgement of the model builders (Oxford Economics), to produce forecasts every six months. It is currently
East of England Plan > 2031 Scenarios for housing and economic growth – Cambridgeshire sub-area profile (East of England Regional Assembly, 2010)	Provides an indication of what the four growth scenarios considered in the review of the East of England Plan to 2031, mean in terms of housing numbers for the Cambridge sub-area. The origin and role of the scenarios are also described.
Sustainable Communities in the East of England (ODPM 2003)	Identifies key issues: the need to tackle rising house prices; the need to improve the transport infrastructure; the need to ensure the benefits of economic growth are distributed evenly through the region; and the need to address implications of scarce water resources.
A Sustainable Development Framework for the East of England (EERA 2001)	Principal aim is to improve the quality of life for all the people of the region. Other high level objectives to achieve this include: to achieve sustainable levels of prosperity and growth; to deliver more sustainable patterns of growth and

Regional Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
	development including housing and employment; to protect and maintain our most valuable regional assets; to reduce consumption of fossil fuels; and to revitalise our town centres.
Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (EERA 2003)	Sets an agenda for ensuring that the environment is given due consideration in the pursuit of sustainable development. Identifies a number of strategic aims: accommodate population and economic growth whilst protecting and enhancing the environment; reduce the need to travel and achieve a switch to more sustainable modes of transport; deliver sustainable design; reduce vulnerability of the region to climate change; promote energy conservation and switch to renewable energy sources; improve environmental awareness; promote environmental economy; maintain and strengthen landscape and townscape character; enhance biodiversity; and conserve and enhance the historic environment.
A Better Life: The role of Culture in the Sustainable Development of the East of England (Living East 2006)	Vision of the strategy is to put culture at the core of the region's life for every resident and visitor. Sets out the following key principles: culture should be at the heart of the region's life; every resident or visitor should be able to get involved with cultural activities; culture is about improving quality of life for communities and individuals; the region's cultural and ethnic diversity should be celebrated; and a vibrant culture can drive social cohesion and prosperity.
A Shared Vision The Regional Economic Strategy for the East of England (EEDA 2008)	Vision: by 2031 the East of England will be: internationally competitive with a global reputation for innovation and business growth; a region that harnesses and develops the talents and creativity of all; and at the forefront of low-carbon and resource efficient economic activity.
Regional Social Strategy 2nd Edition (EERA 2007)	Overall vision is to achieve social inclusion throughout East of England. Sets out the following strategic objectives: to tackle poverty and reduce income inequalities; to promote access to work, tackle low pay and improve conditions of work; to improve life chances of children from disadvantaged families and support vulnerable people from the transition into adulthood; to improve life chances of adults through

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Regional Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
	learning and skills development; to promote active ageing and reduce social exclusion of older people; to support the development of sustainable communities; to improve access to services; and to develop social networks and promote social cohesion.
Woodland for Life: The Regional Woodland Strategy for the East of England (EERA & Forestry Commission 2003)	Vision: trees and woodland are widely recognised as bringing high quality and sustainable benefits to all who live and work in the East of England.
Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2010 (EERA 2005)/ Statement 2010-2014	Vision: to ensure that new housing, existing homes and regeneration play an integral part in the creation and enhancement of sustainable, successful places where people want to live, work and visit. The Statement sets out the following objectives: make sustainable and successful places; Improve the existing stock; reduce carbon emissions from existing housing; achieve regeneration; maximise the use of existing stock; increase housing supply; increase affordable housing supply; improve housing quality and design; address climate change; support rural communities; support vulnerable groups; promote equality; meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers; and support economic performance, jobs and regeneration
Water Resources for the Future: A Strategy for the Anglian Region (Environment Agency 2001)	Sets out the EA's strategic approach to water management including the following actions: protect conservation sites dependent on water; ensure licensing issues are resolved; improve environmental resilience; safeguard water resources through effective catchment management; reduce treatment and energy costs for users; and improve understanding of how the water environment and ecology interact
Living with Climate Change in the East of England (East of England Sustainable Development Roundtable 2003)	Key recommendations include: keeping options open so that extra measures can be added in the future; avoiding making decisions that make it more difficult to cope with climate change in the future; and trying to find no-regrets options that deliver benefits whatever the extent of climate change.

Regional Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, and Targets/ Indicators
Placing Renewables in the East of England (East of England Regional Assembly, 2008)	The study produced a series of recommendations for targets, criteria based policies and broad locations for renewable energy to inform the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.
East of England Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Capacity Study (AECOM and the Landscape Partnership, 2011)	The study looks at the potential for renewable energy generation in the East of England and considers the practicalities of implementation.
Transport and the Economy in the East of England - the Transport Economic Evidence Study (TEES) (East of England Development Agency, Sept 2008)	The study sought to provide; an analysis of current and future wider costs to the regional economy of the constraints imposed by the existing transport network. This aimed to answer the question 'What is the wider cost to the regional economy of the constraints imposed by the current and planned transport network?'; identification of spatial transport 'hot-spots' and priority areas, to identify 'Where exactly in the region does transport impose the most severe costs upon the economy?'; an analysis of the economic benefits, direct and wider, of implementing additional transport interventions i.e. what would be the wider economic benefits to the region of additional investment in transport interventions in the hot-spots identified?

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Cambridgeshire Strategic Open Space Study and User Survey (Cambridgeshire County Council, 2004)	The study defines the nature and distribution of Strategic Open Space (SOS) in Cambridgeshire, maps its accessibility, and evaluates provision across the county. It considers the implications of population growth on SOS, and indicates how much new SOS is needed in the light of planned growth. Estimates are given of the cost of providing new SOS, both to remedy historical deficits and cater for growth. Suggestions are made as to how SOS should be managed in the future. Projects and opportunities for enhancing SOS provision are outlined, and examples of good practice are given.

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Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Employment in the Hi-tech 'Community' Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (Cambridgeshire County Council, 2006)	The report provides key statistical information which helps describe the hi-tech community and recent developments in detail. It is based on a survey, by both post and telephone, of over 1,900 businesses, agencies and research institutes operating in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
The Cambridgeshire Development Study Final Report (Various, 2009)	The study provides an evaluation of potential spatial options for growth in Cambridgeshire and to identify areas of further work needed to guide the preparation of a preferred development strategy for the county.
Cambridge Cluster at 50 - The Cambridgeshire Economy: retrospect and prospect (SQW, 2011)	The study seeks to provide an understanding of; the performance of the Cambridge economy currently (including impacts of the recession) and the factors that underpin and explain it; the long term opportunities and threats for the Cambridge economy including the different aspirations of new generations of Cambridge based businesses and residents; potential synergies and conflicts in Cambridge's different economic roles, both now and looking forward; the constraints to economic growth from infrastructure, workforce, spatial, attitudinal and institutional, and what might be done to address them; and in broad terms of the spatial implications all of these.
Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF) –  Final Report: Finance, Delivery and Engagement (Camco for Cambridgeshire Horizons, 2011+)	Aims including; to serve as an evidence base for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy by identifying the renewable energy Infrastructure needed to meet low-carbon development aims, allowing the collection of developer contributions as part of the funding solution for such projects; informing ongoing development of development plans alongside other evidence based work, with the aim of creating the policy platform for renewable energy infrastructure investment; informing the proposed Community Energy Fund (CEF), identifying opportunities for more flexible sources of low carbon infrastructure investment and to complement the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), which is bringing forward and reducing the risk of renewable energy projects to enable investment.

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Open Space Strategy for Huntingdonshire 2010-2015 (HDC, 2010)	Provides an up to date overview of open space provision across Huntingdonshire to complement and update the 2006 Audit. It also seeks to establish a clear framework for promoting, protecting and improving open space provision.
Huntingdonshire Local Plan (HDC, 1995), Local Plan Alteration (HDC, 2002) and Schedule of Saved Policies (GO East, 2007)	The plan seeks to implement the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan policies and provide for the continued growth and prosperity of Huntingdonshire, whilst conserving the character and quality of its towns, villages and open countryside. The plan assist the council in guiding and controlling development in the interests of the Huntingdonshire community as a whole. The Plan is intended to give clear guidance to residents, businesses, local groups, developers and investors alike as to how the district will develop. The 2002 alteration extended the plan for housing development purposes. In 2007 policies from the plan were 'saved' until replaced by new development plan policies.
Economic Impact of Tourism - Huntingdonshire (East of England Tourism Board, 2007)	The report examines the volume and value of tourism and the impact of that expenditure on the local economy in 2007
Growing Success - Huntingdonshire Council Corporate Plan (HDC, 2008)	The plan identifies the aims we will be working towards as a council and how we plan to deliver them to meet the needs of people in Huntingdonshire. It sets out how the council will achieve its part of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Huntingdonshire Development Management Development Plan Document - Development of Options (HDC, 2009) and Proposed Submission (HDC, 2010)	The document will support the Core Strategy and the East of England Plan. It will set out the council's policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire and will be used to assess and determine planning applications.

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Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Response to Regional Scale Settlement Study (AECOM for HDC, 2009)	Looks at the scenarios for proposed for new regional scale settlements and their implications for Huntingdonshire. Forms the basis of the council's response to the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA).
Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy: Charging Schedule, Background Paper, Viability Testing of Charges (inc. Addendums) and Infrastructure Project List (HDC and Drivers Jonas Deloitte, 2011)	Documents relating to the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy
Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (HDC, 2011)	The SPD sets out the council's policy for securing developer contributions from new developments that require planning permission. The SPD is supplementary to the Adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy, particularly Policy CS10 and should be considered alongside the Draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule November 2011 or any successor documents.
St Neots Energy Study (AECOM for HDC, 2009)	The study seeks to identify opportunities for low and zero carbon decentralised energy for the town and the surrounding area. The study places a particular emphasis on the proposed urban expansion of the town to the east of the railway. It contains; a policy and literature review which supports the development and the implementation of decentralised low carbon and renewable energy policies and targets for the district; baseline energy demands and CO <sub>2</sub> emissions for existing homes and businesses; a review of wind and biomass resource potential within the district; an evaluation of the potential for district heating and stand alone low carbon options in the urban extension; a series of supply-mix masterplan options for future energy demands are presented and financing for these examined.

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Huntingdon West Area Action Plan (HDC, 2011)	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.
Cambridgeshire Children's Trust Plan for 2011-2014 (Cambridgeshire Children's Trust, 2011)	The overarching aim of the Children's Trust is to reduce inequality in outcomes for all children and young people in Cambridgeshire Key priorities for 2011-14 are: To improve outcomes for every child and young person through accessible and high quality service provision. To narrow the gap in education and health outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. To keep children and young people safe. To support change to achieve benefits for children and young people.
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents, Core Strategy and Site Specific Proposals (Adopted 2011)	Sets out a vision for the sustainable management of waste using a network of facilities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and utilising new technology to help reduce adverse environmental affects. Key strategic objectives include: to ensure suitable provision is made for the sustainable management of waste; to develop a network of waste management facilities having regard to climate change; to ensure that all major new developments undertake sustainable waste management practices; and to encourage waste management practices which minimise, counter or eliminate contributions to climate change
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2016 (LTP3) (CCC, 2010)	Overarching aim: To protect and enhance quality of life in Cambridgeshire. This will be achieved through the following strategic objectives: to create a transport system that is accessible to all; to protect and enhance the built and natural environment; to develop integrated transport and to promote public transport, walking, cycling and other sustainable forms of transport; to make travel safer; to maintain and operate efficient transport networks; and to provide a transport system that supports the economy and growing population of Cambridgeshire

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Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Climate Change and Environment Strategy: Meeting the Challenges in Cambridgeshire (CCC 2008)	Sets out vision to promote the county council as an energy efficient authority leading in the achievement of national CO2 targets and a low carbon economy through the use of sustainable construction methods, improved sustainable transport modes and effective conservation of the built and natural environment. Identifies that the vision will be achieved through a number of policies relating to climate change, environmental pollution, and the natural and built surroundings
Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (CCC 1991) [5]	Vision: a countryside which is diverse, reflecting local character and a sense of place, consciously thought about and managed and which acknowledges our affinity with nature and our need for recreation and visual enjoyment. Sets out the following objectives to achieve the vision: increase people's awareness of landscape quality; mobilise care and action amongst the main bodies who play the most active role in generating tomorrow's landscapes; improve overall visual quality and strengthen the contrasts between landscapes in the County; integrate wildlife conservation into landscape action at all scales; protect and enhance historic features; and conserve existing features and create landmarks and 'personality' in the landscape.
The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth (Cambridgeshire Horizons, 2008)	The charter sets out core principles of the level of quality to be expected in new developments in Cambridgeshire. It is organised around 4 themes: Community - Building a sense of community by encouraging resident's participation in the way their neighbourhoods are run, and by providing a range of housing to meet the needs of residents. Connectivity - Locating new developments so they are close to jobs and services, with good public transport links and green spaces for walking and cycling. Climate - Tackling climate change through imaginative landscaping that treats water 'as a friend and not an enemy' and through an innovative approach to energy, transport and waste. Character - Creating places of character with distinctive neighbourhoods and public realm encouraging people to walk and cycle.

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (CCC 2001) [4]	Sets out information to guide planners in the consideration of biodiversity. Identifies five main objectives: protect current species and habitats; enhance existing habitats or create new areas; mitigate against potentially damaging impacts; compensate where damage is unavoidable; and monitor and enforce to assess the success of enhancement, mitigatory and compensatory measures
Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plans (CCC, Various dates)	The 45 Habitat and Species Action Plans were first produced in 1999, they were reviewed in 2003 and 2008/09. The BAPs were partially monitored in 2002. A complete review of all the BAPS nationally took place in 2007, and local BAPS are now monitored in a nationwide database, the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)
Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub-Region (Cambridge Sub Regional Partners, 2004)	Recommends that Cambridge sub regional partners: adopt renewable energy or carbon reduction policy for all new developments to achieve particular targets as a condition of planning; apply minimum energy standards to all new developments on council owned land; adopt a plan for Sustainable Energy Infrastructure; implement the plan for Sustainable Energy Infrastructure; establish a not-for-profit Energy Services Company; establish a renewable energy investment fund; investigate barriers to renewable energy provision; and establish a Cambridge Sub-region Sustainable Energy Partnership
Sustainable Construction in Cambridgeshire - A Good Practice Guide (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2006)	Ensure healthy and comfortable environments for living and working; minimise the amount of energy people need to use to lead their lives comfortably; encourage the sustainable use and management of water resources; minimise the wider impact of new developments through maximising the use of local, natural and sustainable materials.
The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2011)	Seeks to promote action to enhance the network of Green Infrastructure to achieve the objectives of: reversing the decline of Biodiversity; mitigating and adapting to climate change; promoting sustainable growth and economic development; and supporting healthy living and wellbeing.

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Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Cambridge Sub Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2008)	Enable local authorities to think about the nature and influence of housing markets in their area; provide robust evidence to inform the policies aiming to get the right mix of housing across the whole housing market; and provide evidence to inform policies about the level and sizes of affordable housing.
Peterborough Sub Regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2008)	Enable local authorities to think about the nature and influence of housing markets in their area; provide robust evidence to inform the policies aiming to get the right mix of housing across the whole housing market; and provide evidence to inform policies about the level and sizes of affordable housing
Cambridgeshire's Vision 2007-2021 County Wide Sustainable Community Strategy (Cambridgeshire Together 2008)	Vision: For Cambridgeshire to be a county of strong, growing, prosperous and inclusive communities supported by excellent services where people can fulfil their potential; live longer, healthier lives; and influence decision making. Sets out five priorities to achieve this vision - growth, economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, equality and inclusion and safer and stronger communities
Rural Cambridgeshire Ensuring a Vibrant Future A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2010-2015 (Cambridgeshire Together/ ACRE 2010)	Includes, inter alia, aims to increasing number of Rural Exceptions, increasing work opportunities in rural areas and achieving more sustainable transport in rural areas
Greater Cambridge Sub Regional Economic Strategy 2009 - 2012 (Greater Cambridge Partnership, 2009)	Looks forward over a 10 year period, focusing on 2009 to 2012. It sets out the key economic development priorities for the Greater Cambridge area. It identifies 3 goals: Social Development - Enabling individuals and communities to thrive and achieve their potential. Economic Prosperity - Competing nationally and internationally through a successful local economy. Environmental Sustainability - Meeting the challenges of climate change while maintaining a high quality environment. The longer-term ambition is for the growth of a sustainable, low carbon economy that continues to generate a high level of business start-ups and builds on the exceptional scientific expertise in Greater Cambridge.

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Cambridgeshire Local Economic Assessment (Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership, 2011)	Provides further information in relation to key drivers of the economy and the support required to provide for local economic prosperity; provides detailed profile on Huntingdonshire's economic drivers/ opportunities/ weaknesses/ strengths
Greater Cambridge and Peterborough Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (The New Tourism Company SQW 2007)	Aims to strengthen benefits brought by tourism to the study area by encouraging better coordination of the way tourism is managed, developed and promoted
Joint Air Quality Action Plan for the Cambridgeshire Growth Area (HDC, SCDC & Cambridge City Council, 2009)	Reviewed all of the existing air quality information across the region, identified the key causes in each management area and assessed the necessary actions needed to improve pollutant levels in those areas
Surface Water Management Plan for Cambridgeshire (CCC May 2011)	Tool to manage surface water flood risk on a local basis by improving and optimising coordination between relevant stakeholders. SWMPs build on 'Strategic Flood Risk Assessments' and provide the vehicle for local organisations to develop a shared understanding of local flood risk and establish an action plan, including setting out priorities for action, maintenance needs and links into development framework and emergency plans. Also to be used as evidence when formulating general planning policies relating to surface water flooding such as use of SuDS. Identifies St Neots, Huntingdon, St Ives, Sawtry and Godmanchester as wetspots and St Neots for additional modelling work
Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Cambridgeshire (CCC May 2011)	Produced to satisfy Flood Risk Regulations (2009). Appraises historical flood data and identifies future developments which may be susceptible to flooding. Informs preparation of Surface Water Management Plan

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Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
HDC Housing Strategy 2006-2011 (HDC 2006)	Promotes, inter alia, tackling affordability of housing, access to decent housing and the appropriateness of housing to peoples needs
Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (PMP for HDC, 2006)	Vision: Create a comprehensive and sustainable network of green corridors and sites that: enhance the diversity of landscape character; connects and enrich biodiversity habitats and: extend access and recreation facilities. Underpinned by four objectives: assess the availability of open space across the district; establish local standards of provision for planning purposes as required by PPF17; through the application of standards, identify any deficiencies in the quality, quantity and accessibility and surpluses in quantity, along with identifying the spatial distribution of unmet need; and identify priorities for action.
Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Standards Report (HDC 2008)	Key drivers: the need to plan strategically and ensure sustainability of future provision; the LDF setting out expectations for S106 contributions from developers towards current and future sports facility provision; priorities and objectives for the SCS; the need to identify what provision is needed in St Neots given the significant population increase planned; the need to identify how best to provide for those living in rural areas; the need to increase participation at local level; and opportunities for partnerships
Growing Our Communities: Huntingdonshire Sustainable Community Strategy (HDC 2008 - 2028)	The relevant objectives that relate to spatial development include: increase cycle and footway networks (particularly to key services in towns and villages); enhance general community infrastructure; provide adequate local green and open space and improve access; provide adequate strategic green and open space; Improve health and social care infrastructure and its accessibility; promoting education and training; ensure an appropriate supply of new housing including affordable housing; improve the environment of town centres; ensure new buildings meet relevant zero carbon targets; ensure design and location of public services to reduce carbon emissions; ensure sufficient quality and quantity sports infrastructure and promote active and healthy

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
	lifestyles; improving cultural facilities; locate new development in market towns and sustainable locations; address the needs of migrant workers and non settled communities including Gypsies and Travellers; address fear of crime; improve the mix of attractions, facilities and leisure opportunities; and increase retail offer and mix
Huntingdonshire Adopted Core Strategy (HDC, 2009)	Sets out spatial vision for the district to 2026 in order to retain its identity, promote active and healthy lifestyles and improve access to jobs, housing, services and facilities and green infrastructure. Supported by 18 strategic objectives
Growing Awareness: A Plan for Our Environment (HDC 2008)	Sets out a series of actions to tackle the three main environmental challenges of tackling climate change; using resources efficiently and protecting and improving the environment.
Huntingdonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update Part A Market Housing & Part B Rural Exceptions Housing (HDC, 2010 & 2011)	Sets out assessment of suitability, availability and achievability of land for housing development
Employment Land Review (Warwick Business Management Ltd on behalf of HDC 2007)	The review: quantifies existing employment land and allocations with assessment for safeguarding sites in support of regional and local strategies for jobs growth and sustainable development; quantifies land required to meet expected economic development needs; and identifies sites of suitable quality in the right locations taking into account accessibility and sustainable transport needs and the provision of essential infrastructure.
Draft Employment Land Availability Assessment (HDC, 2011)	Identifies existing commitments and new land for employment development as set out in Core Strategy policy CS7. Assesses sites in terms of suitability, availability and achievability



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Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Huntingdonshire Local Economy Strategy 2008-2015 (HDC 2008)	Identifies six strategic priorities: Business support, Physical infrastructure development, Skills development, Town centre support, Visitor development, Sector development (including Creative Industries)
Huntingdonshire Retail Studies/ Development Advice (Roger Tym and Partners for HDC, 2005, 2007 and 2010)	Reviews retail floorspace capacity. Undertakes a qualitative assessment of market towns and two key service centres. Assesses current and future need for retail floorspace. Assesses potential for additional commercial development. Provides a broad locational strategy for meeting need and to assess suitability of potential sites in accordance with sequential search process
Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy (Scott Wilson Ltd for HDC, 2008)	Ensure that the integrity and condition of protected sites under the Habitats Directive identified as potentially affected by the policies in the Core Strategy are maintained
Local Investment Framework (EDWA for HDC 2009)	Assist HDC in taking forward the LDF and determining the scope and scale of public sector and landowner / developer contributions required to deliver the supporting physical and social infrastructure
Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Update (Mott McDonald for HDC, 2009)	Updates flood risk maps take into account changes in Government guidance and more accurate modelling data. Will help the council to understand flood risk across the district and plan land allocations for future development as well as apply the exception test
Huntingdonshire Spatial Strategy Options Assessment (Atkins on behalf of HDC 2009)	Evaluates highways impact of the Core Strategy Preferred Option
Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007 (HDC, 2007)	Provides understanding of character and composition of built and natural environment to guide development proposals

Sub-regional, County and Local level Plans/ Programmes	Key Aims, Objectives, or Targets/ Indicators
Huntingdonshire Design Guide (HDC, 2007)	Sets out key design principles and requirements to help improve the quality of new development
Cambridgeshire Sustainable School Travel Strategy (Cambridgeshire County Council, 2007)	Aims to; improving the physical well-being of the children and young people attending our schools and colleges by increasing the number of children and young people walking and cycling to school; increasing the use of buses as an alternative to cars for the journey to school; reducing levels of congestion and pollution through the promotion of sustainable and more environmentally responsible modes of travel; making travel to school safer; actively supporting the development of key life skills, such as road safety, amongst Cambridgeshire's pupils, thereby increasing their confidence and enabling them to make independent travel choices; supporting the delivery of targets in related plans, for example, the Local Transport Plan (LTP).
Cambridgeshire SuDS Design and Adoption Manual (Cambridgeshire County Council, 2012 (forthcoming))	Guidance on the design and adoption of SuDS for developers.
Conservation area statements (HDC, various)	Statements relating to various conservation areas across the district.

## Appendix 2: Summary of Consultation and Amendments

### Summary of Amendments

#### Consultation on the Draft Scoping Report

**2.1** Consultation on this scoping report took place between 24 February 2012 and 30 March 2012. The consultation was run through the council's [consultation portal](#), where all comments can be viewed.

#### Comments on the Draft Scoping Report

**2.2** In total 34 comments were made by 11 consultees, including two of the three SA Bodies. The comments were wide ranging but can be summarised as being concerned with:

- Recent national developments that have implications for planning, including the National Planning Policy Framework, the Localism Act and the Community Infrastructure Levy
- Plans or programmes that were not referenced
- Public engagement in the Sustainability Appraisal and plan making process
- Links with other aspects of the plan making process, including the Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Economic development, including the Alconbury Airfield Enterprise Zone
- Coverage of topics including ancient woodland, heritage assets, flooding, crime and community facilities
- Minor textual changes to aid clarity

**2.3** The comments have been taken into account and changes have been incorporated into this Scoping Report.

#### Previous Consultation

**2.4** The draft scoping report was based upon the scoping report produced for the Planning Proposals DPD that was intended to be produced prior to the decision to move to producing a Local Plan for Huntingdonshire. Consultation on that draft scoping report took place between 7 February 2011 and 14 March 2011. The scoping report was amended with the intention of issuing it as part of the production process for the Planning Proposals DPD, however the proposal to produce the Local Plan to 2036 meant that the Planning Proposals DPD and its scoping report were not continued. The rest of this section gives a summary of the comments received in 2011.

**2.5** In total 61 comments were made by 24 consultees on the Draft Scoping Report. The comments have been grouped into one of the following topics:

1. General Comments
2. Environmental Issues
3. Social Issues
4. Economic Issues
5. Appendices and Glossary

#### 1. General Comments

**2.6** Over a quarter (17) of the comments were general in nature, many of which were not specifically relevant to any particular part of the draft scoping report or the SA process as a whole. Concerns raised included:

- That flexibility should be retained in the Planning Proposals DPD in light of the Government's proposed changes to the planning system and for Localism
- That the extent of Directions of Growth identified in the Core Strategy are not defined in detail
- That changes since the Core Strategy was adopted undermine its aims, targets or requirements
- Uncertainty about the topics that would be covered by the Planning Proposals DPD

**2.7** Other comments in this category expressed general approval or support.

## 2. Environmental Issues

**2.8** Over a third (26) of the comments received related to environmental issues, objectives or decision aiding questions. Comments raised issues relating to:

- The environmental information presented, in particular some of the factual information
- Water quality as a key issue
- Concerns with the SWOT analysis (no longer part of the scoping process)
- The exclusion of Heritage Assets as part of the SA objectives
- Concerns about the decision aiding questions
- Support for inclusion of specific environmental issues, objectives or decision aiding questions

**2.9** Where comments concerning the factual information identify corrections to information presented the corrections have been made. Water quality has been added as a key issue. Heritage assets are now part of the appraisal framework with objectives and decision aiding questions.

## 3. Social Issues

**2.10** Only a small number (2) comments were directly relevant to social issues, although many others included references or touched on social issues. The main issue raised in these comments, both directly and indirectly, was the importance of a sense of community.

**2.11** Social issues have been covered more fully and reflected in the appraisal framework.

## 4. Economic Issues

**2.12** Just under a fifth (11) of comments were related to economic issues, objectives or decision aiding questions. Comments raised issues relating to:

- Impact of development on services
- Economic issues in the SWOT analysis (no longer part of the scoping process)
- Economic issues that were not considered to have been identified or not covered comprehensively and consequently not adequately reflected in the appraisal framework
- Contribution that tourism makes to the economy

**2.13** A number of economic issues have been added covering issues ranging from diverse economy, historically strong job growth and that there are some educational skills gaps. A further issue relating to the contribution that tourism makes to the local economy has also been included.

**2.14** The economic issues section was added to with the impact of highways infrastructure on development, in particular the A14 and the guided busway. Further additions recognised the contribution that tourism makes to the local economy.

## 5. Appendices and Glossary

**2.15** A small number of comments (5) related to issues with the Appendices and Glossary. The majority of these comments highlighted incorrect factual information or made suggestions for additional Plans and Programmes to be considered. In the main all changes put forward have been made as suggested.

## Glossary

### **Affordable housing**

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing.

Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

### **Air Quality Management Areas**

Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

### **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 tranquillity.

### **Ancient woodland**

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

### **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)**

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

### **Archaeological interest**

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

### **Best and most versatile agricultural land**

Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

### **Birds and Habitats Directives**

European Directives to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora.

### **Brownfield**

See previously developed land (PDL)

### **Climate change adaptation**

Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

### **Climate change mitigation**

Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**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, museums, libraries and children's play areas. It may also include areas of informal open space and sports facilities.

**Community Infrastructure Levy**

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

**Conservation (for heritage)**

The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

**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.

**Curtilage**

The area occupied by a property and land closely associated with that property. In terms of a house and garden, the garden normally forms the curtilage of the property, but fields and paddocks would be outside the curtilage.

**Decentralised energy**

Local renewable energy and local low-carbon energy usually but not always on a relatively small scale encompassing a diverse range of technologies.

**Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)**

The Government department responsible for planning and the production of national planning policy and guidance

**Development plan**

This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and the London Plan, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. (Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished

by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.)

**Economic development**

Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

**Environmental Impact Assessment**

A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

**European site**

This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

**Examination**

Independent inquiry into the soundness of a draft *development plan document*, chaired by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

**Green infrastructure**

A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**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.

## **Heritage asset**

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

## **Historic environment**

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

## **Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)**

This is a single measure of deprivation and contains seven individual indices. The indices are used widely to analyse patterns of deprivation, identify areas that would benefit from special initiatives or programmes and as a tool to determine eligibility for specific funding streams. The indices relate to income, employment, health and disability, education skills and training, barriers to housing and services, living environment and crime.

## **Infrastructure**

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

## **International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity**

All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

## **Landscape Character Assessment**

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

## **Local Enterprise Partnership**

A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

## **Local planning authority**

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority and the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

## **Local Plan**

The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.

## **Major development**

Development above a particular scale (10 or more homes for residential development) as defined in the General Development Procedure Order (2006) as amended.

## **Minerals of local and national importance**

Minerals which are necessary to meet society's needs, including aggregates, brickclay (especially Etruria Marl and fireclay), silica sand (including high grade silica sands), cement raw materials, gypsum, salt, fluorspar, shallow and deep-mined coal, oil and gas (including hydrocarbons), tungsten, kaolin, ball clay, potash and local minerals of importance to heritage assets and local distinctiveness.

## **Mineral Safeguarding Area**

An area designated by Minerals Planning Authorities which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

**Minor scale development**

Development up to a particular scale (10 or more homes for residential development) as defined in the General Development Procedure Order (2006) as amended.

**Mitigation measures**

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

**Neighbourhood plans**

A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

**Older people**

People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

**Open space**

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**People with disabilities**

People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

**Playing field**

The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.

**Pollution**

Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

**Previously developed land (PDL)**

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

**Priority habitats and species**

Species and Habitats of Principle Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

**Ramsar sites**

Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

**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.

**Renewable and low carbon energy**

Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans,

from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

### **Rural exception sites**

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

### **Setting of a heritage asset**

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

### **Significance (for heritage)**

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

### **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.

### **Special Areas of Conservation**

Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

### **Special Protection Areas**

Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive.

### **Site of Special Scientific Interest**

Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

### **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.

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

A study intended to assess overall potential for housing development in an area, including the identification of specific housing sites with development potential over a 15 year time span.

### **Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

A study intended to review the existing housing market in an area, consider the nature of future need for market and affordable housing and to inform policy development.

### **Submission**

Point at which a draft Development Plan is sent to the Secretary of State for examination.



**Supplementary planning documents**

Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

**Sustainable Development**

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 (SuDS)**

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, 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.

**Sustainable transport modes**

Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

**Town centre**

Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude

small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

**Transport assessment**

A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

**Transport statement**

A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

**Use Classes Order**

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.