



Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan

Planning Policy Context Analysis

Report prepared by Cambridgeshire ACRE's Neighbourhood Planning Service

Report dated 07-Oct-2021

Company limited by guarantee No. 3690881 • Registered charity No. 1074032 • VAT Registration No. 838 5035
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Registered office: e-space North, 181 Wisbech Road, Littleport, Ely, CB6 1RA

About the Report's Author

Cambridgeshire ACRE is an independent organisation, a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. We are part of the national ACRE Network of 38 similar organisations in England.

Our vision is to have thriving rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We therefore strive for positive change and work with others to improve the lives of those living and working in rural communities.

Our action-driven approach is supported by our team of staff who are experts in their field and not influenced by any other body. Communities can therefore have peace of mind knowing that their ambitions are in the best possible hands.

Our aim is to help rural communities seize opportunities and drive their projects forward, which includes improving their accessibility to services, information and funding.

As part of our work, we provide a Neighbourhood Planning service for local communities. We have developed this service by building on our skills, knowledge and competencies gained in other project areas such as rural affordable housing and community-led planning and by working with local planning consultants to broaden our capacity. Our current partners are [Modicum Planning Limited](#) and [Nupremis Cambridge Limited](#).



More information can be found on Cambridgeshire ACRE's wider work with rural communities at <https://www.cambsacre.org.uk>.

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Part 1 Introduction

Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan: The Planning Policy Context

1.1 This paper sets out the key strategic planning policies that will need to be considered in developing the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan.

1.2 Neighbourhood Planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need.

Part 2 Basic Conditions

2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan must meet a set of basic planning conditions before it can be put to a referendum and be formally adopted. A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) meets the basic conditions if:

- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the plan;
- the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority;
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirement of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

2.2 The submission Neighbourhood Plan will need to be accompanied by a Basic Conditions Statement.

Part 3 National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 National planning policy is mainly set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021. It states that planning should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development: economic, social and environment. Paragraph 11 of NPPF 2021 states:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or

ii. 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.”

3.2 NPPF emphasises the link between themes such as climate change and health, provides guidance on the vitality and vibrancy of towns and rural areas including retail, town centres and employment. It provides advice on transport, high quality infrastructure, beautiful design and healthy communities, whilst conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment.

3.3 National planning policy requires Local Planning Authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing. Where a local authority does not have a 5 year housing land supply, existing plans are considered out of date and local planning authorities should grant permission unless adverse impacts of doing so would demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

3.4 At March 2020, the council’s annual monitoring report details a 5.24 year housing land supply and allows a 10% buffer. The report states that, ‘Predicted completions over the next 5 years will exceed the target and fully make up the current shortfall. Therefore, the policies for the supply of housing should be considered to be up-to-date.’

3.5 In addition, paragraph 76 of NPPF states that where the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the local planning authority’s housing requirement over the previous three years, the local authority should prepare an action plan. To calculate the HDT measurement for each plan area, the government has divided the number of new homes built (‘delivered’) in the past three financial years by the number of new homes required in the same period. It has made some provision for the impact of the Covid Pandemic on housing delivery by subtracting 4 months from the housing requirement. The HDT measurement figure is expressed as a percentage. The HDT results for Huntingdonshire published on 19 January 2021 report a percentage of 122% and therefore no action is required.

3.6 The NPPF now gives a new emphasis to design policies. Critically, progress must not be at the expense of quality or design. Houses must be right for communities. The planning reforms in the new Framework should result in homes that are locally led, well-designed, and of a consistent and high quality standard. The 2021 NPPF aims to achieve this objective by promoting area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans creating beautiful and sustainable places, and by the refusal of permissions for developments of poor design.

3.7 The NPPF also states that Local Green Space designations through local and neighbourhood plans allow communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them (paragraph 101). The criteria for Local Green Space designation are set out at NPPF (paragraph 102) which states designations should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

3.8 In February 2021, the government published a policy paper that set out how it intended to develop a Spatial Framework to help realise an ambition to support sustainable economic growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc - the area that spans the five counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.

3.9 The consultation document, 'Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc', sets out the government's first public consultation on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework on future growth of the area to 2050. Albeit a significant and important strategic policy agenda, it lies outside the potential scope of the NDP process.

Part 4 Huntingdonshire Development Plan

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan must support the delivery of the strategic policies in the Development Plan and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. The adopted Development Plan for Huntingdonshire comprises Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 adopted on 15 May 2019, made Neighbourhood Plans for St Neots, Godmanchester, Houghton and Wyton, Huntingdon, Buckden, and Bury together with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan. The development plan is also supported by Supplementary Planning Documents:

Huntingdonshire Design Guide 2017
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017
Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire SPD 2014
Developer Contributions SPD 2011
Developer Contributions: updated costs 2019/20
Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD 2007

4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan. Huntingdonshire Local Plan states: Strategic policies are those which are essential to the delivery of the Local Plan strategy. These include:

1. All policies in 4 'The Development Strategy' of this Local Plan
2. All policies that allocate land for development in Section D: 'Allocations' as they are required to achieve the strategy as set out in 4 'The Development Strategy'
3. The policies on 'Design Context' and 'Affordable Housing Provision'

4.3 Whilst Neighbourhood Plan policies should align with and support the delivery of those policies, neighbourhood plan policies can provide more distinctiveness, definition or finer grain of detail by applying them to specific sites or relating them specifically to Great Staughton. The strategic policies are included in Appendix 1.

Housing

4.4 The Local Plan allocates sites for residential development across the district to ensure that sufficient land is brought forward to provide 20,100 new homes including 7,900 new affordable homes. Between April 2011 and March 2020, 10 dwelling units have been completed in the parish.

4.5 Policy LP 9 identifies Great Staughton as a small settlement reflecting, in policy terms, its very limited services and facilities. Small settlements are considered to be less sustainable where a limited amount of development will be allowed to support a thriving rural economy. Policy LP 9 also supports proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area

where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan.

4.6 Para 4.85 in the Local Plan and the implementation table provide a local interpretation of what “built up area” means. It states ‘A built-up area is considered to be a distinct group of buildings that includes 30 or more homes. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area’. Potentially, through character assessment work, the built up area can be more clearly identified and where limited development could come forward without adverse impacts etc.

4.7 Para 4.103 of the Local Plan recognises that opportunities for development within the built-up areas of Small Settlements will vary according to the scale and nature of the individual settlement. The acceptable amount of development will be a balanced judgement between the sustainability of the Small Settlement overall, the locational relationship of the proposed development site with local services and the impact of the proposed quantum of development on the character of the immediate locality and of the Small Settlement as a whole.

4.8 Policy LP10 of the Local Plan states that development in the countryside will be limited to specific opportunities as provided in other policy of the plan subject to a series of safeguarding criteria. The hamlets and smaller groups of dwellings in the parish such as Dillington are considered to be in the countryside and outside the built up area. Defined in the table in para 4.85 as ‘Isolated properties or areas of ribbon and fragmented development which are physically and visually detached from the main built form’. The NDP can consider this definition and provide a more locally distinctive perspective.

Housing Requirements

4.9 This assessment of acceptable amount of development can be informed by a housing requirement figure. Huntingdonshire District Council are required to provide a housing figure for the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan if requested. Paragraph 67 of NPPF states the housing requirement figure for a neighbourhood plan should take into account the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood plan area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority. Huntingdonshire District Council comments that the neighbourhood plan dwelling figures are based on the parish dwelling stock.

4.10 The indicative housing requirement for Great Staughton is 60 dwellings across the plan period 2011 to 2036. The current Huntingdonshire data (2019/2020) suggests 10 houses have been completed and one prior approval for conversion of an agricultural building to 1 dwelling. Of course planning permission has since been granted for 12 affordable homes.

4.11 Policy LP 25 requires a mix of home sizes, types and tenures responding to sub regional and local housing assessments¹. Neighbourhood Plans elsewhere, informed by a Housing Needs Assessment, set out a more detailed housing mix policy. Proposals will be supported that meet optional Building Regulation accessibility standards and the Council will work to address identified requirements for self and custom build homes. Policy LP 26 supports self-contained, specialist housing and residential institutions subject to criteria.

¹ NPPF para 62 ‘the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies’

4.12 The Community Land Trust has of course received planning permission for 12 Affordable Homes, 3 being shared ownership and 9 social rented. The scheme provides a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units with 2 bungalows. The scheme is to be completed over the next 12 months. Importantly, the scheme provides for those households with a local connection. Other NDPs in Cambridgeshire have successfully include a local connections policy reflecting the local affordable housing need requirements.

4.13 The Housing Strategy identifies four housing priorities for Huntingdonshire:

1. To increase the supply of new affordable housing and encourage sustainable growth
2. To identify housing need and improve health and well being
3. To improve housing conditions in existing housing
4. To work in partnership to improve outcomes

4.14 Policy LP 24 states that developments of 11 homes or more will provide 40% affordable homes, of which 70% are social or affordable rented properties, the balance made up of other affordable tenures, dispersed across small clusters of dwellings and the type of tenure will be determined by local housing needs sources. Neighbourhood Plans provide the opportunity for rural communities to identify sites for affordable housing development, meeting the needs of those with a local connection.

4.15 Policy LP 24 has to some extent been superseded by a New Government Policy 'New Homes'. First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan does not benefit from transitional arrangements. First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer.

4.16 These policies create the basis for the predominant supply of new affordable homes each year. In the last 3 years, 66% of new affordable homes in the district have been provided as a result of these policies.

4.17 To accelerate the delivery of affordable homes the council's housing strategy seeks:

- Delivery as part of planning permissions
- Exceptions sites
- Devolution Housing Fund
- Use or borrow council money to increase the provision of affordable housing and Temporary Accommodation
- Council offer small non operational land to registered providers for TA and AH
- Explore setting up a Housing Company or Joint Venture
- Creative use of CIL

4.18 Huntingdonshire's Tenancy Strategy sets out registered providers of social housing and they concern the nature and length of tenancies being offered by Registered Providers. It is based upon data from 2011 / 2012 and plans to provide new affordable housing through

S106 agreements, without recourse to HCA grant, with most affordable housing being social rent unless development site viability suggests that an alternative tenure is required in order to facilitate the development.

4.19 Where delivery of social rent is found to be unviable, the provision of Affordable rents may be considered. Rents must not be charged in excess of the Local Housing Allowance rate. This tenancy strategy states that it is likely that any properties built on other sites (rural exceptions) could be let at affordable rent levels.

4.20 Policy LP 28 supports rural exceptions housing where it includes at least 60% affordable housing for people with a local connection on a site well related to a built up area. Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure the affordable housing is delivered and remains affordable in perpetuity.

Major Development Sites

4.21 There are no current 'major' development proposals within the Parish. However, there are a number of planning applications for residential, employment, tourism and conversions that are worth noting in terms of the type of current planning considerations that might be supported by a NDP.

- The erection of 8 small business and starter workshop/storage units to be used for E(g)(iii) Industrial processes, Little America Industrial Estate, Moor Road, Great Staughton (Staughton Moor) – decision pending.
- Erection of aircraft maintenance and repair hangar, external plant building, apron hardstanding, car parking, landscaping, installation of foul water treatment plant and surface water drainage, Land North East Of 114 Little Staughton Airfield Little Staughton - Approved
- 4 dwellings west of 67 The Highway Great Staughton (appeal approved 19/00452/PP)
- Conversion of grain silo to one dwelling; conversion of barns to B1/B8 use Rectory Farm, The Town Great Staughton (Withdrawn)
- Change of use of agricultural land to accommodate 3 shepherd huts at Cherry Orchard Farm, Moor Road, Great Staughton. Approved
- Extension to bungalow and holiday let / harvest worker accommodation – Cherry Blossom, Moor Road, Great Staughton

4.22 The majority of development proposals within the parish are for small residential developments including the demolition and replacement of dwellings or the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings. However, notably there are significant proposals for employment generating development at the Airfield and support for tourism.

Employment and Retail

4.23 The Local Plan makes provision for 14,400 additional jobs across the district and employment sites have been allocated to meet this demand. B Class Employment and uses compatible with the employment area will be supported on or adjacent to established

employment areas (Policy LP 18). A table at para 6.17 of the Local Plan identifies the Airfield Industrial Estate (Little Staughton) as an Established Employment Area. The extent of two sites around the Airfield is identified on the Local Plan policies map.

4.24 Policy LP 9 states that there are limited and specific opportunities for sustainable development related to maintaining a healthy rural economy. A proposal for business development in the countryside will only be supported where it fulfils the requirements of one of a series of categories. This includes within a defined Established Employment Area; immediately adjoins and is capable of being integrated with an Established Employment Area; involves the reuse of land in use or last used for business uses; or involves the reuse or replacement of existing buildings as set out in policy LP 33 'Rural Buildings'. A proposal for the expansion of an established business within its existing operational site will be supported or a proposal for farm diversification.

4.25 Town centres are defined on policy maps in the Local Plan – no policy designation is made for Great Staughton. Policy LP 22 supports the provision of new local service or community facilities within a built up area. Where permitted development rights do not apply, a proposal which involves the loss of a local service or community facility will only be supported where: an equivalent service or community facility will be provided in a location with an equal or better level of accessibility for the community it is intended to serve; it demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restore.

Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

4.26 Great Staughton is located within National Character Area 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands. At a more local level, the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (June 2007) defines the Parish within the Southern Wolds and Great Staughton stands within Area 3: Western Claylands, of the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991).

4.27 Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (June 2007) identifies key issues for the Southern Wolds as preservation and management of existing deciduous woodlands, promoting opportunities to improve screening of existing developments and visually intrusive settlement edges, management of streams and rivers to maximise ecological value and including the planting of trees, copses and meadows in the valley bottoms, restoration of riverside meadows where practical and protection of the rural character of long distance views from the Kym Valley.

4.28 Strategic Policy SP 3 – Green Infrastructure will be expected to support green infrastructure and will therefore be supported where it demonstrates that it aligns with the Council's SPD, Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Network, Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, improves access to Natural Green Space Standards, enhances the public rights of way network and contributes to the renaturalisation of water bodies.

4.29 Therefore, proposals are expected to support and incorporate green infrastructure (LP 3); protecting and enhancing linkages between green infrastructure priority areas (potential to consolidate less important habitats and facilitate access improvements) and the Cambridgeshire Strategic Green Infrastructure Network, improve accessibility and connectivity to green spaces, provide replacement provision where it harms or results in the loss of existing green infrastructure where it provides a net benefit (Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy).

4.30 Specifically, in view of the Parish boundaries proximity to Grafham Water, Policy SP 3 states 'Grafham Water: A proposal within the Grafham Water Landscape Character Area, defined in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Document, will be supported where it enhances or creates ecological or landscape linkages between Grafham Water and woodland in the vicinity. Enhanced access will also be supported subject to compatibility with the landscape and biodiversity. A proposal will be supported where it involves the role, function and continued operation or enhancement of Grafham Water Reservoir, its Treatment Works and associated networks.' This reflects the Green Infrastructure Priority Area.

4.31 The policies map to the Local Plan details two Cambridgeshire Wildlife Sites, and 3 areas comprising SSSIs at Perry Wood. Policy LP 30 seeks to ensure that there will no net loss of Biodiversity and geodiversity including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar site, SSSI, National Nature Reserve, Protected Species, Priority Habitat, and Sites of Local or Regional Importance. Regard is to be had to the Natural Cambridgeshire publication 'Developing with Nature Toolkit'. Policy LP 31 seeks to conserve trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows.

4.32 The Council is committed to the positive conservation of natural heritage assets in the district as they make an important contribution to the identity, distinctiveness and character of Huntingdonshire as well as to the quality of life. Huntingdonshire has few significant areas of woodland but the ancient and semi-natural woodlands are noted including Perry Wood which is particularly valued. Policy LP 34 Heritage Assets and their settings states that Great weight and importance is given to the conservation of heritage assets (see 'Glossary') and their settings. There is an opportunity for the NDP to provide more detail on the important areas for biodiversity, geodiversity or natural and built heritage.

Protecting Village Character and Green Spaces

4.33 A Design Context policy encourages development to respond positively to the SPD design guides, town assessments and conservation area statements (Policy LP 11). Para 5.7 states 'when seeking to understand the surroundings, a proposal should have regard to resources that detail the quality or character of the surroundings, including, but not limited to, neighbourhood plans, village design statements and parish plans'.

4.34 Policy LP 12 provides an extensive list of generic criteria against which planning applications are judged. More details are provided in the Design Guide SPD. Para 5.18 sets out parking provision and vehicle movement design and Policy LP 13 sets out the need for a Master plan and design code for large scale development. Government policy is specifically supporting Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans to creating beautiful and sustainable places, an approach that could be adopted by the NDP.

4.35 The policies map to the Local Plan details two Conservation Areas and a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the countryside. The Conservation Areas in Great Staughton do not have adopted Conservation Area Appraisal Statements, an issue the NPG may wish to redress.

4.36 The Plan gives weight to the protection of the historic environment (LP 34 protects heritage assets and their settings, conservation areas, archaeology). As part of the same Local Plan chapter, Policy LP 35 supports low carbon energy generating schemes (except wind) where it is demonstrated that all potential adverse impacts including cumulative impacts are or can be made acceptable. Having identified potential adverse impacts the proposal must seek to address them all firstly by seeking to avoid the impact, then to minimise the impact.

The Policy sets out a detailed assessment criteria. Policy LP 36 requires air quality assessments. Given the specific interest in the Parish to energy generation, a positive policy position could be adopted on this issue beyond the district wide response.

4.37 Policy LP 32 seeks to minimise the loss of open space of public value. However, the open spaces are not defined. The strongest form of protection for important green spaces within or close to the settlement available within the NPPF is a Local Green Space. As set out in para 3.7, a Local Green Space may be designated in a Neighbourhood Development Plan where it accords with the NPPF (para 100). Development on a local green space will only be supported in very special circumstances. Alternatively, other local policy designations for open space can be identified. These are sometimes described in policy as Protected Village Amenity Areas, Important Countryside Frontages or visually important gaps.

4.38 The NDP can consider taking up the opportunity offered in the framework to identify and designate Local Green Spaces in accordance with NPPF. Such spaces can only be designated at the time the neighbourhood plan is being prepared and development within them will be treated in the same way as development within the Green Belt – i.e., inappropriate development will only be permitted where there are very special circumstances.

Flood Risk

4.39 Areas directly around the River Kym at Great Staughton are identified within Flood Zone 3. Detailed guidance on flooding and dealing with planning applications is provided in paragraphs 159-169 of the NPPF. Policy LP 5 states that proposals will only be supported where all forms of flood risk, including breaches of flood defences have been addressed including reference to the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.

Infrastructure and Services

4.40 Policy LP 16 supports sustainable travel, seeks to ensure that transport impacts are assessed, and any strategic road network impacts are addressed with Highways England. Policy LP 17 requires justification for parking and vehicle movement space.

4.41 Policy LP 22 seeks to support proposals for and to protect local service and community facilities and sets out criteria on which assessments will be based including marketing of the premises without success.

4.42 The Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016 -2021 (undated) notes improvements to Great Staughton Playing Fields including a heating system with solar panels but also includes it as a future known project. The report highlights 2 tennis courts, 1 cricket pitch, 1 skate park, Village Hall, 1 senior and 1 youth football. However, the Cricket Pitch and Skate Board park are no longer present on the playing field.

4.43 The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan schedule 2017 (IDP), updated by December 2017, does not identify any projects that are required to support the Local Plan in Great Staughton parish.

4.44 However, it identifies that Great Staughton suffers from very limited bus services, and a capacity deficit of 161 at Great Staughton Surgery based upon a ratio of 1:1,800 patients. The Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to review the list of infrastructure requirements and whether the Neighbourhood Plan might address the spatial implications of that requirement. Considerations can include education, green infrastructure, leisure, open

space, health facilities, transport and other infrastructure providing a more distinctive and clear policy layer for Great Staughton.

Climate Change

4.45 The Local Plan includes an objective 'To promote high quality, well designed, locally distinctive, 'Flood Risk' sustainable development that is adaptable to climate change and resilient to extreme weather'. The Local Plan addresses specific issues relating to Climate Change but there is an opportunity for the NDP to respond to more recent National Planning Policy and guidance which stresses the need for the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and resilience and encourage the reuse of existing resources.

Part 5 Key Policy Issues for the Workshop

5.1 The Local Plan and the Supplementary Planning Guidance documents provides a district wide approach to several spatial policy areas. A Neighbourhood Plan could add a more distinctive and locally appropriate layer and provide policy advice to positively influence and guide new development. In addition, a broad range of issues will emerge through early consultations for the Neighbourhood Plan to consider. The policy context raises several issues that the Neighbourhood Plan could consider:

- Great Staughton Natural and Historic Character
 - Retention of the village's natural, historic and important design characteristics and style particularly those that should be included in new developments through Design Guidelines, Codes or Character Assessments.
 - Identify, protect and enhance the best of what you have by identifying positive planning designations and safeguarding policies such as Important Countryside Frontage, public open space, local green spaces or other amenity areas.
 - Identify, protect and enhance areas of wildlife, ecology, local green spaces and the permeability between those spaces.
 - Local response to climate change and Heat Power Generation.
- Settlement Services
 - Identify and safeguard the health and vitality of retail and service offer.
 - Safeguard specific village facilities and fill gaps in existing service offer.
 - Identify more precisely the location, type, design and intervention of new infrastructure services and facilities to meet the demand for the parish.
- Housing
 - Define further housing requirement (60 over plan period 2011 to 2036).
 - The detailed design, mix, tenure of new development.
 - If needed, meeting specific demand or delivery of types of affordable housing.
 - Local definition of the built up area.
- Employment
 - Define the type and location of business development needs, opportunities to support employment locally including home working.
 - Locally appropriate policy for the Established Employment Areas.

Natalie Blaken
Nupremis Cambridge Limited
October 2021

Appendix 1: Huntingdonshire Local Plan 2036 – Strategic Policies

The Local Plan states: Strategic policies are those which are essential to the delivery of the Local Plan strategy.

1. All policies in 4 'The Development Strategy' of this Local Plan
2. All policies that allocate land for development in Section D: 'Allocations' as they are required to achieve the strategy as set out in 4 'The Development Strategy'
3. The policies on 'Design Context' and 'Affordable Housing Provision'.

Legislation sets out 'basic conditions' which Neighbourhood Plans (and Neighbourhood Development Orders) must satisfy. To meet the basic conditions, Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies contained within the Local Plan as set out above.

This is considered to be compliant with the distinction made in the NPPF between policies of a strategic nature and those that are not.'

LP 1

Amount of development

In Huntingdonshire in the period 2011-2036 provision will be made for: at least 20,100 new homes (both market and affordable), and approximately 14,400 additional jobs.

LP 2

Strategy for Development

The development strategy for Huntingdonshire is to:

- Concentrate development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities;
- Direct substantial new development to two strategic expansion locations of sufficient scale to form successful, functioning new communities;
- Provide opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations for housing, employment, commercial or community related schemes;
- Support a thriving rural economy;
- Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside;
- Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
- Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation.

Distribution of growth

Four spatial planning areas are designated reflecting their status as the district's traditional market towns and most sustainable centres. These are centred around:

- Huntingdon including Brampton and Godmanchester and the strategic expansion location of Alconbury Weald
- St Neots including Little Paxton and the strategic expansion location of St Neots East
- St Ives
- Ramsey including Bury

Approximately three quarters of the objectively assessed need for housing and the majority of employment and retail growth will be focused in the spatial planning areas.

Seven key service centres are designated reflecting the concentration of services and facilities in these locations and their role in providing services to residents of other nearby communities.

These are:

- Buckden
- Fenstanton
- Kimbolton
- Sawtry
- Somersham
- Warboys
- Yaxley.

All other settlements with a single built up area of 30 dwellings or more are defined as Small Settlements as set out in 'Definition of Small Settlements'.

Approximately a quarter of the objectively assessed need for housing, together with a limited amount of employment growth, will be permitted on sites dispersed across the key service centres and small settlements to support the vitality of these communities and provide flexibility and diversity in the housing supply.

In addition, rural exception, small and windfall sites will be permitted on sites which are in conformity with other policies of this plan providing further flexibility in the housing supply.

LP 3

Green Infrastructure

A proposal will be expected to support green infrastructure and will therefore be supported where it demonstrates that it:

- a. incorporates open/ green space in accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011) (SPD), or successor documents;
- b. protects and where possible enhances existing green infrastructure, concentrating efforts on protecting, enhancing or creating links within, to and between green infrastructure priority areas and the Cambridgeshire Strategic Green Infrastructure Network;
- c. is consistent with the objectives of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) or successor documents;
- d. improves the accessibility, naturalness and connectivity of green spaces, assisting in achieving Natural England's Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt);
- e. provides replacement provision where the proposal would result in harm to or loss of existing green infrastructure, where the replacement provides a net benefit, judged in terms of the factors set out in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011);
- f. maintains and where appropriate enhances the rights of way network; and
- g. contributes to the re-naturalisation of water bodies such as rivers and lakes, where possible.

Green Infrastructure Priority Areas

Several Green Infrastructure Priority Areas have been identified, as indicated on 'The Key Diagram' and shown on the Policies Map. They have potential to consolidate and link

important habitats and facilitate access improvements. A proposal within a priority area will be supported where the requirements for that area will be achieved.

The Great Fen

Within the Great Fen a proposal will only be supported where it is clearly demonstrated that it will make a positive contribution towards the implementation of the Great Fen Masterplan (2010) or successor documents.

A proposal that lies outside the designated Great Fen area, but within its Landscape and Visual Setting will be expected to demonstrate consideration of the landscape and visual impacts that the proposal could have on the Great Fen, such as how the proposal might affect the aims of the Great Fen project to establish an area where the experience gained by visitors will be one of a tranquil area of countryside unaffected by urban encroachment.

Great Ouse Valley

A proposal within the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area, defined in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Document will be supported where it contributes to the landscape, wildlife, cultural and historical value of the area.

A proposal at Paxton Pits will be supported where it helps to deliver the objectives of the Nature Reserve Management Plan (2017) and/ or the objectives of the Reserve Management Strategy for the planned extension to Paxton Pits Nature Reserve (2007) or successor documents.

Nene Valley

Within the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it is compatible with the objectives of the NIA and where possible enables identified habitat opportunities to be realised.

Grafham Water

A proposal within the Grafham Water Landscape Character Area, defined in the Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Document, will be supported where it enhances or creates ecological or landscape linkages between Grafham Water and woodland in the vicinity. Enhanced access will also be supported subject to compatibility with the landscape and biodiversity.

A proposal will be supported where involves the role, function and continued operation or enhancement of Grafham Water Reservoir, its Treatment Works and associated networks.

Associated facilities

A proposal to provide facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure in the countryside will be supported where a countryside location is justified, the use is compatible with the green infrastructure in question and adverse effects are avoided.

LP 4

Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery

Community Infrastructure Levy

Applicable developments will be liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or subsequent local infrastructure tax, as set out in the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (2012) or subsequent revisions.

Planning Obligations

In addition to the CIL, contributions towards the provision of infrastructure, and of meeting economic, social and environmental requirements may be necessary to make a proposal acceptable in planning terms. Contributions that may be required include the following:

- a. Affordable housing;
- b. Recreation (including leisure and sports facilities);
- c. Green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement/ mitigation;
- d. Transport;
- e. Community facilities;
- f. Education, health and social care and community safety;
- g. Utilities infrastructure and energy;
- h. Emergency and essential services;
- i. Environmental improvements;
- j. Drainage and flood prevention and protection;
- k. Waste recycling facilities; and
- l. Public art, heritage and archaeology.

Such contributions will be calculated as set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011) (SPD) or successor documents and will be sought through a planning obligation. The nature and scale of planning obligations sought will depend on the form of development and the impact it is considered to have upon the surrounding area on the basis of documentary evidence. Requirements may be provided on or off site as set out in the SPD. The timing of provision will be carefully considered in order to ensure that adequate infrastructure, support and facilities are in place before development is occupied or comes into use.

All considerations and negotiations will be undertaken in a positive manner in order to come to the most appropriate solution and will, subject to such evidence being submitted, take viability and other material considerations including specific site conditions into account.

Where particular requirements of sites allocated for development are known they are identified in the applicable allocation policy.

Subdivision of allocated sites in order to avoid liability for contributions will not be accepted.

Contributions will be calculated on the complete developable area and apportioned appropriately.

The delivery of development may need to be phased, and review mechanisms used, to ensure necessary infrastructure is provided to meet needs. Conditions or a planning obligation may be used to secure this.

LP 5

Flood Risk

Location of development

A proposal will only be supported where all forms of flood risk, including breaches of flood defences or other defence failures, have been addressed, as detailed in the National Planning Practice Guidance and with reference to the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), such that:

- a. the sequential approach and sequential test are applied and passed, having regard to actual and residual flood risk and including consideration of the impact of climate change;
- b. if necessary the exception test is applied and passed;

- c. development has been sequentially located within the site to avoid flood risk;
- d. all reasonable opportunities to reduce overall flood risk have been considered and where possible taken;
- e. the integrity of existing flood defences is not adversely affected and any necessary flood mitigation and compensation measures have been agreed with relevant bodies and the Council; and
- f. the requirements relating to flood risk set out in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD have been applied.

Any reliance on emergency services to make a proposal safe will not be acceptable. Safety risks will be determined with reference to the Defra guidance on flood risk safety FD2320 or successor guidance, on the basis that development should be 'safe for all' for a 1:1000 annual probability flood event, for the lifetime of the development, with appropriate climate change allowances.

Previously developed land in defended areas

Where a proposal for redevelopment of Previously Developed Land (as defined in the 'Glossary') which benefits from flood defences is deemed appropriate following application of the sequential test and exception test it will be supported where:

- g. breach modelling has been completed to determine the residual risk in all instances for new vulnerable development; and
- h. safe access and egress can be provided with approval from the emergency planning authority that there is no additional reliance on their services as a result of the development.

Managing flood water

Where a proposal is considered to be acceptable within the 1% annual probability flood extent (flood zone 3), including an allowance for climate change for the lifetime of the development, the development must not result in a loss of flood storage capacity, reduced flow performance, increase the rate of flooding onset or result in an unsustainable form of flood storage requiring on-going silt removal, maintenance or renewal.

Where a proposal would occupy functional flood plain (flood zone 3b), the developer must ensure that it does not impact upon the ability of the floodplain to store or convey water, and seek opportunities to provide floodplain betterment. Development will only be support where it results in no loss of floodplain performance within the undefended floodplain.

Where ground levels are proposed to be raised to bring the development out of the floodplain compensatory floodplain storage within areas that currently lie outside the floodplain must be provided to ensure that the total volume and performance of floodplain storage is not reduced or vulnerability to climate change impacts increased.

Site specific flood risk assessments

On a site that is at risk of flooding from any form, where there are critical drainage problems or on sites of 1 hectare or more the proposal will only be supported where a site-specific flood risk assessment has been produced, appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and risks involved, including consideration of the impact of climate change, and is agreed with relevant bodies. Such assessments will need to demonstrate that they comply with the requirements set out:

- i. in the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD or successor documents;
- j. by any applicable responsible authority, including but not limited to the Environment Agency and Cambridgeshire County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority; and
- k. by the Middle Level Commissioners or internal drainage boards, as may be applicable.

LP 6

Waste Water Management Sewer Network

A proposal for major scale development that would:

- a. require a new connection to the sewer network;
- b. involve significant increases to flows entering the sewer network; or
- c. involve development of a site identified by the Huntingdonshire Stage 2 Detailed Water Cycle Study or updated, successor or equivalent documents, to have potentially limited sewer network capacity (Amber or Red assessment);

will only be supported where a sustainable foul/ used water strategy has been prepared and agreed with Anglian Water as the sewerage undertaker to establish whether any upgrades are necessary so that flows from the proposal can be accommodated. If upgrades are necessary the proposal will need to include an agreed plan for delivery, including phasing of development as necessary.

Water Treatment Capacity

A proposal for any scale of development will be supported if:

- d. Anglian Water Services do not raise concerns relating to the ability of waste water infrastructure to accommodate waste water flows from the proposal;
- e. the Environment Agency and Natural England or another responsible authority do not raise concerns that the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive could be compromised; and
- f. the Middle Level Commissioners or other internal drainage board do not object on the basis of flood risk in the system they manage, as may be applicable.

To achieve these requirements for proposals that would involve waste water flows to Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW) with constrained capacity, as currently identified in the Huntingdonshire Stage 2 Detailed Water Cycle Study, interim treatment measures are likely to be required until an acceptable permanent solution is put in place. Where temporary measures are not available or would be insufficient it may be necessary for development to be phased. If acceptable permanent solutions are not possible proposals will not be supported.

LP 7 Spatial Planning Areas

Each Spatial Planning Area to which this policy applies is defined above.

Development Proposals on Unallocated Sites

A proposal for development on a site which is additional to those allocated in this plan will be supported where it fulfils the following requirements and is in accordance with other policies:

Residential Development

A proposal for housing development (class 'C3') or for a residential institution use (class 'C2') will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement.

Business Development

A proposal for business development (class 'B') will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement. An appropriate location will include an Established Employment Area, defined in policy LP 19 'Established Employment Areas'; a town centre, defined in policy LP 22 'Town Centre Vitality and Viability' or the Alconbury Enterprise Zone.

Main Town Centre Uses

A proposal for a main town centre use, as defined in the 'Glossary', will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement. An appropriate location will be determined through the application of the sequential approach as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Outside a defined town centre a proposal including more than 600m² of net internal retail floorspace will need to be accompanied by a proportionate and locally appropriate impact assessment as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. A proposal will not be supported where it is likely to have a significant adverse impact.

Other uses

A proposal for a non-residential institutional use (class 'D1') or an assembly and leisure facility (class 'D2') other than those defined as a main town centre use will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement.

Mixed use development

A proposal which includes a mix of uses will be supported where each use accords with the applicable requirements detailed above.

Relationship of settlements within a Spatial Planning Area

A proposal will be supported where it will not undermine the role of the primary settlement within the Spatial Planning Area or adversely affect the relationship between the settlements of the Spatial Planning Area whether this is through its scale or other impacts.

LP 8

Key Service Centres

Each Key Service Centre to which this policy applies is defined above.

Development Proposals within the Built-up Area

A proposal for development on a site which is additional to those allocated in this plan will be supported where it is located within a built-up area of a Key Service Centre.

Development Proposals on Land well-related to the Built-up Area

A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan.

LP 9

Small Settlements

Each Small Settlement to which this policy applies is defined above.

Development Proposals within the Built-up Area

A proposal that is located within a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the:

- a. level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement;
- b. opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport;
- c. effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.

Development Proposals on Land well-related to the Built-up Area

A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan.

LP 10

The Countryside

Development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan.

All development in the countryside must:

- a. seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value:
 - i: avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, and
 - ii: avoiding Grade 1 agricultural land unless there are exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the loss of land;
- b. recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
- c. not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

LP 11

Design Context

A proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including natural, historic and built environment, to help create distinctive, high quality and well-designed places. In order to achieve this a proposal will need to have applied the guidance contained in the Council's Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017), the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD (2007) or successor documents and applicable conservation area character statements. A proposal should also have had regard to relevant advice or guidance that promotes high quality design, details the quality or character of the area or describes how the area should develop in the future.

LP 24

Affordable Housing Provision

In order to assist in meeting the identified local need for additional affordable homes, a proposal which includes housing development will be required to provide a range of affordable housing types, sizes and tenures. These should be appropriate to meet the requirements of the local community taking into account the latest evidence from the Housing Register, the Cambridge sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other local sources. The affordable housing provision may include specialist or supported housing where an identified need exists. A proposal will be supported where:

- a. it delivers a target of 40% affordable housing on a site where 11 homes or 1,001m² residential floorspace (gross internal area) or more are proposed (12);
- b. it provides approximately 70% of the new affordable housing units as social or affordable rented properties with the balance made up of other affordable tenures;
- c. affordable housing is dispersed across the development in small clusters of dwellings; and
- d. it ensures that the appearance of affordable housing units is externally indistinguishable from that of open market housing.

Where it can be demonstrated that the target is not viable due to specific site conditions or other material considerations affecting development of the site an alternative dwelling or tenure mix or a lower level of provision may be supported. Preference will be given to amending the tenure mix; only if this is still demonstrated not to be viable will consideration be given to reducing the affordable housing requirement. A development viability assessment may be required to support an alternative mix or level of affordable housing provision.

In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to accept off-site provision and/or commuted payments where this would offer an equivalent or enhanced provision of affordable housing.