

West Northamptonshire Local Plan - 2041  
(Regulation 18) Consultation Draft April 2024

**Foreword**

To be added

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 What are we consulting on?

1.1.1 The Council has produced this Plan to cover the whole of the West Northamptonshire area. This Plan will replace the existing West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) and the Part 2 Plans for each of the former council areas, namely:

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan - December 2014
- Settlements and Countryside Local Plan for Daventry District - February 2020
- South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan - June 2020
- Northampton Part 2 Local Plan - March 2023

1.1.2 This Plan sets out a vision for the area and policies to achieve that vision. It sets out the scale of development that needs to be provided for over the plan period, where that development will take place and sets requirements for that development, for example regarding climate change.

1.1.3 The Plan covers the period up to 2041.

1.1.4 Comments are invited on this Plan. **The closing date for comments is ???** (*8 weeks from the start, which is expected to be early April*)

## 1.2 What stage are we at?

1.2.1 When work originally started on this Plan, the intention was to produce a Strategic Plan that would be supplemented by one or more Part 2 Plans. In [June 2023](#) it was decided that a single plan would be preferable, and from then all work on the Plan has been on that basis.

1.2.2 The Plan is still being prepared, evidence is still being gathered and options are still being considered. The Plan contains fully developed policies which we are inviting comments on. In some cases, the plan identifies that policies are still being developed or choices being made, again comments are invited on these parts of the Plan. These policies are identified with 'PSID' in the Plan. This stage of plan making is referred to as the Regulation 18 stage.

1.2.3 The next stage of plan preparation is the Regulation 19 stage. That version of the Plan will be published for comment, this is planned for early 2025. Any comments received will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration as part of the Plan's examination.



1.2.4 The timetable for the next stages is set out in the Local Development Scheme.

1.2.5 Two stages of consultation have already been undertaken. Consultation on an Issues Paper was undertaken in autumn 2019 and an Options Paper from October to December 2021. These papers can be viewed on the Council's website.

### **1.3. Why do we need a new Local Plan?**

1.3.1 The existing planning policy framework for West Northamptonshire is set out in the WNJCS Strategy adopted in 2014 and Part 2 plans for each of the former local authority areas (Daventry District, South Northamptonshire District and Northampton Borough). These plans cover the period to 2029.

1.3.2 A new local plan enables the new Council to set out its vision for the future of the area. The new Plan will ensure there is an up-to-date set of policies in place for decision making and will also simplify the planning policy environment by providing all of the policies in a single plan rather than separate part 1 and part 2 plans. The new Plan will also ensure that there is a plan in place to cover a longer time horizon.

1.3.3 When adopted, the new Plan will form part of the development plan alongside made neighbourhood development plans and the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

### **1.4. How is this Local Plan Structured?**

1.4.1 This Plan is in 15 chapters.

1.4.2 It starts with the spatial portrait for the area in Chapter 2, together with the vision and spatial objectives.

1.4.3 The spatial strategy for the area is set out in Chapter 3.

1.4.4 In Chapter 4, the Plan then focuses on placemaking, responding to climate change, sustainability and healthier lives, which are overarching themes for this Plan.

1.4.5 Chapters 5 to 9 set out future strategies and policies for the key places in the area, starting with Northampton, the largest settlement in West Northamptonshire, followed by Daventry, Brackley, Towcester and then the rural areas.

- 1.4.6 The Plan then looks at key themes: homes, economic growth, built and natural environment, transport and infrastructure.
- 1.4.7 The final chapter sets out how the Plan will be implemented and monitored.

## **Chapter 2: Spatial Portrait, Vision and Objectives**

### **2.1 Spatial Portrait**

- 2.1.1 West Northamptonshire is a unitary council area located within the southern part of central England. It covers a large geographical area, including four towns: Northampton, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley and an extensive rural area incorporating over 190 villages.
- 2.1.2 There are strong connections between Northampton as the Principal Urban Area with the other main towns and the rural hinterland as reflected in significant household and travel to work movements between the settlements. To the north and east, there are strong travel links between the Northampton area and Kettering and Wellingborough. There are also significant commuter flows into Milton Keynes from Northampton and the southern part of the council area.
- 2.1.3 West Northamptonshire has excellent connections to the rest of the country and to mainland Europe. The area benefits from key strategic transport infrastructure including linkages to the M1, M40, M6, the Haven Ports and the West Coast Mainline, Chiltern and Midland Mainline railways. The area is often described as being at the crossroads of the M1 north-south route and the A14/ M6 east-west route. Other key routes on the strategic road network include the A5, A43 and A45.
- 2.1.4 West Northamptonshire is readily accessible to Greater London and Birmingham, the country's two largest cities. Travel times from Northampton to both London and Birmingham by train are only one hour. For air travel many passenger journeys by residents and businesses in West Northamptonshire are made from major gateway airports at London with smaller regional airports at East Midlands, London Luton or Birmingham International also offering a wide range of flights. Whilst both East Midlands Airport and London Luton Airport are accessible by car within one hour's journey time from Northampton there are limited rail connections to both destinations.
- 2.1.5 Northampton town centre, together with its retail parks, cultural and leisure offer remains a key attractor for West Northamptonshire residents and for some residents outside the area. Major attractors for shopping and other 'town centre' uses beyond West Northamptonshire's area include Milton Keynes to the south and the major shopping and leisure complex at Rushden Lakes to the east. Like all areas of the country, our towns, traditional high streets, and shopping centres have been challenged for over a decade by falling market demand. This trend was further accelerated and compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council has ambitious plans for the regeneration of our town centres and the

policies and proposals of this Local Plan will be a key tool in realising this ambition.

## **The West Northamptonshire Area**

- 2.1.6 West Northamptonshire has a population of 425,725 people (Office of National Statistics 2021 census). Overall population has increased by 13.5% (50,624 residents) since 2011 which is significantly above the national average. Whilst the land area is predominately rural, approximately two-thirds of this population live in urban areas, principally Northampton and one-third of the population lives in the rural area beyond the main towns.
- 2.1.7 The area presently has an above national average youth population and a below average older population; however, population projections indicate that the proportion of elderly people within the population is likely to rise.

## **Northampton**

- 2.1.8 With a population of 238,653 in 2021, Northampton is the largest town in England. Planned expansion has led to substantial population growth from around 100,000 in the 1960s. The town continues to grow and maintain its role as a major employment, cultural, retail, and residential centre in Northamptonshire.
- 2.1.9 The town is home to a range of major employers including Barclaycard, Cosworth, Carlsberg UK, Panasonic UK, Nationwide Building Society, Avon Cosmetics, Mahle Powertrain and GE Precision Engineering. Since its creation in August 2011 the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone has been an important catalyst for economic growth and regeneration. Significant developments include the new Waterside Campus for the University of Northampton, the development of a new railway station building and the University of Northampton's Innovation Centre. Northampton is also the focus for learning in the area and in addition to the University is home to Northampton College, with Moulton College lying immediately to the north of the town. Northampton town centre provides the main services and facilities, health care, including Northampton General Hospital, and retail offer for the wider population of West Northamptonshire and beyond.

## **Daventry**

- 2.1.10 Daventry is a market town with a population of around 28,000 in 2021. The town experienced significant expansion in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of its designation as an overspill town for Birmingham. This resulted in significant growth in population from around 4,000 in 1950.
- 2.1.11 The town is an important employment centre with large industrial/commercial estates located to the north west and south east. Significant employers include the car manufacturer Ford and Cummins which is a global engineering company. Daventry has benefited from several regeneration schemes including the Abbey Retail Park, the 'iCon' building and more recently the 'Arc' cinema development.

## **Towcester**

- 2.1.12 Towcester is the oldest town in Northamptonshire with a population of about 11,500 (census 2021). The town experienced significant housing expansion in the 1980s and the town continues to expand with the development of the Towcester South Sustainable Urban Extension. Towcester residents predominantly travel to either Northampton or Milton Keynes for work and shopping (other than food shopping), but employment allocations in the Part 2 Local Plan will provide additional opportunities for local employment. Existing employers include the defence and aerospace manufacturer BAE Systems and the global electronics company Abaco Systems.
- 2.1.13 Towcester has an historic and attractive town centre, and the recent regeneration of the Moat Lane area has brought additional activity to the centre, with local government offices and library, residential development and new commercial floorspace. The completion of the planned relief road to the south of the town will help to address issues of congestion and poor air quality on the A5.

## **Brackley**

- 2.1.14 Brackley is an attractive historic market town. It has a population of about 16,000 and has experienced extensive housing expansion over the last 30 years. The excellent road links provided by the A43 mean that many Brackley residents travel to the neighbouring larger towns of Banbury, Oxford and Milton Keynes for employment and shopping.
- 2.1.15 The linear town centre has many listed buildings and supports a good balance of independent businesses and national multiples. Employment opportunities are concentrated in a small number of industrial/commercial estates to the south and east. With Silverstone in close proximity the town hosts several high technology and motorsport companies including Mercedes AMG Petronas.

## **Jobs**

- 2.1.16 West Northamptonshire, being a diverse area, has a broad economic base. In 2022 the area's economy produced goods and services valued at £12.5 (bn) (GVA) and supported around 243,500 jobs.
- 2.1.17 Since the 1990s there has been strong growth in employment and GVA and the local economy was able to recover from the global recession in 2008 and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Compared to the regional average West Northamptonshire has a relatively high employment and economic activity rate. The unemployment rate, recorded at 2% in 2022, is below the England average of around 4%.
- 2.1.18 The proportion of residents employed in manufacturing continues to decline (to 8.7% in 2021), but this remains higher than the national average of 7.3%. Other sectors showing decreases in numbers employed between 2011 and 2021 are financial and insurance activities (down 6%) and accommodation and food activities (down 4.5%). These decreases are more than compensated by increases in construction (up 45%), transport and storage (up 28%) and health and social work (up 25%).
- 2.1.19 Across West Northamptonshire over the last decade, the top-level occupation data shows a shift away from the middle skill range of occupations and growth at either end of the spectrum. The main loss is amongst administrative and secretarial occupations (down 12.2%). On the other hand, managerial and professional occupations along with elementary occupations have all increased by between 23% and 25% since 2011. In fact, longer term, the number of residents working in professional occupations has more than doubled in twenty years.
- 2.1.20 One of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has been on the way that people work, with a significant increase in remote and hybrid working practices across many industries. This trend is likely to affect those sectors which generally account for a significant take up of office space and as such, compared to pre-pandemic trends, the demand for offices is likely to fall.

## **Homes**

- 2.1.21 The four main towns in West Northamptonshire have all experienced considerable housing growth over the years in order to support viable, sustainable, and mixed communities. Housing stock varies greatly from older, traditional housing to modern, contemporary forms. Some specific neighbourhoods in Northampton and Daventry are in need of housing improvement.

- 2.1.22 Whilst West Northamptonshire has higher house prices compared to the regional and England average, Northampton has median and lower quartile house prices 49% and 47% lower than in the South Northamptonshire area. House prices have increased across West Northamptonshire, but the Daventry area has seen the largest increase at 89% over the last 15 years.
- 2.1.23 West Northamptonshire is also a relatively expensive place to rent a dwelling, with rents at all price points higher than the East Midland average. However, there is significant variation in rents between the three sub-areas. Rents in Northampton are significantly lower than either Daventry or South Northamptonshire.
- 2.1.24 Over the last decade the persistent decrease in the proportion of resident households living in socially rented housing across West Northamptonshire has stabilised and now stands at 14.4% (England average 17.1%). Alongside this trend, there has been a further shift away from home ownership (particularly with a mortgage) which probably reflects the well-known increase in the housing affordability ratio and the difficulty this has given first time buyers seeking to access the housing market. The decline in home ownership and the restricted supply of affordable housing has led to an increase in the private rental sector which now houses 19.1% of WNC households (England average 20.5%), up from 6.5% in 2001.

## **Movement**

- 2.1.25 In West Northamptonshire 85% of economically active people both live and work in the council area, and just over half of these work predominantly from home. This indicates a high level of self-containment and suggests that many work-related trips occur within West Northamptonshire itself. In terms of work-related travel, the most significant destinations are North Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes. In both instances approximately 3% of West Northamptonshire's economically active residents work in these locations.
- 2.1.26 The 2021 census showed that 29% of residents were predominately working from home. 51% of residents travelled to work using a car/van which was higher than the England average. Only 4.2 % used public transport and 1.5% used a bicycle. In both cases the proportions are lower than in the 2011 census. It should be noted that the pandemic has impacted on these figures.
- 2.1.27 The West Northamptonshire area is one of generally high car ownership and residents continue to use the private car as the preferred mode of travel. Whilst 15.9% of households do not have access to a car this is lower than the England average of 23.5%. This presents challenges for the provision of public transport

in the area and the heavy reliance on the private car contributes to congestion on our roads and other problems such as air pollution.

## **Community Regeneration**

- 2.1.28 The West Northamptonshire area is generally an affluent one. The 2021 census revealed just under 5,000 of households with three or four deprivation dimensions which represents a 25% decrease from 2011. This equates to 2.9% of households, below the England average of 3.9%. There are, however, significant pockets of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that 16.9% West Northamptonshire's population lives in the 20% most deprived areas (LSOA). Northampton contains significant pockets of deprivation in central and eastern areas, with 12 LSOAs that are among the most deprived 20% in the country. There is also one LSOA in Daventry town which falls into this category. Consequently, there are a number of social and economic issues facing some neighbourhoods and communities where regeneration intervention is required. Towcester and Brackley do not have any significant areas of deprivation.
- 2.1.29 In the rural areas an overall appearance of wealth can mask small pockets of rural deprivation. 43% of households live in the rural area of West Northamptonshire. Challenges within this rural context include, an ageing population, a lack of affordable housing, limited access to services and reduced public transport, and poor access to digital infrastructure.

## **Town Centres**

- 2.1.30 Northampton town centre remains the key centre in West Northamptonshire. Notwithstanding the decline in retail and the impact of the pandemic, Northampton has the strongest comparison goods offer and draws on a wide sub regional catchment area. The town centre has many positive attributes, not least its significant heritage assets with four conservation areas in the town centre alone. This provides a strong basis for ongoing regeneration. The Council, working with partners, is investing significant resources in several schemes to support the regeneration of the town centre. These include the transformation of the market square, public realm improvements to Abington Street and redevelopment at Four Waterside and Marefair for a mix of uses including, offices, hotel, and new housing.
- 2.1.31 Daventry town centre has a relatively good balance of independent and multiple stores with a retail offer that is anchored by its three main foodstores. Recent regeneration schemes include the development of the Arc cinema which enhances the mix of uses in the town centre. The Council has plans for further regeneration activity in the town to be coordinated through the preparation of a new masterplan.



2.1.32 Towcester and Brackley function as rural service centres for their large rural areas and operate well within this role. The retail study concluded that Brackley had a relatively good balance of independent and multiples stores and that the retail offer is anchored by a main food store. Towcester has a similar range of shops and services and has seen revitalisation in recent years through the Moat Lane heritage led regeneration scheme.

### **Arts, Culture and Sport**

2.1.33 As the hub of West Northamptonshire Northampton is home to a range of high-quality professional sports clubs (including rugby union, football, and county cricket) and cultural facilities (including two theatres, museums and gallery space). Northampton's extensive network of parks and open spaces provides an important resource for both residents and visitors.

2.1.34 Daventry has an extensive green infrastructure network which connects the town to the wider countryside. The Daventry Country Park and the greenspace at Borough Hill are key elements of this network. Towcester has the nationally protected Easton Neston Historic Park and the currently underutilised Towcester Racecourse. Brackley has local facilities for leisure and recreation but would benefit from additional sports pitch provision.

2.1.35 The River Nene flows through West Northamptonshire and close to the southern edge of Northampton town centre. It provides a rich resource for water sports, nature conservation and informal recreation. The area also benefits from the historic canal network as a cultural, recreational and wildlife asset. The countryside around the West Northamptonshire towns is itself a wider recreational resource.

2.1.36 Silverstone Circuit is a year-round international sporting attraction and the home of Formula 1's British Grand Prix. It draws motorsport enthusiasts from all over the country and beyond and reinforces the area's long tradition in the motor sports industry. It is expected to continue its role as a major economic driver through sport-based tourism, education, high-tech business opportunities and research and development.

### **Built and Natural Environment**

2.1.37 The towns and rural area within West Northamptonshire have a rich heritage. There is a wealth of listed buildings and conservation areas within the towns and villages as well as numerous archaeological sites. The many historic houses and associated historic parks and gardens are a significant feature of the countryside and in many cases provide a valuable tourism asset.

- 2.1.38 West Northamptonshire is a predominantly rural area containing a diverse mix of farmland, woodland, villages, and riparian landscapes together with larger urban areas. The countryside is highly valued both as a food producing area, and as a recreational resource. Much of the area has a quiet rural character, with stone-built villages and extensive country estates.
- 2.1.39 The landscape character of West Northamptonshire is varied, reflecting the pattern of the underlying geology. The highest parts of the area are located to the west where a distinctive tract of elevated and rolling rural landscape forms the West Northamptonshire Uplands. Other distinctive landscape areas include the central Northampton plateau, the wooded landscapes of Whittlewood, Yardley Chase and Salcey and the valley landscapes of the Nene, Ouse and Tove.
- 2.1.40 The area supports a number of priority habitats including deciduous woodland, grassland, and wetland habitats. Some of these are protected through formal designations including the internationally important Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area.
- 2.1.41 Evidence produced to support this Plan has identified strategic scale opportunities for investment in Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital across the area.

### **Future opportunities**

- 2.1.42 West Northamptonshire clearly has many strengths, such as its highly accessible location, strong housing and economic growth, and its many heritage assets. There are, however, a number of challenges which include supporting the regeneration of Northampton, tackling congestion and air pollution, addressing climate change, improving health and wellbeing, raising educational attainment, and ensuring infrastructure is delivered to support growth.
- 2.1.43 The following vision and spatial objectives seek to build on the strengths of the area whilst addressing the challenges that have been identified.

## **2.2 Spatial Vision**

- 2.2.1 The Spatial Vision is a vision of where we want to be at the end of the plan period in 2041. It is central to the Local Plan and sets out the ambition for our communities, our economy and our environment. Place based visions are included for Northampton, Daventry, Brackley, Towcester and the wider rural area.

## The Spatial Vision

'In 2041 our **people** live in vibrant, active and sustainable communities with ready access to the services, facilities and infrastructure they need. Quality housing is available, including affordable housing to meet the needs of everyone. Our residents have improved educational attainment and have the skill levels necessary to adapt to a changing economy. The challenges of an ageing population have been met and health outcomes have improved for all. The take-up of active and healthy lifestyles, including active travel, is widespread and levels of obesity have reduced. Everyone benefits from living in one of the best connected places in the UK.

West Northamptonshire is playing a leading role in the economic success of the Oxford to Cambridge Partnership. We have a thriving **economy** with increased productivity. There has been significant growth in innovation and high value sectors such as motorsport, high precision engineering, life sciences, food and drink, and finance. We also have a dynamic economy which adapts to change and provides job opportunities for all our residents. Our improved tourism offer makes a significant contribution to the value of the local economy.

Our **environment** has been enhanced by sustainable growth with a net gain in biodiversity, a successful local nature recovery strategy, and green space that is accessible to all. Our valued landscapes and built environments have been preserved and enhanced and high quality design has delivered neighbourhoods that people are proud to live in. Above all West Northamptonshire has led the way in the transition to a low carbon economy, has achieved net zero targets, is resilient and continues to adapt to climate change.

A regenerated **Northampton** is the key strategic centre at the heart of West Northamptonshire. Brownfield sites have been developed which support vibrant urban living and economic growth in a high-quality and attractive environment for residents, visitors and investors. As a leading centre for culture, commerce, leisure, education and health it is a place where history, innovation and regeneration go hand in hand.

Whilst retaining its roots as an historic market town, **Daventry** is a sub-regional centre of growing importance, with a successful town centre and strong commercial core. Local economic strengths in engineering and sustainable construction have developed and innovative start-up businesses thrive. Daventry is well-connected, community focussed and benefits from an accessible green network integrated into the fabric of the town.

The market towns of **Brackley** and **Towcester** continue to prosper, with successful town centres providing services, facilities and employment opportunities for the wider rural area. Whilst continuing to accommodate sustainable growth the distinctive character

of the towns and their heritage and environmental assets has been protected and enhanced.

Our **rural area** provides a network of vibrant, well-connected villages supporting a wider choice of homes, employment opportunities, and services at a scale consistent with local needs. The countryside supports a thriving and diverse rural economy, with sustainable food production, enhanced natural capital and distinctive local landscapes. The essential character of our rural area has been retained.

## **2.3 Spatial Objectives**

- 2.3.1 To ensure our Vision is achieved the following 17 Spatial Objectives have been identified which provide specific direction to the policies of this Local Plan. The objectives have been informed by the Council's Corporate Plan which has six priorities, five of which are directly relevant to the Local Plan. The objectives are grouped under each priority.
- 2.3.2 To enable us to monitor how effectively the objectives (and therefore the Vision) are being achieved; specific targets will be developed and set out in the Implementation and Monitoring Framework (Chapter 15).

### **Priority - Green and Clean – Environment and Wellbeing**

#### **Objectives:**

#### **Objective 1 - Climate Change**

To support the transition of West Northamptonshire to a net zero carbon area by 2045, and deliver effective resilience and adaptation to and mitigation of the impacts of climate change by:

- Securing radical reductions in carbon emissions
- Requiring sustainable design and construction in all new development
- Ensuring strategic development allocations are located and designed to be resilient to future climate change and the risk of flooding
- Supporting renewable and low-carbon energy production in appropriate locations
- Ensuring the location and layout of new development promotes the use of sustainable travel modes and reduces the need to travel

#### **Objective 2 - Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital**

To conserve and regenerate natural habitats and species, provide net gains in biodiversity and enhance West Northamptonshire's network of natural capital and green infrastructure by improving existing areas and designing green and blue infrastructure into development. To support the delivery of the local nature recovery strategy including

improving connections between habitats and the creation of new habitats such as woodland for carbon capture and meadowland for biodiversity.

### **Objective 3 - Landscape**

To protect and enhance West Northamptonshire's distinctive landscape character especially those valued landscapes which have been designated as Special Landscape Areas.

### **Objective 4 – Heritage**

To conserve and enhance West Northamptonshire's heritage assets and their settings, recognising their contribution to local distinctiveness, a sense of place, quality of life and economic success.

### **Objective 5 – Water Environment**

To improve our water environment using an integrated water management approach that brings together sustainable water supply, usage and recycling, wastewater disposal, improvement of water quality and flood risk management.

## **Priority: Improved Life Chances – Health, Social Care and Families**

### **Objectives:**

### **Objective 6 – Education and Skills**

To raise educational achievement, attainment and the skills base of all our communities through supporting the development of our learning infrastructure and strengthening links between local businesses and local schools, Moulton and Northampton Colleges, the University of Northampton, and Silverstone University Technical College.

### **Objective 7 – Health and Well-being**

To promote health and wellbeing to support healthy outcomes through high quality development which supports independence, encourages active and healthy lifestyles, supports social interaction, and creates inclusive and safe communities. To ensure the delivery of necessary health and social care infrastructure alongside new development.

### **Objective 8 - Infrastructure and Development**

To protect and enhance local services and to ensure social, physical, green, and technological infrastructure is adequately provided to meet the needs of people and business in a timely and sustainable manner in response to regeneration and new development in West Northamptonshire.

## **Priority - Connected Communities – Transport and Connectivity**

### **Objectives:**

### **Objective 9 - Connections**

To reduce the need to travel, shorten travel distances and prioritise sustainable travel as an attractive option across West Northamptonshire by maximising and promoting the use of alternative travel modes. To facilitate infrastructure for ultra-low emission vehicles, combat congestion, reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and address social exclusion for those who do not have access to a private car. To support the improvement of strategic public transport connections across the area.

### **Objective 10 - Supporting All Our Communities**

To ensure new development in urban areas actively supports and links new and existing communities physically and socially, to achieve social cohesion, maintain or improve the existing residential amenity and address the areas of deprivation. To protect and support rural communities to ensure they thrive and remain vital.

### **Priority - Thriving Villages and Towns – Place Shaping and Homes**

#### **Objectives:**

#### **Objective 11: Supporting Town Centres**

To support the regeneration of our Town Centres responding positively to their distinctive character, heritage, and environmental assets to create attractive centres that are resilient and provide a range of functions such as leisure, culture, the visitor economy and high quality urban living.

#### **Objective 12: Housing**

To provide an appropriate range of housing in sustainable locations, of high quality environmental and design standards, including those relating to designing out crime, to meet the needs of all sections of our changing population, including affordable homes, housing for the younger generation and housing for older persons, vulnerable people, and those with specialist housing needs.

#### **Objective 13: High Quality Design**

To ensure high quality design of new development to deliver beautiful places and buildings making a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of West Northamptonshire, its towns, villages, and neighbourhoods.

### **Priority – Economic Development – Growth and Prosperity**

#### **Objectives:**

#### **Objective 14: Economic Advantage**

To strengthen and diversify West Northamptonshire's economy by taking advantage of our internationally well-placed location, strategic transport network and proximity to London and Birmingham. To maximise the opportunities for sustainable economic growth and investment offered by our strategic location in the Oxford to Cambridge Partnership area.

**Objective 15: Specialist Business Development**

To support and develop opportunities for specialist employment clusters and business development focused on a low carbon economy and new technologies.

**Objective 16: Rural Diversification and Employment**

To support rural diversification and rural employment opportunities, especially those related to agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and other forms of economic development which are appropriate in scale and nature to their location.

**Objective 17: The Visitor Economy**

To facilitate sustainable tourism and leisure related growth creating a distinct offer within West Northamptonshire building on our rich heritage and cultural attractions.

## **Chapter 3: A Spatial Strategy for West Northamptonshire**

### **3.1 Introduction**

- 3.1.1 This chapter sets out a spatial strategy for West Northamptonshire which flows from the Spatial Portrait, Vision and Objectives set out in Chapter 2, and provides a framework for the policies and site allocations in this Local Plan.
- 3.1.2 The spatial strategy outlines the hierarchy of places and the principles for the distribution of development between these places. The key focus of the strategy is on the regeneration of the urban areas of existing towns, maximising the use of previously developed land and vacant or underutilised buildings. Whilst significant peripheral growth will continue through the development of sites allocated in previous Local Plans, this Plan includes relatively limited growth on the edge of Principal Urban Area of Northampton. Details of how much development will be provided are set out in Chapter 10 'Homes' and Chapter 11 'Economic Growth'.
- 3.1.3 The delivery mechanisms that will be used in order to achieve the spatial strategy are set out in Chapter 14 'Infrastructure'.

### **3.2 Policy context**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023**

- 3.2.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a genuinely plan-led planning system, with the expectation that succinct and up to date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of the area together with a framework for meeting housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities.
- 3.2.2 The NPPF states (paragraph 17) that Local Plans 'must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for development and use of land in its area.' This spatial strategy and the policies that flow from it aim to fulfil this requirement.

#### **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 3.2.3 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) confirms the role of development plans at the heart of the planning system and states 'Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places.'



3.2.4 The strategy of this Plan and the policies that flow from it seeks to meet the guidance set out in PPG.

### **3.3 West Northamptonshire Council Corporate Plan**

3.3.1 The Corporate Plan for West Northamptonshire identifies six priority areas:

- a. Green and clean
- b. Improved life chances
- c. Connected communities
- d. Thriving villages and towns
- e. Economic development
- f. Robust resource management

3.3.2 The vision and spatial objectives for this Plan closely reflect the priorities in the Corporate Plan. The strategy of the Plan and the policies within it will have a key role in achieving many of the priorities within the Corporate Plan.

### **3.4 Evidence Base summary**

3.4.1 This Plan has been informed by an up-to-date Housing and Employment Needs Assessment Update (HENU). The HENU uses current census population data and forecasting to reach housing and employment figures which form the basis of the objectively assessed needs that the Plan seeks to address.

3.4.2 In determining the spatial strategy for the Plan the Council has considered a range of alternative broad spatial options. A sustainability appraisal (Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for the West Northamptonshire Local Plan – Interim Sustainability Report – September 2023) was undertaken of the following eight broad spatial options:

- Option 1 – Northampton Focus
- Option 2 – Northampton Fringes with Northern Relief Road
- Option 3 – Urban Regeneration
- Option 4 – Larger Towns and Primary Service Villages (existing strategy)
- Option 5 – Major New Settlement
- Option 6 – Sustainable Transport Corridor
- Option 7 – Larger Towns, Primary and Secondary Service Villages (wider dispersal)
- Option 8 – Employment as a focus for growth

3.4.3. The assessment revealed that all of the options have mixed effects when considered against the sustainability appraisal objectives. Overall, Options 1 and

3, which are both regeneration focused score most favourably in sustainability terms. As such the evidence provided by the SA lends support for a strategy with an increased emphasis on regeneration and the utilisation of previously developed land. The Council is putting significant investment into the regeneration of our towns as a catalyst for further inward investment into the central areas. A regeneration focused strategy will support the investment being made by the Council.

### **3.5 The Settlement Hierarchy**

3.5.1 In order to determine the principles for the distribution of development across West Northamptonshire it is necessary to understand the role and function of our existing settlements, the relationship between those settlements, and the relationship with settlements in other areas. The WNJCS adopted in 2014 identified the following categories to reflect the role and function of the main towns in the area:

- Principal Urban Area – Northampton
- Sub Regional Centre – Daventry
- Rural Service Centres – Brackley and Towcester

3.5.2 Having regard to the spatial portrait set out in Chapter 2 it is considered that the role and function of the main towns identified in the WNJCS remains valid and as such the hierarchy will continue to apply as summarised below.

3.5.3 **Northampton – Principal Urban Area** – As the largest urban area and the main commercial, administrative, cultural and retail centre for West Northamptonshire, Northampton plays a key role in the area and beyond. Due to its size, function and strategic location, the town will continue to generate economic growth and support further housing and population growth. The continued regeneration of the central area will ensure that the town centre performs a multi-functional role for West Northamptonshire and the wider area.

3.5.4 **Daventry – Sub Regional Centre** – As the second largest area in West Northamptonshire, Daventry provides a range of services to support its own needs as well as the rural area around it. Planned development will ensure that the town continues to provide opportunities for economic growth, new housing and regeneration.

3.5.5 **Brackley and Towcester – Rural Service Centres** – Brackley and Towcester's current roles are to provide local services and facilities for their own residents and the rural areas around them. These roles will continue and be strengthened and enhanced.

3.5.6 **Rural Settlements** – There is a diverse range of settlements within the rural area of West Northamptonshire, with significant variation in the size of settlements and the services and facilities which are supported. Some of the villages play a key role in providing local services and facilities, including employment opportunities. A detailed hierarchy for the rural settlements will be set out in the submission version (Regulation 19) in the Making Great Places : Rural Areas chapter.

## **S1 – Spatial Strategy (Distribution of Development)**

Housing and economic development will be distributed on the following basis:

- A. Development will be concentrated primarily in the Principal Urban Area of Northampton through the regeneration of previously developed land and vacant or underutilised buildings. Limited, planned, peripheral growth will also be required to meet housing need in the plan period.
- B. Appropriate development of a lesser scale will be located in the Sub-Regional Centre of Daventry, with a focus on the regeneration of sites within the existing urban area.
- C. Within the Rural Service Centres of Brackley and Towcester the emphasis will be on existing planned growth in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Part 2 Plan, together with the regeneration of sites within the existing urban areas.
- D. In rural areas development of a smaller scale which is consistent with local needs will be supported with a particular emphasis on:
  - i. Enhancing and maintaining the vitality of rural communities and the services and facilities they provide;
  - ii. Strengthening rural enterprise;
  - iii. Promoting improved connectivity between settlements and their hinterlands; and
  - iv. Protecting the distinctive character and quality of rural settlements.
- E. In all cases growth will be directed towards the most sustainable locations in terms of access to services, employment opportunities, transport and the impact on the environment. Priority will be given to the regeneration of our urban areas making the best use of previously developed land and vacant or underutilised buildings.

**WNLP objectives:** All objectives are relevant

## **Chapter 4: Placemaking**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 This chapter sets out key policies that development in West Northamptonshire will need to take account of, to create excellent places. The chapter focuses on four main areas:

1. Climate change and sustainability
2. Creating excellent places
3. Health and wellbeing
4. Community and sports facilities and open spaces

4.1.2 The areas relate to both national policy ambitions as well as authority objectives for residents and visitors to West Northamptonshire.

### **Corporate Plan**

4.1.3 The Corporate Plan for West Northamptonshire Council identifies six priority areas:

- Green and clean
- Improved life chances
- Connected communities
- Thriving villages and towns
- Economic development
- Robust resource management

4.1.4 In particular this chapter and its policies will help deliver the Green and Clean, Thriving Villages and Towns and Improved Life Chances corporate priorities.

4.1.5 The 'Green and Clean' priority sets out seven targets for environment and Wellbeing these are:

- Net zero by 2030
- Climate summit in first few months
- Increased wildlife species and more trees
- Increased electric charging and energy efficiency
- Vibrant towns and villages
- High quality parks
- Accessible green space for all

4.1.6 The 'Thriving Villages and Towns' priority sets out the ambitions for place shaping and homes these are:

- Regeneration of our core town centres
- Safer communities with less antisocial behaviour
- Flourishing and supported small business
- Sustainable planning for growth
- Increased affordable housing and council homes
- Raised standards of privately rented homes

4.1.7 The 'Improved Life Chances' priority sets out a number of priorities which include the following:

- Healthy, safe and protected Children
- Increased aspirations in young people
- Investment in new schools and provision
- Joined up and local services with health
- Safe and secure accommodation for all

## **4.2 Climate change and sustainability**

4.2.1 The United Kingdom (UK) is experiencing rising temperatures. The most recent decade (2012 to 2021) has been on average 1.0°C warmer than the 1961 to 1990 average. All 10 of the warmest years in the UK have occurred since 2003. 2022 was the UK's hottest year on record, with an average year-round temperature above 10°C seen for the first time. (Source: [Climate change explained - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/climate-change-explained))

4.2.2 While the climate is warming, temperatures are not expected to rise every single year. Natural fluctuations will still cause unusually cold years and seasons, but these events will become less likely.

4.2.3 Along with warming at the earth's surface, many other changes in the climate are occurring, such as warming oceans, melting polar ice and glaciers, rising sea levels and more extreme weather events.

4.2.4 The more greenhouse gases there are in the atmosphere, the warmer the earth becomes. While the plants and the oceans absorb about half of the carbon dioxide from human activities, the rest goes into the atmosphere. recent warming is being driven by:

- burning fossil fuels for energy
- changes in land use and deforestation which reduces the numbers of trees available to absorb carbon dioxide

- agricultural production which releases greenhouse gasses from energy use, from the number of livestock and the amount of fertiliser applied to land
- manufacture of cement, chemicals and metals, which releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere

4.2.5 The effects of climate change can already be seen. They are projected to become more severe and widespread as greenhouse gas emissions and global temperatures continue to rise. Some of the effects of changes to our climate include:

- risk to water supplies
- localised flooding and flooding in coastal regions
- damage to marine ecosystems and associated failure of fisheries
- loss of biodiversity
- heat stress, affecting human health and habitability
- increased risk of wildfires
- food insecurity as conditions for growing crops change and habitable region of pests expands

4.2.6 A golden thread throughout this Plan is how it can respond to the impact of climate change through the delivery of sustainable development. As highlighted in the NPPF, local plans must take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, whilst considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Planning policies will support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities, buildings and infrastructure to climate change impact.

4.2.7 As part of the response to climate change, West Northamptonshire Council is committed to achieving Net Zero for its own emissions by 2030 and Net Zero for West Northamptonshire's emissions by 2045. The Northampton Sustainability Accord reflects a commitment to sustainability, as well as identifying the work needed to address sustainability challenges. The Council produces a sustainability report each year which considers how the Council is reaching this target. This Plan has been produced in collaboration with the Council's Sustainability team. A Climate Strategy is also being produced (expected 2024) which looks at risk, resilience, adaptation and mitigation.

- 4.2.8 A key element of achieving our climate change goals is to deliver sustainable development. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development which creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. The NPPF sets out that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve (Paragraph 131).
- 4.2.9 Paragraph 158 of the NPPF sets out the requirements for planning for climate change. It requires plans to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Policies will support measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to the impact of climate change. These could include providing space for physical protection measures or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.
- 4.2.10 Paragraph 159 sets out the ways in which new development should be planned to respond to climate change. These include avoiding increasing vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and ensure new development should be planned to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, through its location, orientation and design.
- 4.2.11 In 2022 the Council set out ambitious plans to improve the sustainability in West Northamptonshire and as part of that, has made a national pledge to beat climate change targets. West Northamptonshire is signed up to the UK100 Net Zero pledge, which focuses on tackling the climate emergency and reducing carbon emissions. UK100's Net Zero Pledge commits councils to cutting their own emissions to net zero by 2030 and those of their residents and businesses by 2045 - five years ahead of the UK Government's 2050 target.
- 4.2.12 The UK100 network includes 100 councils across the country and enables the Council to work directly with others facing the same climate challenges as well as having wider access to a range of new resources including climate research, campaigns, publications, innovative funding models and private sector expertise. To further this work the Council will be preparing a climate strategy which will highlight how the Council will implement the approach to carbon reduction.
- 4.2.13 Planning policy plays an important role in achieving the Council's climate change goals and this section of the Plan sets out development will need to be resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Reduce greenhouse gases and maximise the on-site carbon savings;
  - Manage the climate impacts of flooding and overheating; and
  - Provide suitable and sustainable adaptation measures that provide sufficient resilience to the impacts of climate change.

### **4.3 Climate change adaptation and mitigation studies**

4.3.1 The Council commissioned consultants in 2022 to undertake three studies:

1. Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Evidence for the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan – Climate Change Adaptation
2. Climate Change and Renewable Energy Study – Mitigation Action Report
3. Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Assessment.

4.3.2 The purpose of the studies was to understand how West Northamptonshire can adapt to the future effects from climate change, mitigate these effects and minimise carbon emissions through the use of renewable and low carbon energy.

4.3.3 The Climate Change Adaptation report considered the anticipated impacts of climate change in West Northamptonshire and the Renewable and Low Carbon Energy assessed the scope for renewable and low carbon energy in West Northamptonshire.

4.3.4 The Mitigation Action Report explored the likely trajectory for decarbonisation in WNC and what interventions the Local Plan could take to support decarbonisation and the achievement of net zero.

4.3.5 The key decarbonisation challenges where interventions are required are:

- Rapid decarbonisation of the existing building stock both for commercial and domestic buildings.
- Ensuring that any new buildings do not add to emissions in the area.
- Local generation of renewable electricity to reduce demand from the electricity grid.
- Encouraging a shift away from car use towards low carbon public transport and active travel.
- Vehicle efficiency improvements.
- Encouraging an increase of freight transport by rail.
- Provision of widespread infrastructure to enable a large-scale shift to EVs (or to another type of vehicle that uses sustainable energy) in the car and van fleet.
- Reduction in waste being generated in the Council area, to all waste streams.
- Changing agricultural practices to improve waste management, reduce fertiliser use and reduce soil carbon losses.

4.3.6 The key planning policy priorities include:

- Locate new development to minimise emissions
- Electrification of vehicles



- Encourage more journeys to be made by active modes – walking, wheeling and cycling
- Encourage more journeys to be made by public transport
- Energy efficient and use of renewable or low carbon energy in new buildings in line with the energy hierarchy
- Decarbonisation of grid electricity
- Decarbonisation of agriculture

4.3.7 Climate Change Adaptation, identifies the anticipated impacts of climate change in West Northamptonshire and how the Plan can reduce the risk and strengthen the resilience. This identifies two issues, flood risk and overheating exposure which are considered to be particularly significant risks in West Northamptonshire and sets out the principles focusing on planning for flood risk and overheating.

#### **4.4 Sustainable design and construction**

4.4.1 All development is required to help:

- Buildings are significant contributors to carbon emissions, so it is essential to ensure that all developments are contributing to reducing the impact of climate change and to meeting carbon net zero emissions. Maintaining, repairing, reusing and adapting existing buildings to enable their continued use is one of the most effective ways to reduce carbon emissions and unnecessary waste.
- The whole life cycle of a building should be considered. A life cycle assessment looks at the stages of a building, construction, operation, maintenance/refurbishment and demolition and or re use (or decommissioning).
- When preparing proposals that incorporate heritage assets, applicants are expected to consider the latest Historic England (or successor body) advice such as that contained in the Climate Change and Historic Building Adaptation Historic England Advice Note.

4.4.2 Proposals will need to demonstrate that the following design considerations have been considered:

- Orientation of buildings – such as positioning buildings to maximise opportunities for solar gain, and minimise winter cold wind heat loss;
- Form of buildings – creating buildings that are more efficient to heat and stay warm in colder conditions and stay cool in warmer conditions because of their shape and design [Approved Document O: Overheating \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#);
- Fabric of buildings – using sustainably sourced materials and building techniques that reduce heat and energy needs. Ideally, this could also consider using materials with a lower embodied carbon content and/or high practical recyclable content; consideration should also be given to the reuse of existing heritage building materials, especially for the use of repair of heritage assets;
- Renewable energy generated – generating enough energy from renewable sources onsite (and preferably on plot) to meet reasonable estimates of all regulated and unregulated total annual energy demand across the year;
- Environmental performance – designed to demonstrate energy efficiency and adapt to the changes of use and a changing climate over its life time;
- Water efficiency – promotion of sustainable design; and
- Insulation and ventilation - proposals should ensure that new buildings are well-insulated and sufficiently ventilated to avoid the health problems associated with damp, heat and cold.

4.4.3 For major residential and commercial developments an application will need to be supported by a sustainability statement which will demonstrate how the proposal addresses a number of issues as set out in Policy PL1. Major residential development is defined as housing schemes of 10 or more units. Any major residential application will be the expected to achieve energy efficiency standards such as those set out in the Passive House principles. Major commercial development is defined as schemes of 2,000 sq.m and more.

4.4.4 For schemes of 1 – 9 residential units, schemes will be encouraged to use Passive House principles or similar. This is a voluntary standard for energy efficiency in a building which reduces the building's ecological footprint. The key elements of passive house standard are, high quality insulation, heat control and robust windows, airtight construction, heat recovery ventilation and having a thermal bridge free design. More information can be found [Home \(passivhaustrust.org.uk\)](#).

4.4.5 Commercial development of 2,000 sq.m and above will also be required to provide a sustainability statement to demonstrate how the proposal will contribute to achieving carbon net zero.

4.4.6 The most recently adopted supplementary planning documents outline how development can be more energy efficient. These documents were, however, adopted some time ago and in some regards national policy will be more up to date and therefore should be addressed. They, or any successor documents, should be reviewed when preparing an application.

- Daventry Area – Energy and Development SPD
- South Northamptonshire Area – Energy Efficiency SPD
- South Northamptonshire Area – Low Carbon and Renewable Energy SPD

4.4.7 BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) sets the standards for best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation of commercial buildings. This standard allows assessment of measures of performance to evaluate buildings specification, design and construction and applies to:

- Energy and water use
- Internal environment (health & wellbeing)
- Management processes
- Pollution
- Transport
- Materials
- Travel
- Waste
- Ecology

4.4.8 Credits are awarded in each of these sections which are combined to give a final rating unclassified (<30%), Pass (=30%), Good (=45%), Very Good (=55) Excellent (=70%) and Outstanding (=85%). It is anticipated that all developments should strive to achieve the highest level of BREEAM classification as possible.

4.4.9 All commercial developments should be meeting the highest BREEAM level of 'outstanding'.

### **Policy PL1 - Sustainable Design and Construction**

- A. All developments will be required to contribute to meeting carbon net zero emissions by 2045.
- B. Applications for major residential schemes and commercial development above 2,000 sqm, including redevelopment of existing floorspace, must include a sustainability statement which demonstrates how the proposal addresses all the following issues:

- i. Adaptation and resilience to climate change;
  - ii. Contributes to carbon reduction;
  - iii. Manages water efficiently;
  - iv. Manages site waste;
  - v. Uses sustainable materials; and
  - vi. Incorporates energy saving and energy producing measures, where possible, such as photovoltaic panels.
- C. All commercial developments should aim to meet the highest level of BREEAM or successor standards. Where developers cannot achieve the highest standards, they will need to demonstrate why.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 2, 5

## **Air quality**

- 4.4.10 Under the Environment Act 1995, the Council has a statutory duty to review and assess air quality across the authority area against national air quality objectives and co-ordinate actions to improve air quality where an issue has been identified.
- 4.4.11 The Council has a duty to declare any area where an air quality objective is unlikely to be or is not being met as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Once an AQMA has been declared the council is required to develop an Air Quality Action Plan outlining the measures required to improve air quality in that area.
- 4.4.12 The NPPF states that, "planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality. Planning decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local Air Quality Action Plan. An Air Quality Action Plan is a legal requirement for councils with an Air Quality Management Area, which sets out the councils' planned actions to meet the National Air Quality Objectives."
- 4.4.13 The Council has eight declared AQMA's for nitrogen dioxide – seven in Northampton and one in Towcester. These are as a result of road traffic emissions. These are shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.

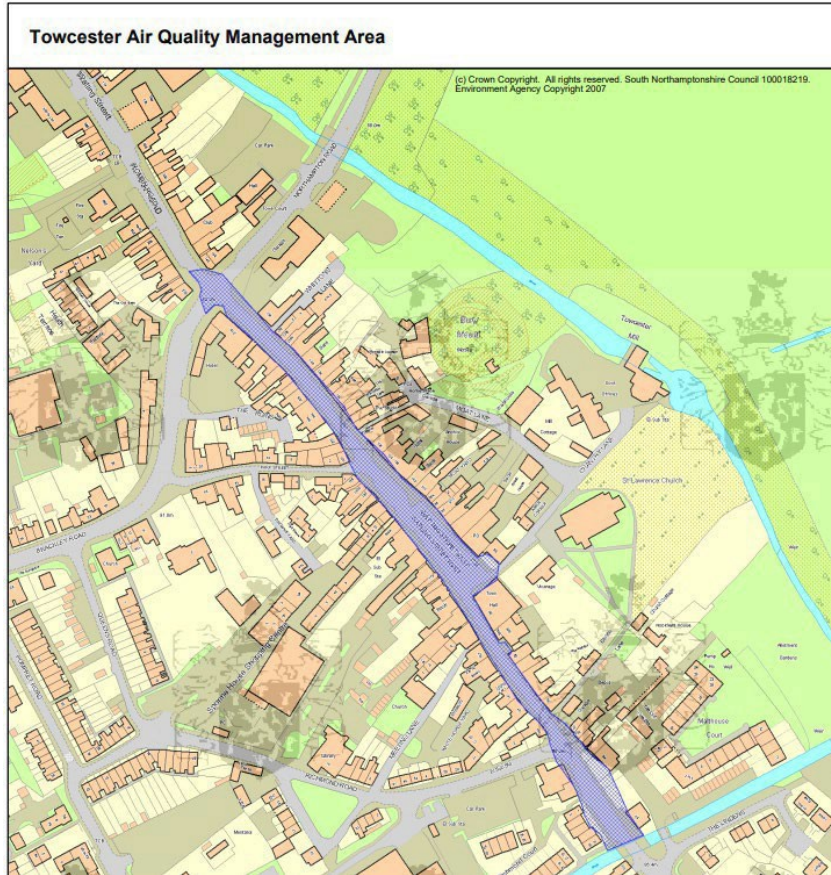


Figure 1: Towcester Air Quality Management Area

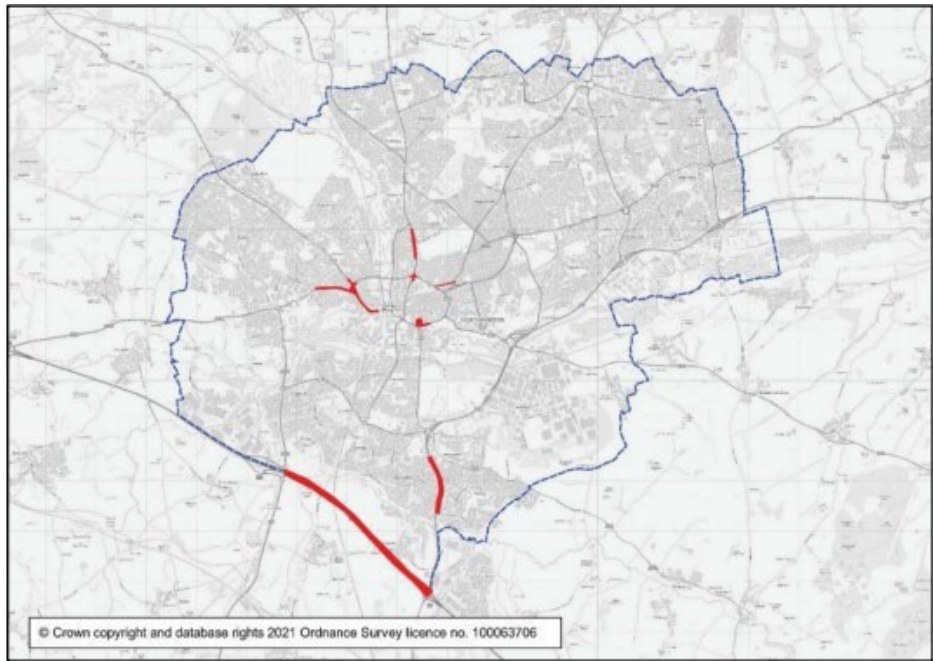


Figure 2: Northampton Air Quality Management Areas

- 4.4.14 It is important to note that all development can generate emissions that will impact on air quality, and that we need protect the good air quality that we have in most of West Northamptonshire. Poor air quality can be defined as areas within an existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) or sites next to a busy or congested road or an existing industrial site.
- 4.4.15 Strategies to deal with improving air quality were adopted by the former Councils including:
- Northampton Low Emission Strategy 2017 – 2025 (December 2017) covering the former Northampton Borough
  - South Northamptonshire Air Quality Action Plan – February 2021
  - Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Developers has been produced in conjunction with the East Midlands Air Quality Network. covering the former South Northamptonshire District.
- 4.4.16 The Council is producing an Air Quality Action Plan (in draft) which together with Policy PL2 of this Plan support the principle that emissions are mitigated in all proposed developments, in the first instance regardless of whether they are within an AQMA. The extent of mitigation is dependent on whether the application is a minor, major or large-scale major scheme. Mitigation includes traffic and travel management, provision of vehicle recharging and active travel infrastructure, construction dust management and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. These documents should be referred to when preparing applications.
- 4.4.17 As outlined above, the proactive approach to mitigating emissions from all development is currently in place in the former South Northamptonshire District as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and in the former Northampton Borough as part of the Low Emission Strategy. A decision is expected to be made in 2024 on whether an SPD that covers the whole of West Northamptonshire is appropriate.
- 4.4.18 In the post development phase, reference should also be made to the principles in the Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Developers produced in conjunction with the East Midlands Air Quality Network.

### **Policy PL2 – Air Quality**

- A. All development is required to take steps to mitigate its impact on local air quality in the construction and post development phases.



- B. Where a development will introduce sensitive receptors into an area of poor air quality, an air quality assessment will need to be undertaken to establish the impact on the sensitive receptors and how this impact can be mitigated through development design.
- C. For industrial processes and the use of biomass, an air quality assessment shall be undertaken that demonstrates that the development will be air quality neutral.
- D. Consideration shall be given to reducing construction/demolition dust, reducing transport and plant emissions both in the operational and development phase, low emission travel and using low emission heating and cooling systems.

**WNLPP objectives:** 1, 7

### **Low carbon energy and renewable energy**

- 4.4.19 The NPPF is clear that the planning system should support a transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. This can partly be achieved by encouraging the use of renewable energy either in large-scale developments such as solar and wind farms but also at the local level on individual housing and employment buildings.
- 4.4.20 Policy for renewable energy also needs to take into consideration local environmental issues such as landscape and visual impacts, as well as cumulative impacts of renewables including wind turbines. Landscapes will have different levels of sensitivities and consideration should be given to policy BN6 Landscapes and supporting evidence on landscape sensitivity.
- 4.4.21 The NPPF requires plans to identify opportunities for development to draw its energy from decentralised, renewable or low-carbon energy supply systems. Consequently, other renewable energy solutions that are appropriate include combined heat and power (CHP), heat source pumps, photovoltaics and other emerging technologies. These types of energy will be supported over the use of fossil fuels with the Council seeking to achieve exemplar developments.
- 4.4.22 Although biomass is a renewable energy source it can have a significant impact on local air quality and residential amenity. The use of biomass will only be supported where an air quality assessment has been undertaken that demonstrates that the development will be air quality neutral.
- 4.4.23 The Council already has some adopted supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and guidance on renewable energy including:



- Daventry Energy and Development SPD (2007)
- South Northamptonshire Energy and Development SPD (2007)
- South Northamptonshire Energy Efficiency SPD (2013)
- South Northamptonshire Low Carbon and Renewable Energy SPD (2013)

4.4.24 These policies reflect the Council's commitment to tackling climate change by reducing energy consumption and thus carbon emissions through the application of sustainable development principles in design and the encouragement of the use of low carbon energies such as CHP on major development proposals and use of active solar technology on any development.

4.4.25 Policy PL3 sets out the criteria to appropriately assess the likely impact of proposals for renewable energy to help ensure that the right technology is accommodated in the right location with minimal impact on the natural and built and environment and heritage assets.

### **Policy PL3 – Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Schemes**

Proposals for large-scale renewable energy development will be supported where, with appropriate mitigation, they do not have an adverse impact on any of the following:

- i. Form, character and setting of an existing settlement;
- ii. Heritage assets including their setting;
- iii. Biodiversity and ecology;
- iv. The landscape including the cumulative impact with existing or approved renewable energy development;
- v. Residential amenity including noise, air quality and shadow flicker; or
- vi. The enjoyment of the open countryside including public rights of way.

### **WNL objectives: 1**

### **Policy PL4 - Low Carbon and Renewable Energy for New Development**

- A. Where appropriate and viable, new development should utilise the availability of any local energy network, such as combined heat and power (CHP) system or generate their own energy from low carbon technology. Where district heating schemes are proposed, and it is reasonably practical, all properties will be expected to be connected to them.
- B. Commercial developments should, where practical, incorporate renewable energy into their proposal including the provision of on-site renewable energy, and low carbon technologies such as solar panels or ground source heat pumps.

- C. Schemes that increase the amount of carbon sinks, through initiatives such as living walls and roofs as well as sustainable drainage will be supported.
- D. Development is required to provide electric vehicle (or other sustainable fuel type) charging points and associated infrastructure as set out in the most up to date standards.

### **WNLN objectives: 1**

#### **Flood Risk**

- 4.4.26 In accordance with the sequential test and principles of the NPPF and PPG, development will be steered away from areas of greatest risk of flooding, and where this is not possible, flood risk management will be required to make development safe. Development should be protected from flood risk throughout its lifetime and should not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- 4.4.27 Flood risk is a significant concern for West Northamptonshire with the rivers Nene, Tove and their tributaries, the canal network and reservoirs prominent features of the landscape.
- 4.4.28 West Northamptonshire Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and is therefore responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management.
- 4.4.29 Section 10 of the NPPF and its supporting Planning Practice Guidance, states that Local Plans should be supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs). Local plan policies and allocations for new development should be considered in light of these assessments.
- 4.4.30 SFRAs consider the risk of flooding from all sources, taking into account climate change and are normally prepared in consultation with the Environment Agency, relevant Water and Sewerage Companies (WASCs) and other relevant flood risk management bodies including, the LLFA, Emergency Planning and Drainage teams. A West Northamptonshire SFRA (Part 1) was produced by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) in 2017.
- 4.4.31 NCC also published a variety of guides that can help developers in the design of surface water drainage systems, the standards required to be met as well as information that should be submitted as part of a planning application.

- 4.4.32 Any successor documents produced by WNC, or its partners, should be used if they supersede the NCC documents.
- 4.4.33 Development proposals will need to comply with the SFRA recommendations, development management requirements, and the NPPF and PPG to address current and future flood risks with appropriate climate change allowances.
- 4.4.34 A sequential approach will need to be applied to development proposals in flood risk areas, in order to direct development to areas at the lowest probability of flooding. In this case, development has to meet the requirements of the sequential test and the exception test (if needed) as set out within Figure 3.

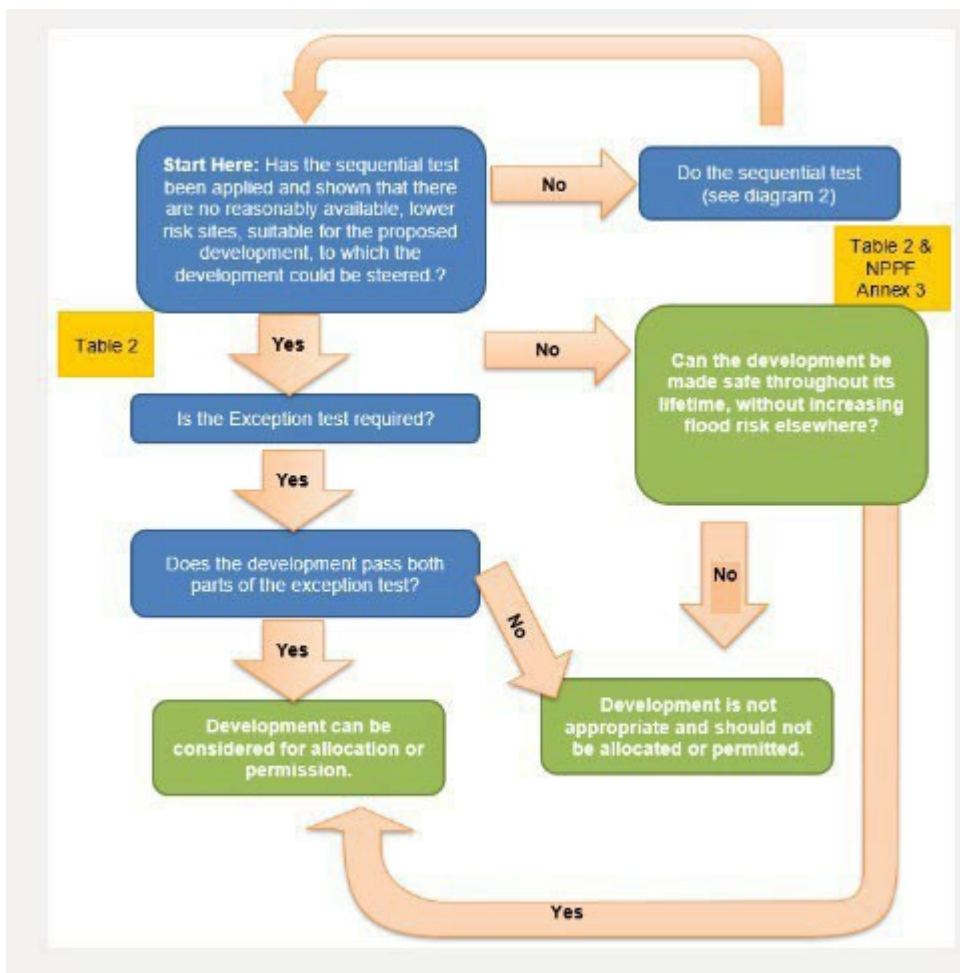


Figure 3: Application of the Exception test to plan preparation  
 Source: PPG – Accessible version

- 4.4.35 All new development, including regeneration proposals, will need to demonstrate that there is no increased risk of flooding to existing properties, and proposed development is (or can be) safe and shall seek to improve flood risk management.
- 4.4.36 All proposals must demonstrate that they will assist in the management of flood risk, ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere and provide flood risk reduction/betterment. Proposals must have regard to relevant guidance for flood risk management and standards for surface water produced by the lead local flood authority and Anglian Water, Severn Trent and Thames Water (or successor documents).
- 4.4.37 It is not possible to eliminate all the risk of flooding. The Northamptonshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy produced by the LLFA, sets out a framework of measures to manage local flood risk. The strategy sets out a collaborative approach to reducing flood risk within Northamptonshire. The design standard for the Upper Nene Catchment (through Northampton and within the Nene catchment upstream of Northampton) is the 0.5% probability (1 in 200 chance of occurring in any given year) event plus climate change. Surface water attenuation should be provided up to this standard. Further evidence has been commissioned to produce an Integrated water cycle study.
- 4.4.38 Where flood risk management requires the use of sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water run-off, these systems should:
- a. take account of advice from the lead local flood authority;
  - b. have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards;
  - c. have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and
  - d. where possible, provide multifunctional benefits.
- 4.4.39 The Council is currently undertaking an Integrated Water Management Strategy and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. These evidence base documents are likely to include policy recommendations relating to water use, water quality, flooding, sustainable drainage, water efficiency and re-use. The Council will review the recommendations and include them, when relevant, in the draft policies.

### **Policy PL5 - Flood Risk**

- A. All proposals for development of 1 hectare or above in flood zone 1 and for development in flood zones 2, 3a or 3b must be accompanied by a flood risk assessment (FRA) that sets out the mitigation and resilience measures for the site. An FRA should also accompany proposals where they may be subject to other

sources and forms of flooding or where other bodies have indicated that there may be drainage problems. The FRA should be agreed with the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.

- B. In order to meet the exception test, development must:
  - i. demonstrate that it provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and
  - ii. be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment that demonstrates that the development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible, reduce flood risk overall.
- C. Where flood risk management requires the use of sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water run-off, these should:
  - i. separate surface water from foul and combined sewers;
  - ii. be accompanied by a long-term management and maintenance plan; and
  - iii. protect and enhance water quality.
- D. Surface water attenuation should be provided to the design standard for the Upper Nene catchment (through Northampton and within the Nene catchment upstream of Northampton) i.e. the 0.5% probability (1 in 200 chance of occurring in any year) event plus climate change.
- E. For all development suitable access must be provided and maintained for water supply and drainage infrastructure.

**WNLFP objectives:** 1, 5

## **4.5 Creating excellent places**

### **Introduction**

- 4.5.1 There are a variety of definitions of placemaking, but it is essentially the process used to shape our buildings and spaces where people want to live, work and explore.
- 4.5.2 Good places can be achieved through design of buildings, safe and direct transport connections to amenities and jobs that prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, provision of and access to green and blue infrastructure, quality construction that is adaptable to current and future impacts of climate change and design that is coherent and respectful to the existing built and natural environment.

- 4.5.3 Through consideration of the above planning matters, the placemaking policies within this Plan seek to improve residents and visitors' health and wellbeing.
- 4.5.4 They will promote healthier lives, seek to reduce obesity and other health inequalities across West Northamptonshire.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023**

### **Placemaking**

- 4.5.5 The NPPF sets clear expectations of the 'quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained'. It states, that 'Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyle'. It identifies that 'patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality place'.
- 4.5.6 These include creating places that are 'safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards.' The emphasis in the NPPF is the importance of securing well designed, attractive and healthy places.
- 4.5.7 Paragraph 131 states that 'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this'.
- 4.5.8 The NPPF sees one of the main mechanisms to delivery is through the uses of area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. To support this the Government have produced the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code
- 4.5.9 Sport England, supported by Active Travel England and the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities has produced Active design guidance to help create active environments and help people lead more physically active and healthy lives.

## **National Design Guide 2021**

4.5.10 The National Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It is part of the planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places. It helps define well designed places as 'fit for purpose, durable and brings delight'. The guide sets out the ten characteristics of place that fit under the three themes of character, community and climate. The ten characteristics are context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and life span. Further detail is provided in the national model design code.

## **National Model Design Code**

4.5.11 The National Model Design Code expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide and provides a common overarching framework for design, which create high quality places. The Guide sets out detailed guide of the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. The coding process is set out in three key steps, analysis which includes defining the scope of the code and establishing the baseline, vision, defining the vision, coding plan and master planning and the Code (guidance for Area Types and Code Wide guidance). All design guides and codes will be consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and Model Design Code.

## **Building for a Healthy Life**

4.5.12 Building for a healthy Life is an additional design tool for creating places that are better for people and nature. It is a design code to help improve design of new and growing neighbourhoods and is based on three key principles, integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places and streets for all. It is intended to provide an illustrated, clearly written and visual prompt.

## **Manual for Streets**

4.5.13 Streets make up the greater part of the public realm. Better designed streets contribute significantly to the quality of the built environment.

4.5.14 Manual for Streets (Manual for Streets) is expected to be used predominantly for the design, construction, adopting and maintenance of residential streets, it is also applicable to existing streets subject to re-design and is based on the principles of inclusive design.

4.5.15 The placemaking policy (PL6) sets out the principles for placemaking that all development should consider. It is reflective of the Government's 'BIDEN' principles, which are:

- making sure new development is Beautiful
- supported by the right Infrastructure
- a more Democratic system where communities have their say
- enhances the Environment
- and creating better Neighbourhoods shaped by the people who live in them

4.5.16 Development proposals will contribute to creating attractive, interesting, inclusive, safe walkable local living in which people of all ages and levels of fitness are happy to travel actively for short distances from home to the destinations that they visit and the services they need to use day to day. This can be established by giving consideration to existing settlement pattern, and the level and quality of interconnectivity of the proposed development with the surrounding area including local access to:

- sustainable modes of transport such as local public transport and safe, high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks;
- employment;
- day to day shopping;
- community, health and social care facilities;
- schools, childcare and lifelong learning opportunities;
- playgrounds and informal play opportunities, green spaces, sport and recreation facilities, opportunities for food growth and allotments,
- options of affordable and accessible housing, ability to age in place and housing diversity.



## **Policy PL6 - Placemaking**

All development should be designed to promote and contribute to good placemaking through high quality, innovative, sustainable and beautiful design which encourages the creation of a strong, successful and locally distinctive sense of place. New development that is of a high quality, in a sustainable location, built in a sustainable way with appropriate infrastructure will be supported. Proposals are required to:

- i. Be well designed for the intended use(s), attractive and adaptable to future requirements such as the needs of the occupier and the impacts of climate change;
- ii. Demonstrate consideration of all aspects of health and wellbeing issues that promote active and healthier lifestyles in their design, layout, landscaping and mix of uses (including co-location of services) and provide sustainable links to the wider community, jobs, facilities and countryside;
- iii. Ensure pedestrians, wheelers and cyclists are at the top of the transport hierarchy. Proposals should prioritise active travel and incorporate safe pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to new and existing facilities, services and leisure opportunities to enable community interaction, cohesion and to encourage healthy lifestyles. Attractive and safe routes should be made within developments that link well with off-site routes and public rights of way;
- iv. Support the delivery of Local Transport Plans, Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans or successor plans that are in place to ensure the relevant routes are linked to, provided or upgraded;

- v. Respond to and enhance locally distinct townscape, landscape and natural and historic environment characteristics;
- vi. Retain, enhance and create important views and vistas into, out of and through the site responding to topography and landform where such opportunities arise;
- vii. Include high quality public realm for streets and public spaces incorporating features such as public art as an opportunity to reinforce and enhance legibility, character and local distinctiveness;
- viii. Incorporate mixed-use buildings where appropriate, taking amenity into account; and
- ix. Ensure plans for long-term maintenance are in place.

**WNLP objectives:** All objectives are relevant

## **Design and Amenity**

4.5.17 In order to deliver the vision of this Local Plan there are a number of principles that development will be tested against. Policy PL7 Design and Amenity sets the context for key considerations that will form the basis within this Plan. Design covers a range of different factors that shape our interaction with the environment. 'Good Design' is about creating visually attractive and successful places that work well and are functional. Design is a key component of achieving healthy places and delivering the wider objectives of the NPPF. Key considerations that the Plan cover include setting and coalescence, materials and design, accessibility, crime prevention, waste management and parking covered in the following sections.

Setting and Coalescence:

4.5.18 The spaces between buildings, groupings and settlements are an integral part of the character of West Northamptonshire. The Council recognises this and also that local communities place great importance on maintaining the identity of the areas in which they live, be that a settlement as a whole or component parts of a larger settlement. Distances between these elements are such that inappropriate, cumulative development could lead to these areas losing their distinctiveness.

Materials and design:

4.5.19 The relevant adopted Design Guide or code (e.g. South Northamptonshire Design Guide [SNC Design Guide](#) ) should be used when considering future development which will be expected to demonstrate a strong design ethos and an understanding of their context. For larger sites and developments, the Council may require the submission of a detailed master plan and evidence that demonstrates how the design influences, including the historic environment, have been woven into the proposals.

4.5.20 The historic environment also plays an important role in mitigating the effects of

climate change and can produce significant benefits for the environment in West Northamptonshire. The continued use, re-use and upgrading of heritage assets in ways that sustains their significance can greatly improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings as well as ensuring that the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions embodied within existing buildings are not lost through demolition. Therefore, in assessing the impact of development proposals which affect the historic environment, the whole life-cycle carbon of heritage assets and any new building should be taken into account, including the impact of demolition and rebuild where relevant. The Council will support proposals which sustain the significance of heritage assets and may require the use of bespoke solutions compared with modern buildings, whilst achieving climate positive objectives.

#### Accessibility:

- 4.5.21 Accessibility is a key principle of good design and the achievement of sustainable development. At the highest level, development proposals should be located within easy reach of a range of services (via walking, cycling and public transport). Developments should be designed to reduce the need to travel and minimise car use.

#### Crime prevention:

- 4.5.22 Well-designed places should promote a sense of security. It is important that crime or the fear of crime does not undermine our quality of life or community cohesion; this includes counter terrorism design to protect crowded places. Design can contribute to increased surveillance, access points, control and ownership. Secured by Design is the UK Police flagship initiative supporting the principle of designing out crime by applying a set of standards. Further information on how to design places to be more resilient to terrorist threats can be found in the Government issued guidance "Crowded Places the Planning System and Counter Terrorism", as well as in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

#### Waste Management:

- 4.5.23 The type and location of waste disposal will need to be considered to provide adequate and accessible bin provision, recycling opportunities and bin storage in line with local standards. Off street bin storage areas should be provided. Communal bin stores in particular will need careful design, management and security to prevent waste accumulating and discourage fly tipping.

#### Parking:

- 4.5.24 Patterns of movement, streets and parking, including cycle storage are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. The

former councils of West Northamptonshire have several adopted parking standards SPDs (Northamptonshire Parking Standards – 2016; Northampton Parking Standards – 2019; and South Northamptonshire Standards and Designs – 2017) which should be referred to when preparing applications.

- 4.5.25 The design of developments needs to include infrastructure to accommodate electric vehicle charging or charging infrastructure that is suitable for other emerging sustainable fuel types. Attention should also be paid to cycle and other wheeler vehicle storage to make non-car use the first choice for journeys. Reference should also be made to Inclusive Mobility guidance

### **Policy PL7 – Design and Amenity**

- A. All development must contribute to high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Schemes will be supported where:
- i. They maintain the individual identity of towns and villages, do not result in physical coalescence that would harm this identity, do not result in the unacceptable loss of undeveloped land and open spaces and protect locally important views that are of particular significance to the form and character of the settlement;
  - ii. The design of the development is in accordance with the relevant design codes;
  - iii. Geography, typology and building materials have been considered when preparing applications, proposals should address the following:
    - a. Context
    - b. Identity
    - c. Density and mix
    - d. Built form
    - e. Movement
    - f. The natural environment
    - g. The historic environment
    - h. Public spaces
    - i. Existing uses
  - iv. The proposals have demonstrated a safe and secure built and natural environment, that promotes and facilitates an active and healthy lifestyle. Proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the design of schemes has met criteria set out in Building for a Healthy Life, the National Design Guide, National Model Design Codes, Active Design Guide, Inclusive Mobility or similar successor documents;
  - v. The proposal results in a good standard of amenity for its future occupiers in terms of privacy, sunlight, daylight, outlook, natural ventilation, noise, odour and vibration; and will not unacceptably harm the amenity of occupiers and users of neighbouring properties and the area through noise, odour, air quality, vibration, light, shadow flicker, ground instability, ground and water contamination, overshadowing or result in loss of privacy, sunlight, daylight or outlook, unless adequate mitigation measures are proposed and secured;

- vi. The proposals have incorporated sensitive lighting schemes that respect the surrounding area, avoiding harmful impacts on wildlife and residents;
  - vii. The proposals have met the design requirements of the adopted parking standards set out in the relevant SPDs for that particular area;
  - viii. The proposals do not pose risk to users, occupiers and neighbours located in the vicinity of sites that are used for the storage or processing or transporting of hazardous substances;
  - ix. Appropriate waste and recycling storage is provided, ideally within private rear gardens and service yards where it will not result in visual clutter which can detract from the street scene; and
  - x. Proposals on contaminated land should incorporate appropriate remediation. Such remediation should not pose a risk to health or the environment.
- B. Major development proposals will also be required to:
- i. Retain, enhance or create a high-quality public or semi-public realm; and
  - ii. Enhance legibility through the spatial pattern of development and street hierarchy.
- C. Development proposals involving backland development and the complete or partial redevelopment of residential back garden land will not normally be permitted unless the development scheme can demonstrate the following:
- i. It will not adversely affect the character of that part of the settlement; and
  - ii. It will not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring residential properties; and
  - iii. Suitable parking can be provided.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13

## **Neighbourhood Plans, Orders and Village Design Statements**

4.5.26 The Localism Act (2011) makes provision for local communities to shape development in their areas through the production of neighbourhood development plans (NDPs), neighbourhood development orders (NDOs) and Community Right to Build Orders (CRBOs).

4.5.27 NDPs need to meet certain basic conditions:

- Have appropriate regard to national policy
- Contribute toward the achievement of sustainable development
- Be in general conformity with strategic policies in the local development plan
- Be compatible with EU Regulations including human rights requirements
- Does not have a significant effect on a European Site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012)

- 4.5.28 Where parish or town councils, exist, these bodies take the lead in neighbourhood development planning. Alternatively, other groups can be formed where there is no parish to take forward an NDP.
- 4.5.29 The Council encourages parish councils and neighbourhood development planning groups to enter into early dialogue and will offer support by providing information and guidance on the process, sharing technical evidence and how to conduct parish housing needs surveys. The Council will also undertake the Regulation 16 consultation for a submission NDP, NDO or CRBO.
- 4.5.30 One of the basic conditions is that the NDPs must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan and should not promote less development than set out in this Local Plan or undermine its policies. All of the NDPs that have already been made have had regard to the WNJCS (Part 1) and area specific Part 2 Local Plans. Once adopted, all NDPs will need to conform with this Local Plan.
- 4.5.31 NDPs should contain policies to address local issues including the definition of settlement confines, local housing needs, designation of local green space, community and locally important heritage assets but should avoid repeating policies contained within this Plan.
- 4.5.32 Qualifying bodies who are preparing neighbourhood plans will be encouraged to prepare design codes to address local design issues. Design codes are a set of design requirements for the physical development of an area. Once made NDPs form part of the development plan.

### **Village Design Statements**

- 4.5.33 Parish councils also have the option to prepare village design statements, these will provide more detailed design guidance for a parish to supplement the Local Plan policies. It is anticipated that these will have a rural emphasis and it is likely that they will take a form similar to design codes. However, a village design code will be a supplementary planning document and have less weight than a NDP.

## **Policy PL8 - Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders, Design Codes and Village Design Statements**

- A. The Council will support and work with communities engaged in community-led planning activities including Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders, design codes and Village Design Statements.
- B. Neighbourhood Development Plans should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and can include allocations for development. Neighbourhood Development Plans should contain policies to address identified local issues including key placemaking and design standards or codes to maintain and enhance the vitality of rural community and to enhance local character and distinctiveness.



- C. Policies in Neighbourhood Development Plans should not duplicate policies in this Local Plan.
- D. All Neighbourhood Development Plans should include proposals for monitoring and review.

**WNLPP objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13

## **4.6 Health and Wellbeing**

- 4.6.1 Planning can assist in creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles and also in identifying and securing facilities needed for the health and care system. The design of new developments can have an impact on the community's health and wellbeing, through the shaping of the local environment and influencing the lives of existing and future residents.
- 4.6.2 The health of people in West Northamptonshire is varied compared with the England average. The life expectancy for males is 79.8 (2018 – 2020) which is better than the England average. For females it is 82.8 (2018 – 2020) which is worse than the England average.
- 4.6.3 In West Northamptonshire 14% of children aged under 16 lived in low income families in 2019/20 which is better than the England average.
- 4.6.4 In terms of obesity, 21% of children in reception class and 30% in Year 6 were overweight or obese in 2019/20. Therefore, it is a key issue of this Plan to help tackle obesity through healthy food policies and by supporting schemes that prioritise sustainable journeys and maximise opportunities to access open and green space.
- 4.6.5 One of the three objectives of achieving sustainability is the social objective, which seeks to support strong vibrant and healthy communities. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF requires plans to "foster well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being".
- 4.6.6 Paragraph 96 of NPPF requires plans to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which, promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles. To support this the policies in local plans need to plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. It also needs to take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.

- 4.6.7 Paragraph 102 of NPPF encourages access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.
- 4.6.8 The planning system as requires active management of patterns of growth and reiterates in Para 109 that "Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health"

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 4.6.9 The design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure are major determinants of health and wellbeing. Planning and health need to be considered together in two ways: in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system (taking into account the changing needs of the population).
- 4.6.10 The PPG describes a 'healthy place' as one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing. It is a place which is inclusive and promotes social interaction and meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

- 4.6.11 Public health organisations, health service organisations, commissioners, providers, and local communities can use this guidance to help them work effectively with local planning authorities to promote healthy and inclusive communities and support appropriate health infrastructure.
- 4.6.12 Wider determinants of health The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is a comprehensive and collaborative approach to understanding the health and wellbeing needs of our community in West Northamptonshire. As a fundamental tool for decision-making, the JSNA plays a pivotal role in shaping policies and strategies that aim to improve the overall quality of life for residents within West Northamptonshire.

- 4.6.13 The JSNA brings together key stakeholders, including local authorities, health services, community organisations and the public to analyse and interpret a wide range of data related to health, social care, and wellbeing. By pooling our resources and expertise, we can create a holistic and evidence-based understanding of the current and future needs of our diverse population.
- 4.6.14 To help meet the vision, a set of 10 'Live Your Best Life' ambitions have been developed to deliver better outcomes for the people of West Northamptonshire over the coming years. These are:
- Ambition 1: The best start in life
  - Ambition 2: Access to the best available education and learning
  - Ambition 3: The opportunity to be fit well and independent
  - Ambition 4: Employment and Anti- poverty
  - Ambition 5: Good housing in places which are clean and green
  - Ambition 6: To feel safe in their homes and when out and about
  - Ambition 7: Connected to their families and friends
  - Ambition 8: The chance for a fresh start, when things go wrong
  - Ambition 9: Access to health and social care when they need it
  - Ambition 10: To be accepted and valued simply for who they are
- 4.6.15 There are nine Local Area Partnerships, also known as LAPs in West Northamptonshire. Each of the LAPs cover communities of between 30,000 and 50,000 people with the aim of working together to ensure health and care services are better co-ordinated and focused on the needs of each area. This new approach will help to support tailored and targeted supported to each community, to improve better health and care outcomes that will make a difference to those who live there.

### **Health Impact Assessments**

- 4.6.16 The purpose of policy PL9 is to help reduce health inequalities, improve health outcomes, improve mental and physical health for all, increase the take up of active and healthy lifestyles and enable people to make healthy choices.
- 4.6.17 The health and wellbeing of communities will be maintained and improved through the assessment of the potential impacts of development proposals and development plans.
- 4.6.18 Applicants should refer to the most recent local and national guidance on producing Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and demonstrate that all policies within this Plan relating to health and wellbeing have been addressed.

- 4.6.19 A HIA enables the identification and assessment of the likely effects that a proposed development will have on the health and wellbeing of the community. This assessment can be used to maximise the positive health and wellbeing impacts and avoid or minimise any negative health and wellbeing impacts.
- 4.6.20 In order that HIAs are proportionate to the scale of a scheme, the Council and its partners have developed a HIA tool and guidance for assessing likely health impacts of development proposals of between 10 and 100 dwellings, and for the completion of a full HIA for developments of 100+ dwellings or 1,000 sq.m.plus.
- 4.6.21 This should be used at the earliest practicable stage of the planning process in order to influence the proposals as they are being developed. The tool focusses on the health and wellbeing impacts associated with built environment proposals, particularly those influenced by the planning process.
- 4.6.22 The purpose of systematically assessing these impacts is to develop the proposals in a way that minimises negative health and wellbeing impacts and maximises positive contributions to community wellbeing, including reducing health inequalities. This will help achieve the objectives of local strategies and plans to improve health and wellbeing, including the West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, thus contributing to sustainable communities.

### **Policy PL9 - Health and Wellbeing - Health Impact Assessments**

- A. The health and wellbeing of communities will be maintained and improved. Major developments will need to demonstrate, through an appropriate Health Impact Assessment, that they will contribute to creating an age friendly, healthy and equitable living environment through:
- i. Creating an inclusive built and natural environment;
  - ii. Promoting and facilitating active and healthy lifestyles;
  - iii. Preventing negative impacts on residential amenity and wider public safety from noise, ground instability, ground and water contamination, vibration and air quality;
  - iv. Providing access for all to health and social care facilities;
  - v. Promoting access for all to green spaces, sports facilities, play and recreation opportunities; and
  - vi. Use of design tools such as Building for a Healthy Life.
- B. The Council will support the provision of health facilities to accommodate primary and secondary needs in accessible locations which contribute towards health and wellbeing.

**WNL objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13

- 4.6.23 Like much of England, obesity is a key problem in West Northamptonshire. One way of contributing to reducing this issue is restriction of takeaways and encouraging healthier food choices.
- 4.6.24 One of the key components of the NPPF is to promote healthy and safe communities, requiring policies and decisions to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. In particular, policies should enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- 4.6.25 The Council is considering what the best planning policy approach regarding healthy food choices would be. Whatever policy approach is taken it will need to be viewed holistically alongside other policies within this Plan and other policies/strategies to contribute overall to better health outcomes for West Northamptonshire’s residents. Policy PL10 PSID sets out a range of possible policy options which are being considered.

### **Policy PL10 PSID - Healthy Food Choices**

The submission version of this policy will include one or more of the following options:

- A. Hot food takeaway exclusion zones
- B. Quotas to control over-proliferation/over concentration
- C. Restricting takeaways in areas of high obesity prevalence
- D. Health Impact Assessment as part of application requirements
- E. Additional residential amenity considerations
- F. Wider issues as part of planning process such as restricting opening hours, highway safety, noise, crime and anti-social behaviour. Healthy catering commitments.

It is intended that the policy will also include the following provisions:

The Council supports the retention of existing, and provision of new, allotments to encourage growing healthy food, physical exercise and recreation associated with maintaining allotments.

Space for food and farmers markets will be supported.

**WNLP objectives:** 7, 10, 11

## **4.7 Community and sports facilities, open spaces and allotments**

- 4.7.1 The NPPF clearly states that to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies need to plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. It also requires plans to take into account local strategies such health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community and to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.
- 4.7.2 Community and sports facilities and open spaces are important in ensuring the needs of communities are met. They are where people meet and spend their leisure time with recent studies demonstrating how critical they are to good physical and mental health. Allotments also contribute to food security and healthy eating. Planning for an appropriate mix of community facilities, including sport and recreation facilities, community and village halls, arts and cultural facilities, playing pitches and open spaces, will provide the facilities and infrastructure to encourage people to be more active. The design and location of such facilities requires careful consideration as some facilities such as multi use games areas (MUGAs) can cause significant noise disturbance to local residents and amenity if not properly planned.
- 4.7.3 West Northamptonshire's growing population will result in an increasing demand for community facilities including, but not restricted to, places of worship, public houses, village halls and sports facilities. A full definition can be found in the glossary.
- 4.7.4 The NPPF requires authorities to plan positively for the provision of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services which enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments (paragraph 93).
- 4.7.5 The policies in this Plan require developers to consider at the outset the existing community facilities and where necessary, enhance or provide new infrastructure.
- 4.7.6 Early dialogue at the master planning stage is recommended to ensure developments incorporate the relevant facilities or provide suitable and safe access to existing services.
- 4.7.7 The Submission Version (Regulation 19) of this Plan will be informed by up-to-date playing pitch and sports facilities strategies and an open space assessment, which are currently being prepared.

- 4.7.8 The two strategies are considering the supply and demand for built sport and recreation facilities, formal playing pitches and playing fields and publicly accessible open spaces and will make recommendations for the facility network required to meet identified needs. The playing pitches strategy and open space assessment will also inform revised standards of provision which will be expressed in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

## **Policy PL11 - Community and Sport Facilities, Open Space and Allotments**

### **Protecting existing facilities**

- A. The Council will protect existing community facilities, including built sports facilities, public open spaces and allotments. Development that would result in the loss of community facilities, public open spaces or allotments will be resisted and only be allowed where they can satisfy one of the following criteria:
- A. The proposal would provide a compensatory replacement facility, open space or allotment of equal or better quality that is located in an accessible location; or
  - B. The proposal would bring about community benefits that outweigh the loss of the facility; or
  - C. There are sufficient alternative accessible facilities serving the same catchment area; or
  - D. The facility or open space has been identified in the most up-to-date sports facility strategy, playing pitch strategy or open space assessment as surplus or little used.

### **Provision of new facilities**

- B. The Council will support new community facilities including new development or changes of use provided that:
- A. It is well related to the community or settlement it serves;
  - B. It would not adversely affect the amenity of residents;
  - C. It is fit for purpose and is accessible for all visitors; and
  - D. It is in keeping with surrounding area in terms of scale and character.

**WNLPA objectives:** 2, 7, 10

- 4.7.9 The final form of the following policy will be informed by an open space assessment which is currently underway. It will recommend the quantity, quality and accessibility standards for different typologies. In the interim the policy requirements in existing Part 2 Local Plans will prevail.

- 4.7.10 Where development is not directly delivering new open space, contributions will need to be made to nearby open space to enhance user experience, safety and amenity facilities.
- 4.7.11 The standards are set out for the different open space typologies and split into quantity, quality and accessibility. It may not always be appropriate to create onsite open space, for example a relatively small site may result in an open space that is too small to make a positive contribution or is difficult to maintain due to its size. In these circumstances a contribution towards enhancement of an existing nearby open space to the quality standards expressed or works that would deliver a typology that is in short supply locally would be acceptable. The Council will review and update the Infrastructure and Developer Contributions SPD following adoption of this Plan. This will include guidance on how the standards will be applied and will enable the level of financial contribution to be calculated using the cost calculator to ensure that the development remains viable.
- 4.7.12 There is some overlap between different typologies, for instance parks and gardens frequently include areas of amenity open space, natural and semi-natural green space, play areas and courts or pitches. Similarly, many amenity open spaces contain play areas, particularly those in residential areas. This overlap will be taken into account when determining the precise quantum that needs to be provided. The updated Infrastructure and Developer Contributions SPD will provide further guidance.
- 4.7.13 When considering the needs of an application which may be eligible to provide open space it will be important to assess the needs at the settlement level for quantity, quality and accessibility. If the settlement has a shortfall in quantity terms, then the development should provide for the typology based on the adopted standard. If when assessing the quantity of open space from a development, this results in a surplus in the settlement of a particular typology, the Council will consider whether alternative types of provision would be suitable to meet any known local needs.



## Policy PL12 PSID - Provision of New Sports Facilities, Playing Pitches, Open Space and Allotments

- A. New residential development accommodating 10 dwellings or more will be required to meet the following open space standards

(Note: the requirements in this policy in its final form will be included in the submission version of this plan and will be informed by the Open Space assessment which is currently underway):

Open space type	Quantity per 1,000 population	Accessibility	Quality
Parks & gardens			
Amenity open space			
Accessible natural & semi-natural open space			
Children & young people's facilities			
Allotments			
Cemeteries & church yards			
Civic spaces			
Sports pitch provision			

- B. Where it is not appropriate to create new on-site open space, consideration should be given to an off-site contribution towards the enhancement of nearby off-site open spaces. Such open spaces will be local or strategic open spaces that have been identified in the Open Space Assessment as requiring enhancement or works to deliver an open space type that is required in the local area.
- C. New residential development accommodating 10 dwellings or more will be required to directly provide or make an off-site contribution towards enhancement of local sports facilities or playing pitches identified in the Sports Facility Strategy or Playing Pitch Strategy as requiring enhancement.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 7, 10

### Local Green Space

- 4.7.14 Local Green Space (LGS) designation is a way to provide special protection against development on green areas of particular importance to local communities.
- 4.7.15 In West Northamptonshire, LGS has to date either been designated through the Part 2 Local Plans or through NDPs. These are 'green areas' which are afforded special protection. Given that they have already been tested, they have been 'rolled forward' into this Plan.
- 4.7.16 To designate a LGS, the criteria within the NPPF (Promoting healthy and safe communities) should be used. The LGS must be:
- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
  - demonstrably special to a local community and hold 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
  - local in character and not be an extensive tract of land.
- 4.7.17 If a LGS satisfies these tests and is designated as a LGS, policies for managing development within it are similar to those for Green Belts. The areas identified as LGS as at March 2024 are identified in Appendix B.

### **Policy PL13 - Local Green Space**

- A. Development proposals, which would result in the loss of a Local Green Space defined on the policies map or that would have a harmful impact on the features which make it locally significant, will not be permitted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.
- B. The only form of development considered appropriate within a Local Green Space is that which:
- i. Is ancillary to the use of the space or to any buildings on that land; and
  - ii. Will enhance its beneficial use; and
  - iii. Is appropriate in scale; and
  - iv. Will contribute positively to the character and quality of the space.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 7, 10, 13

## **Chapter 5: Making Great Places - Northampton**

### **5.1 Introduction and overview**

#### **Population and role**

- 5.1.1 Northampton is the largest urban area in West Northamptonshire and remains the largest market town in the UK. It is also the 37<sup>th</sup> largest urban area by population in the UK. The town's population more than doubled from circa 100,000 in the early 1960s, to 245,899 in 2021. Its evolution and growth over the last 50 years was initially fuelled by its designation as a New Town in 1968, the development of the Grosvenor indoor shopping centre in 1976 and the opening of the M1 motorway in 1959.
- 5.1.2 Although Northampton continues to grow and maintain its role as the major employment, retail and residential centre within West Northamptonshire, it faces a variety of challenges particularly in relation to its town centre role, housing delivery, high employment but low skilled labour and competing / conflicting needs.
- 5.1.3 Northampton is the Principal Urban Area of West Northamptonshire. It has significant employment, service and civic functions that meet the needs of its wider population. It has potential for place-making, investment and regeneration of key sites to accommodate new mixed-use development that will strengthen its attraction over the plan period. The Central Area comprises the town centre and areas just outside it which are considered suitable for uses which support the role and function of the town centre. Northampton has an Enterprise Zone, designated in 2011.

#### **Topography**

- 5.1.4 Northampton is located within a shallow "bowl" adjacent to the River Nene. It is surrounded by higher land, which rings the town, including Glassthorpe Hill (141m above sea level) to the west, Coneybury Hill (approximately 120m above sea level) and the Pitsford Ridge (approximately 125m above sea level). The town is positioned at the confluence of the River Nene and its tributary the Brampton Nene, which flows south into the Nene from Pitsford Reservoir.

#### **Housing**

- 5.1.5 Northampton currently has eight Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs), allocated in the WNJCS, capable of delivering around 14,909 dwellings over the plan period. With the exception of the Kings Heath SUE these are all under

construction. For the plan period to 2041, Northampton will continue to contribute towards housing delivery as shown in the table below.

5.1.6 Figure 4 below shows the projected housing supply between 2023 and 2041. This projection is calculated from the monitoring data as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, which was compiled with the assistance of developers through annual Statements of Common Ground. It shows that if the new allocations were all built out in the plan period, Northampton would deliver up to just under 31,000 dwellings over the plan period. Whilst this is possible, it is expected that parts of the new allocations would come forward after the plan period. More work on a trajectory will be undertaken in readiness for the Submission version.

Northampton	Supply 2023-2041+
WNJCS Part 1 allocations (SUEs) (residual capacity as of end of March 2023)	14,909
Part 2 Allocations (identified in the adopted Northampton Local Plan Part 2, March 2023)	3,700
Allocations in this Plan:	
Regeneration Sites (Policy N3)	1,266
East of Wootton Fields	2,100
West of A43	2,000
Commitments (planning approvals as at end of March 2023)	2,412
Windfall Allowance	4,695
Lapse Allowance	-414
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>30,668</b>

Figure 4 Table N1 – Northampton, Projected Housing Supply

5.1.7 The Central Area Assessment for Northampton (AECOM, March 2024) concluded that the resident population in the Central Area remains low for an urban area. It also states that the under supply of housing in the Central Area contributes to the area’s deprivation, stifling the town’s growth aspirations.

## Economy

5.1.8 According to NOMIS (November 2022), West Northamptonshire, including Northampton, has high levels of employment, with 3.1% of the economically active unemployed between July 2021 and June 2022. This equates to the East

Midlands rate (also at 3.1%) and is below the Great Britain rate of 3.8%. Northampton's strategic location makes it attractive for logistics and distribution, as well as head office functions. Major employers include Barclaycard, Cosworth, Panasonic UK Ltd, Travis Perkins, Avon, Carlsberg UK and Nationwide Building Society are located in Northampton. Grant Thornton's "Northamptonshire Ltd 2022" report says the top 10 Northants companies include the following from Northampton: Winvic Group Ltd, Perrys Group Ltd, Briffs & Forrester Group Ltd, William Morgan Group Ltd, St Andrew's Healthcare.

- 5.1.9 Northampton has an Enterprise Zone, which was designated in August 2011. Since its designation, over 6,000 net new jobs have been created and significant regeneration schemes have taken place. These include the development of the new bottling/canning plant at Carlsberg, the expansion of Cosworth, the completion of the redeveloped railway station, the completion of a new campus for the University of Northampton and the refurbishment of Vulcan Works.
- 5.1.10 The River Nene also contributes positively to Northampton's economy. The 91-mile River Nene, threading its way through Northamptonshire's Nene Valley, is one of the longest rivers in the UK and offers a superb opportunity to attract many different types of visitors to enjoy a quintessentially and internationally important English landscape shaped over millennia. The marina is an integral part of the Becket's Park area and enables waterway users to have a safe place to stay. Its connectivity to the town centre means that waterway users can contribute to the economy of the town for leisure, retail and/or cultural reasons.
- 5.1.11 The above will contribute towards the delivery of about 38,450 jobs required over the plan period.
- 5.1.12 The West Northamptonshire Retail and Town Centre Uses Study (Lambert Smith Hampton, April 2022) ("Retail Study 2022") states that Northampton town centre remains the key centre in West Northamptonshire. Notwithstanding retail trends and the impact of the pandemic, Northampton has the strongest comparison goods shopping offer in West Northamptonshire and draws on a wide sub-regional catchment. The town will continue to function as the West Northamptonshire's Principal Urban Area, and main shopping and leisure destination.
- 5.1.13 Vacancy rates and footfall data show a decline in Northampton town centre, and this is typical of other town centres of this size. Vacancy rates for the whole of the town centre area increased from 12.7% in 2015 to 13.9% in 2019. The Retail Study mentioned that the pandemic has accelerated many of the long-term negative trends affecting the UK towns, high streets and shopping centres, including the growth in online shopping and leisure activities.

- 5.1.14 Northampton is not immune from this. The loss of major retailers from the town over recent years for example has left large vacant premises which has resulted in some inactive and unattractive retail areas, streets and shop frontages. It should be noted that major retailers that have left Northampton include Marks & Spencer, British Homes Stores and Debenhams, as well as the occupiers in Market Walk. The Retail Study 2022 also concluded that no additional retail floorspace needs to be allocated in the local plan.
- 5.1.15 The Central Area Assessment (AECOM, March 2024) concluded that the Central Area lacks good quality offices and this, in addition to lack of housing supply, stifles economic growth.

### **Tourism and leisure**

- 5.1.16 There is a further economic development opportunity in capitalising on the historic identity of Northampton, its heritage assets, open spaces and opportunities to repurpose the town centre. This could help to attract investment from relocating businesses, improve rates of business tourism and build Northampton's attractiveness for wider tourism as well as injecting new life into the town centre by welcoming wide ranging new roles including more cultural and leisure related services.
- 5.1.17 Northampton has three professional sports grounds, Northampton Saints Rugby at Franklins Gardens, Northampton Town Football at Sixfields and Northamptonshire County Cricket in Abington. It has a high proportion of leisure provision, including commercial leisure centres, such as the centres run by the Leisure Trust (Danes Camp, Lings Forum, Mounts Bath, Cripps), cinemas (at Vue Sol Central and Cineworld Sixfields), various private gyms, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches (for example the Old Northamptonians/Old Scouts/Casuals rugby clubs), the Bike Park in Delapre and the Nene White Water Rafting Centre in Bedford Road. Northampton also has a marina at Becket's Park, which is ideally placed within the national canal network providing all the necessary facilities for boat users.
- 5.1.18 Cultural and leisure facilities including music venues are also catered for including Royal & Derngate theatre, The Deco theatre, the Northampton Filmhouse, and 78 Derngate (history of Charles Rennie Mackintosh), Roadmender, Picturedrome, NN Contemporary Art and the Northampton Museum.
- 5.1.19 The Hotel Audit and Demand Assessment (Hotel Futures, May 2016) (referenced "the Hotel Study 2016") concluded that corporate demand is set to increase significantly given the planned office development and employment growth in the Enterprise Zone. Therefore, Northampton could prioritise full

service, international brand 3 and 4 star hotels complete with conference, banqueting and leisure facilities to help in attracting major national and international companies to the Enterprise Zone.

- 5.1.20 The Retail Study 2022 concluded that no additional leisure provision is required in the area.

## **Heritage**

- 5.1.21 Northampton has a range of heritage assets, including over 500 listed buildings (such as Delapre Abbey, the Guildhall, County Hall and All Saints Church) and 21 conservation areas. There are four conservation areas within the town centre alone, which reflects the town's strong heritage legacy and architectural and historic interest. In addition, there is also a Registered Battlefield in Northampton, located partly within the grounds of the Barnes Meadow Local Nature Reserve and Delapre Abbey Park. There are seven scheduled monuments in Northampton.

## **Natural environment**

- 5.1.22 Northampton currently has over 1,600 hectares of parks, open spaces and other green areas that provide a network that both supports biodiversity as well as providing ecosystem services. Together with the River Nene, these natural and man-made corridors provide valuable natural and historic assets which are of great importance for sustaining and enhancing biodiversity. In addition, Northampton also accommodates the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (also a Ramsar site) and six Local Nature Reserves.
- 5.1.23 Equally important are the vast numbers of open spaces and the green infrastructure in Northampton, which provide residents and visitors with health benefits, as well as education in nature conservation matters.

## **Transport and travel patterns**

- 5.1.24 Northampton benefits from a range of key strategic highway network connections including three junctions on the M1 (Junctions 15, 15A and 16). The A43 links to the M40 Motorway, Oxford and the south of England and the A14 at Kettering and the A45 trunk road runs through the town from the M1 providing links to Wellingborough, Rushden, the A14 at Thrapston and Cambridge and the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe to the east. The M6 and M45 give Northampton access to Birmingham and Coventry to the west. London is less than 70 miles to the south, via the M1.
- 5.1.25 As stated in section 13.6 of the Transport Chapter, the Council is exploring

options for the provision of highway improvements to the north of Northampton.

- 5.1.26 Northampton is on the Northampton loop of the West Coast Main Line. It is served by London Northwestern Railway train services to both London and Birmingham New Street. There are two trains per hour each to these destinations, off peak, Monday to Saturday which makes both cities accessible from Northampton. It is accessible to Birmingham International Airport, London Luton Airport and East Midlands Airport.
- 5.1.27 Northampton has a network of local bus services as well as interurban bus and coach services. There are also around 10,000 car parking spaces which are formed of over 20 private and public surface and multi storey car parks.
- 5.1.28 According to the Central Area Assessment (AECOM, March 2024), 80% of the population in Northampton both live and work within the area, with many trips being less than 5km. The study adds that Census 2021 data shows that 56% of journeys to work are made in cars and vans, and this is higher than the national average of 50%.

## **Health, wellbeing and social infrastructure**

- 5.1.29 Northampton has significant areas of deprivation, including parts of the eastern and central areas. However, like most towns of this size, there are parts of the borough which are relatively affluent. There is a need to ensure that the requirements of Northampton's current and emerging population, businesses, investors and visitors are met in a balanced and consistent manner. Combined with a growing population, there is a need to plan for healthier communities, addressing the health and lifestyle issues that have resulted in Northampton having poor health outcomes, particularly in the most deprived areas.

## **5.2 Regenerating Northampton**

- 5.2.1 The regeneration of Northampton's central area is one of the Council's top priorities. The Council has commissioned AECOM to undertake a Northampton Central Area Assessment, to provide evidence to inform policies in this Plan and across the Council's areas of responsibility, including regeneration, economic development and highways.
- 5.2.2 According to the Central Area Assessment, the central area of Northampton has accommodated a substantial share of the population growth – from around 11,500 residents in 2001 to over 22,500 in 2021. That is 11,000 more residents. The central area of Northampton is also likely to have an increasingly important



role in providing services in health, care, and leisure – while becoming relatively less important role as a place for retail activity and office-based employment.

- 5.2.3 To accommodate these changes and growth, there are opportunities to capitalise on brownfield sites, particularly in Northampton's Central Area. Within the town centre, work is ongoing to revitalise the Market Square and redevelop the property in the Drapery (formerly occupied by Debenhams). Work is also underway to assess the potential of the vacant units previously occupied by Marks & Spencer and BHS on Abington Street. Also being progressed is the work associated with public realm improvements to Abington Street and Fish Street. The Enterprise Zone continues to provide opportunities for both new commercial and leisure developments and expansion schemes. Commercial operators have already benefitted from these opportunities including the development of the Premier Inn hotel, the redevelopment of Northampton's Railway Station, the development of Northgate Bus Station and the regeneration of Vulcan Works at Guildhall Road. Work is underway in progressing FOUR Waterside.
- 5.2.4 Working with partners, and together with other funding sources (including the Towns Fund) it is investing significant resources into a number of schemes, including:
- Transformation of the market square – a £10.4 million investment to create new permanent high-quality market stalls, new seating, increased number of trees, a bespoke interactive water feature and a flexible community and events space, resurfacing and new street furniture, lighting, CCTV and public art.
  - Abington Street Public Realm Improvements – a £4.9 million project to revitalise one of the busiest commercial and pedestrian routes through the town's main shopping street, providing improved pedestrian access, new seating, planting, outdoor dining space and encourage community activity.
  - 24 Guildhall Road – redevelopment of a heritage asset into an innovative and creative cultural space for artists.
  - Four Waterside and Marefair – space for offices, new hotel, and high quality homes.
  - 35 – 45 Abington Street – this was formerly used as retail units and have the potential for housing use
- 5.2.5 In order to define where the policies relating to Northampton apply it is intended to define confines for the town. Outside of the confines, the policies relating to the open countryside will apply. The criteria which are proposed for defining the confines are set out in appendix E. The confines will be defined in the Submission version (Regulation 19) of this Plan.

## **Policy N1 – Spatial Strategy for Northampton (Principal Urban Area)**

- A. The role of Northampton as the Principal Urban Area will be supported and enhanced through growth and regeneration, creating strong, sustainable, cohesive and inclusive mixed-use communities, regeneration schemes, making the most effective use of previously developed land, and enabling the maximum number of people to access employment, services and facilities locally.
- B. The Council will support proposals which contribute to, and result in, the regeneration of Northampton, and infrastructure, particularly where they:
- i. Capitalise on the brownfield sites located in the town centre and the Central Area, for a range of uses including housing, employment and main town centre uses, as well as mixed use schemes;
  - ii. Deliver schemes which result in buildings and spaces (including public realm) that are beautiful, integrated with their surroundings, meet the requirements set out in Policies PL6 and PL7, capable of reducing carbon footprint and future proofing, provide improved and safe connectivity to neighbouring areas and promote a healthy lifestyle for new and existing communities;
  - iii. Protect, conserve, enhance and capitalise on Northampton's wide ranging heritage assets by supporting proposals which will secure their retention and long-term conservation. This includes assets that are disused or underused and regeneration of priority areas and assets, including those identified as at risk either by Historic England or the Council. The Council will work in partnership with property owners, occupants and stakeholders and will advise on potential viable uses and how to repair, sustain and enhance the assets and their settings, including the public realm. Where appropriate, it will advise on conservation plans, heritage impact assessments and opportunities for funding and will produce supplementary planning documents;
  - iv. Deliver and / or contribute towards strategic and local transport schemes; prioritise improved pedestrian/ cycle/ wheelchair priority through and to Northampton town centre and district centres; incorporating public realm and cycle parking improvements; secure sustainable transport and access for all to and from major employers, education and research clusters, hospitals, schools and colleges; and support improvements in local air quality. Proposals must also improve connectivity whilst supporting active and safe travel.
- C. The importance of the town's identity, character and setting and the need to prevent coalescence with neighbouring villages will be recognised by resisting development outside of the confines for Northampton unless it complies with the exceptions set out in policy R1.

**WNLP Objectives:** 1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15

## Central Area and the Town Centre

5.2.5 The Central Area, incorporating the town centre, its adjoining areas and parts of the Waterside Enterprise Zone, have experienced some significant changes in recent years. These include the consolidation and relocation of the University of Northampton to Waterside Campus in Bedford Road, the development of the University's student accommodation in St John's Street, the development of the North Gate bus station, the development of a new railway station building, the development of a Premier Inn hotel in St John's Terrace and the refurbishment of Vulcan Works. The Central Area also has four conservation areas, several listed buildings and two Scheduled Monuments. Heritage therefore remains fundamental to the character of the Central Area.

5.2.6 Northampton Town Centre is a regional shopping centre and remains the main retail and services centre within Northamptonshire. The town centre currently accommodates the indoor retail units of the Grosvenor Centre and the Ridings Arcade. It has an outdoor market area, the largest in England, which is currently undergoing significant improvements which will improve its appearance, offer and layout. There are tourist attractions within the Cultural Quarter, which centres around a creative cluster in the area around Derngate/ Guildhall Road. The Royal & Derngate Theatre, Northampton Film House cinema and a major new extension to the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery creating new galleries/teaching facilities/retail area are major attractions within the Cultural Quarter. The Northampton Museum and Art Gallery is home to the world-famous Shoe Collection, a collection of national importance. 78 Derngate commemorates the works of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Conversion of the Vulcan Works into a managed workspace for around 100 businesses within the Cultural Quarter will support job creation over the plan period.

5.2.7 The opportunity remains to capitalise on the Central Area, by maximising the potential that the area offers in terms of its land availability, regeneration opportunities, connectivity, public transport network and the town centre. The town centre has an opportunity to become people's extended living and dining rooms – making it an area where people come to gather, socialise and dine. The Central Area Assessment (AECOM, March 2024) provides the following vision for the Central Area:

“Northampton Central Area will be a welcoming, thriving and healthy town which weaves the old with the new and focuses on community. It will be resilient and will promote a diverse mix of uses and services, attracting new residents and visitors both during the day and into the evening, always remaining flexible to change. It will celebrate its distinctive heritage whilst promoting Central Area living and working. Innovation and entrepreneurship will be an integral part of the Central Area, which will provide opportunities for

growth, skills and businesses. This will be supported by high quality digital technology and a reduction in the town's carbon footprint. It will build on its well-established cultural offer, attracting the creative industries and complementing a reinvigorated leisure and consolidated retail offer, which will support the independent sector and the soon to open destination market place. It will become vibrant and inclusive with new active transport hubs; safe, high quality public realm; and pedestrian friendly streets, which will welcome everyone and encourage exploration."

## **Policy N2 – Northampton, Defining the Roles of the Town Centre and the Central Area**

Development proposals which contribute to delivering the vision and developing/enhancing the roles of the town centre and the Central Area will be supported. In particular:

- i. The town centre will remain the heart of the town and the focus of main town centre uses particularly retail (within the Primary Shopping Area as shown on the policies map), office, leisure, culture and restaurants and cafes. Residential use will also be supported to ensure that the town centre retains an appropriate mix of uses including residents and visitors who will support both the daytime and night time economy of the area. Proposals which will result in the increase and improvement of these uses will be supported;
- ii. Proposals which promote, improve and enhance the cultural elements of the town centre will be encouraged. In particular, proposals which capitalise on and create a positive influence on the town's existing cultural offer will be welcomed;
- iii. The wider Central Area will continue to be regenerated, maximising the potential offered by brownfield sites, its location within the Enterprise Zone, and its connection with the railway station and the Northgate Bus Station;
- iv. Proposals for hotels within the town centre and the Enterprise Zone will be supported particularly to ensure that existing and future demand from emerging businesses and tourism arising from the regeneration schemes primarily in Northampton can be met;
- v. Schemes which facilitate enhancement of and safe provision for the evening and night-time economy including night clubs, theatre, music venues and pubs/restaurants will be supported;
- vi. Proposals which improve in a sustainable manner the connectivity, safety and legibility of these areas, including those which increase connectivity to and within the town centre; and

vii. Proposals which will result in improvements to the facilities offered by the University of Northampton, and their accessibility.

**WNLN Objectives:** 1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15

## Promoting regeneration in Northampton

5.2.8 Northampton has sites which are suitable for regeneration. These are primarily brownfield sites, which are either vacant, underused or there are intentions for these to cease operations. Some are already actively being promoted for development including those within the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone. Policy N3 identifies these sites and their primary land use(s). Residential sites are further identified in policy N6 which is a comprehensive list of housing and housing led allocations. In most cases the combination of policy N3 and N6 (where applicable) and other policies in this Plan provide sufficient policy guidance to bring the sites forward. In some cases there are a number of constraints that need to be addressed and opportunities that need to be realised and additional policy is required. This additional policy is provided in the 'Site Specific Policies' section below.

### Policy N3 – Northampton, Sites allocated for Regeneration

The following sites are identified to support the Plan's strategy of regenerating Northampton as the Principal Urban Centre.

Site	Primary Land Use(s)	Relevant Policy (non-exhaustive)
N3i	35-45 Abington Street	N6
N3ii	Cattlemarket Road and its adjoining area	N6, N11
N3iii	FOUR Waterside	N6
N3iv	Greyfriars Development Area	N6, N12
N3v	Marefair Heritage Park and Castle House	N6
N3vi	Horizon House, St Peter's Way	N13
N3vii	Market Walk	N6, N14
N3viii	Northampton Railway Station Car Park	N6, N14
N3ix	Northampton Railfreight	N6, N14

N3x	St Edmund's Hospital	Residential	N6
N3xi	Ransome Road	Residential	N6, N15

**WNLP Objectives:** 1, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17

### **5.3. Northampton's Waterside Enterprise Zone**

- 5.3.1 Northampton's Waterside Enterprise Zone (NWEZ) was established in August 2011 and continues to contribute towards Northampton's economy and its wider area, as well as jobs growth. It was designated as part of the Government's aim and vision to help unblock any barriers to delivery, including unlocking key development sites, consolidate infrastructure, attract business and create jobs. In addition, Enterprise Zones are about delivering long-term, sustainable growth based on cutting edge technology and enterprise. Businesses are clustering around centres of excellence in key sectors such as financial services, bio-sciences, digital and creative industries, advanced engineering, automotive, and renewable energy. For Northampton, the Council's ambition is for the NWEZ to become a National Centre of Excellence for advanced technologies, precision engineering, environmental and low carbon technology as well as professional, financial, business services and leisure orientated businesses (Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone Delivery and Implementation Strategy, Cushman & Wakefield, May 2022).
- 5.3.2 It is therefore important for the Council to continue to negotiate a range of business unit sizes within the NWEZ to enable and encourage the start-up and grow-on of businesses. In addition, the Hotel Study 2016 concluded that Northampton could prioritise full service, international brand 3 and 4 star hotels with conference, banqueting and leisure facilities, to help in attracting major national and international companies to the Enterprise Zone and to develop Northampton as a conference destination. The study concluded that there was a need for a planning policy approach that will allow consideration of hotel development in the town centre and across the Enterprise Zone, including edge of centre and out of centre sites, without the need to rigorously apply the sequential test to Enterprise Zone sites.

### **Policy N4 – Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone**

The Council will continue to ensure that the ambitions for the Enterprise Zone will be met through following:

- i. Development proposals which will contribute towards the creation of jobs will be supported, particularly jobs within the high - performance technology sector, next generation transport, and manufacturing and advanced technology;
- ii. Schemes which provide ancillary support for these employment generation uses including residential and hotel will also be considered positively provided that evidence is supplied demonstrating that these are required to facilitate and deliver the ambitions for the Enterprise Zone;
- iii. Development design and construction will be required to maximise and capitalise on the use of renewable energy;
- iv. Development principles including design, height and massing will need to be considered in a sensitive manner particularly schemes which are within close proximity to residential areas;
- v. Offering quality training as part of the construction process and recruitment drive; and
- vi. Ensuring that transport connectivity and accessibility form a vital part of the development design process to include provision for public transport and cyclists. Particular attention needs to be given to improved and sustained connectivity with Northampton Town Centre, the train station, the University of Northampton and residential areas.

**WNL P Objectives:** 1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17

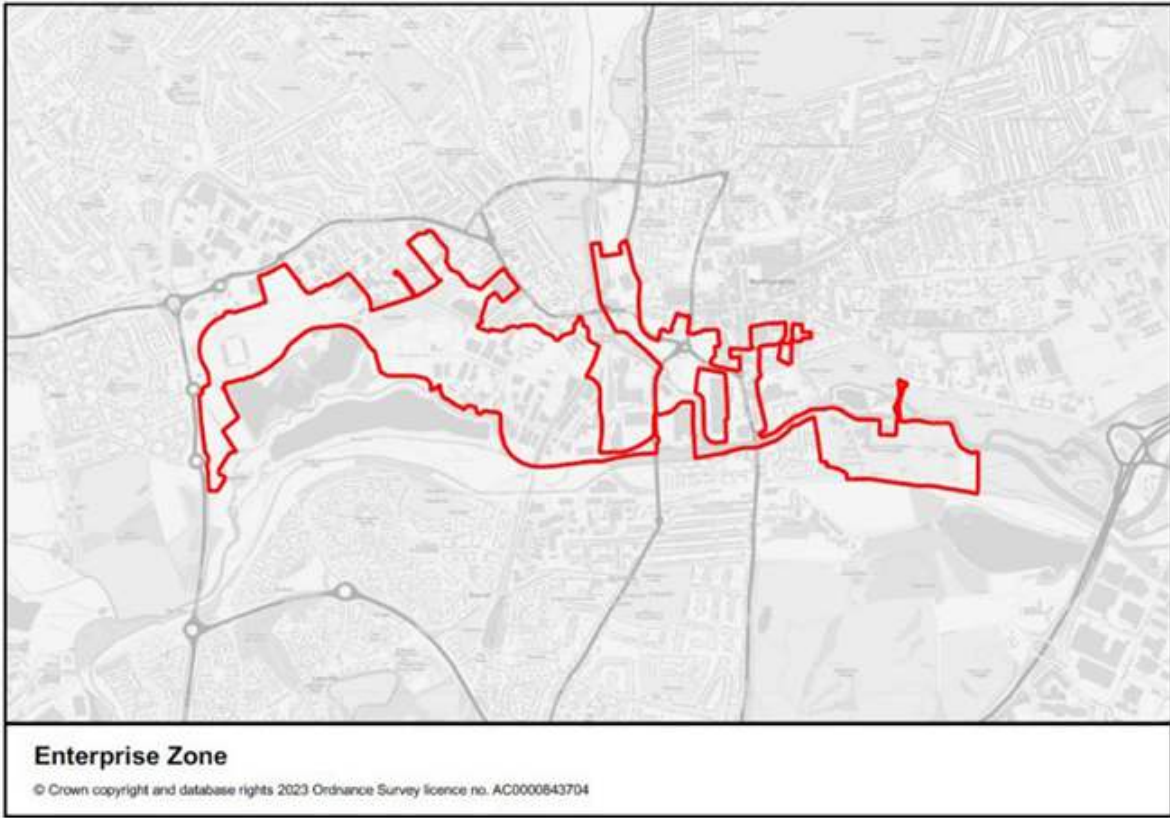


Figure 5: Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone - boundary



## **5.4 University of Northampton**

- 5.4.1 The University of Northampton was formed in 1999 following the amalgamation of a number of training colleges. It gained full university status as the University of Northampton in 2005 and remains the only university in Northamptonshire. It is therefore imperative that it remains supported in ensuring that it continues to perform as well as enhance its role and function when required. The University's role in place making and embedding in Northampton's infrastructure was a key decision in the move to this £330 million Waterside Campus regeneration project on an unused derelict site in the Enterprise Zone.
- 5.4.2 It opened in September 2018 and is within 10 minutes walk of the town centre. The Waterside campus provides not just teaching facilities at all levels from undergraduate degrees to doctorate qualifications, it also has facilities to support students, staff and students' families through the provision of a hotel, student accommodation and sports facilities. The university plays a crucial role in ensuring that Northampton produces graduates with the right skills to contribute towards the town's economy. It is essential that the university be supported in order to ensure that a readymade supply of graduates, capable of meeting local labour requirements, is met. Its location in the Central Area will contribute to the town centre's viability and vitality, since students and their families will be taking advantage of the offer within the area including its culture, heritage, leisure and retail provision, adding to the town's investment and growth.

### **Policy N5 – Northampton, University of Northampton Waterside Campus**

- A. The role and contribution of Northampton University will be supported through the safeguarding of the site for education and ancillary uses which are required to serve the role and function of the university. Any enhancements to the existing facilities, and improved connectivity to the town centre, will be welcomed provided the schemes meet the other requirements of this Plan.
- B. The Council will continue to support uses such as student accommodation and commercial uses to meet the requirements of existing and future students, as well as visitors and investors.
- C. Proposals will need to demonstrate that they have capitalised on the connections and availability of green and blue infrastructure in the vicinity of the site, particularly the River Nene, Becketts Park, Midsummer Meadow and Barnes Meadow Local Nature Reserve.

- D. Proposals for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment meeting the design standard for the Upper Nene catchment through Northampton of a 0.5% probability (1 in 200 chance of occurring in any given year) event plus an allowance for climate change to protect against fluvial flooding. Surface water attenuation should be provided up to this standard.
- E. Any proposal should include the safeguarding of suitable access for the maintenance of foul drainage infrastructure.

**WNLPP Objectives:** 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15

## **5.5 Meeting Housing Need in Northampton**

- 5.5.1 The vast majority of Northampton's new housing in the plan period will be met by planning permissions and allocations in existing adopted plans (the WNJCS and the Northampton Part 2 plan). These include the allocations for the Sustainable Urban Extensions.
- 5.5.2 A number of those allocated sites do not yet have the benefit of planning permission. Because of their limited scale, it is not the intention to re-allocate any of the sites with a capacity of less than 50 units in this Plan, therefore, any sites that have not come forward after this Plan is adopted would be judged against the relevant policies in this Plan. Sites of more than 50 units are re-allocated in this Plan to provide certainty.
- 5.5.3 In accordance with the spatial strategy which prioritises regeneration and the use of brown field sites, work has been undertaken to identify opportunities within the central area of Northampton. This work, the Central Areas assessment has identified further opportunities for residential development in the central area, these are allocated in N4. In some cases this work has identified more capacity on sites that were already allocated.
- 5.5.4 Not all of the housing requirement for the plan period can be met through existing commitments and the regeneration sites. Further opportunities have been identified to the east of Wootton Fields and West of the A43. These are included in Policy N6. Some development on these allocations may extend beyond the plan period.

## Policy N6 - Northampton, Land Allocated for Residential and Residential Led Development

The following sites, as identified on the policies map, are allocated or re-allocated for residential or residential led development. The capacities identified are indicative only and are dependent on compliance with other policies in this Plan.

Sites re-allocated from the Northampton Part 2 Local Plan are identified with NLPP2:

Reference	Address	Indicative Capacity	Relevant Policy (Non-exhaustive)
N6(i)	35-45 Abington Street	300	
N6(ii)	Cattlemarket Road	141	N3, N11
N6(iii)	Four Waterside (part of mixed use)	119	
N6(iv)	Greyfriars (part of mixed use) (NLPP2)	733	N3, N12
N6(v)	Marefair Heritage Park and Castle House)	92	
N6(vi)	Northampton Rway Station car park (NLPP2)	280	N3, N14
N6(vii)	Northampton Railfreight (NLPP2)	362	N3, N14
N6 (viii)	St Edmund's Hospital	85	
N6 (ix)	Former Abington Mill Farm (NLPP2)	125	N16
N6(x)	Ransome Road (NLPP2)	217	N15
N6(xi)	Ryland Soans garage (NLPP2)	62	
N6(xii)	Land west of Northampton South SUE (NLPP2)	261	
N6(xiii)	Land north of Milton Ham (NLPP2)	224	
N6(xiv)	Hill Farm Rise (NLPP2)	80	N17
N6(xv)	Land east of Wootton Fields	2,100	N18
N6(xvi)	Pineham (NLPP2)	80	
N6(xvii)	Land west of A43	2,000	N19
N6(xviii)	The Green, Great Houghton (NLPP2)	800	N20
N6(xix)	Watering Lane (NLPP2)	265	
N6(xx)	Wootton Fields (NLPP2)	74	
N6(xxi)	The Farm (NLPP2)	55	
N6(xxii)	Former Lings Upper School (NLPP2)	60	

**WNLP Objectives:** 1, 7, 10, 11, 12

5.5.5 In most cases the combination of policy N6 and other policies in this Plan provide sufficient policy guidance to bring the sites forward. In some cases there are a number of constraints that need to be addressed and opportunities

that need to be realised and additional policy is required. This additional policy is provided in the 'Site Specific Policies' section below.

5.5.6 There are three allocations for Sustainable Urban Extensions which do not yet have the benefit of planning permission in whole or in part:

- Northampton North, allocated as N3 in the WNJCS, does not yet have planning permission for its northern part. An outline application has the benefit of a resolution to grant permission subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement. The southern part has permission and is under construction.
- Northampton West, allocated as N4 in the WNJCS, does not yet have planning permission for its southern part. The northern part has permission and is under construction.
- Northampton Upton Lodge, allocated as N9A in the WNJCS, does not yet have planning permission. An outline application has the benefit of a resolution to grant permission subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement. The western part of the allocation (Norwood Farm) has permission and is under construction.

5.5.7 In all cases if permission has not been granted when the submission version of this Plan is prepared they will be re-allocated in that plan.

## 5.6 Supporting Job Creation

5.6.1 In addition to the jobs that will be created on the regeneration sites identified in this Plan, there will be opportunities for further job creation on land allocated for employment use. These sites were allocated in the Northampton Part 2 Local Plan and are re-allocated in this Plan.

### Policy N7 – Northampton, land allocated for employment

The following sites, as identified on the policies map, are re-allocated for employment use:

Site	Area (Ha)	No of Jobs (indicative)
N7i Sixfields East	10.18	871
N7ii Crow Lane	2.92	94
N7iii Martin's Yard Extension	1.4	194
N7iv Land at Waterside Way	0.98	445

## **WNLP Objectives: 7, 10, 14, 15**

### **5.7 Strategic Distribution**

- 5.7.1 The Economic Growth Chapter of this Plan, sets out that there is a continuing demand for strategic logistics space. Some of that need will be met by existing provision including the Logistics Park at junction 15 of the M1 which is currently under construction.
- 5.7.2 The SEGRO Logistics Park Northampton Gateway (NG) facility is a large-scale logistics park located adjacent to J15 of the M1 with a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) that has been designated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and has a Development Consent Order (DCO) permitting development of up to 464,515 sq.m (5 million sq.ft) of distribution buildings. It consists of a 182 ha (450 acre) state-of-the-art multi-modal logistics development, which will accommodate around five million square feet of modern sustainable warehouse space and logistics facilities. It is anticipated that most schemes coming forward at DIRFT will be in accordance with the DCO and will not, therefore, require planning permission.
- 5.7.3 The project aims to create in excess of 7,450 jobs and includes:
- A 14 ha (35 acres) Strategic Rail Freight Interchange
  - An intermodal freight terminal capable of handling trains up to 775m in length
  - Up to 5 million sq ft of distribution buildings
  - New road infrastructure and improvements on the A508, A45 and M1 J15
  - A508 Bypass of Roade village
  - Numerous junction improvements on the surrounding road network
  - Extensive landscaping, including new footways and cycleways
  - Planting of 60,000, trees and 30,000 shrubs
  - Over 32 ha (80 acres) of parkland and amenity grassland
- 5.7.4 Any planning applications submitted at the Gateway development will be considered in the context of policy EC9 in the Economic Growth Chapter, together with any other relevant policies.
- 5.7.5 As noted in the Economic Growth Chapter existing provision will not meet all of the demand in the plan period and therefore there is a need to provide more land for strategic logistics.

- 5.7.6 Land to the south of junction 15 of the M1 provides an opportunity to provide a facility in close proximity to the motorway and adjacent to the rail freight terminal which is currently being constructed.
- 5.7.7 Its location south of Collingtree and Grange Park, and within 5 – 10 minutes journey time of Northampton town centre, mean that the site is accessible to labour supply within a short distance of the site. To the south is the village of Roade, which has connections to the A5 and Milton Keynes. In addition, connection to a strategic railfreight interchange will allow the industry to perform and progress in a sustainable manner.
- 5.7.8 To the north of the site, on the other side of Junction 15, there are other uses including commercial, hotel and leisure. To the south of the allocation the Historic Park and Garden of Courteenhall provides an attractive backdrop to the site. Proposals will need to respond to this designated heritage asset with both a strategic landscape assessment of the whole site and a detailed heritage impact assessment required prior to the design of the scheme in order to inform the height of any proposed buildings, layout and extent of the development.
- 5.7.9 Proposals will also need to demonstrate that they are following a design-led approach, that sees the delivery of contextually appropriate high-quality buildings situated within an attractive landscape setting. Applicants should demonstrate measures that will enhance the development's sustainability and address the challenges of climate change as set out in Chapter 4 of this plan.
- 5.7.10 Due to its location within 5.9 km of the upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, all proposals will need to address the requirements of policy BN15.

### **Policy N8 – Northampton, south of Junction 15 M1**

- A. Site N8 is allocated for 68 Ha of strategic warehousing development.
- B. An integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be taken for the site and a masterplan must be prepared, in consultation with the local planning authority and the local highway authority, and other statutory undertakers prior to the submission of a planning application covering the development of the whole site.
- C. Winter surveys shall be undertaken to determine whether the site is used by overwintering Golden Plover / Lapwing and whether it acts as functionally linked land to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area. If the site is found to be functionally linked land, appropriate mitigation will be required for the loss of habitat.

- D. The proposed development should be designed in a manner which will reduce the impact of the scale and massing of the buildings on the local character of the area.
- E. A detailed strategic landscape assessment of the whole site will be required to deliver a high quality landscaped setting within and around the boundary of the proposal. The assessment needs to demonstrate how the scheme will respect the undulating character of the landscape and the setting of the registered park and garden.
- F. A detailed heritage impact assessment will be required for the whole site, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England, prior to the design of the scheme in order to inform the height of any proposed buildings, layout and extent of the development. This will explicitly include an assessment of the height of any new buildings and impact on the Courteenhall Registered Park and Garden as well as detailed consideration of any impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets and subject to the assessment being agreed a programme of informed mitigation to be included with any application.
- G. Proposals will be required to be supported by a detailed Transport Assessment that includes consideration of the impact of the scheme, including cumulative impact, on the A45, A508 and the M1.
- H. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the rate of surface water run off
- I. Any proposal for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.

**WNLP Objectives:** 7, 10, 14, 15





Figure 6: Development Principles for South of Junction 15, M1

## 5.8 Neighbourhood centres

5.8.1 The Town and Country Planning Association (20 minute neighbourhoods, TCPA March 2021) states that the idea of neighbourhoods in which day-to-day services are accessible within a 15-to-20-minute walk has been gaining momentum for several years. Interest in the idea has grown as the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns put a spotlight on the importance of the liveability of neighbourhoods, with people spending more time locally, working at home if possible, using public green space, cycling and walking instead of using cars and connecting with neighbours. The Central Area Assessment (AECOM, February 2024) concludes that this approach is beneficial because residents are encouraged to become more active, which improves their mental and physical health. Also, residents tend to use local facilities and green spaces more regularly; traffic is reduced, and air quality is improved; and people see more of their neighbours, strengthening community bonds. The study also referred to the TCPA guide which defines 20 minutes as the maximum time that people are

willing to walk to meet their daily needs and that the 20 minute journey represents an 800m walk from home to a destination and back again (10 minutes each way). The impact of COVID has made the 20-minute neighbourhood even more pertinent, with access to local facilities, and green and natural space being so important.

5.8.2 Key to the idea is the need to ensure that it is easy for people to meet most of their everyday needs by a short, convenient and pleasant return walk (taking no more than 5 - 10 minutes each way). Essentially, accessible neighbourhoods (which can also include neighbourhood centres) are defined by the communities who live there, and each will have unique expectations of the services and facilities they need.

5.8.3 In Northampton, there are over 60 neighbourhood centres which serve the local communities who live within 10 - 20 minutes walk. Typically, these centres accommodate at least five units offering a range of facilities including a newsagent (some of which also have post offices), a hairdresser and a hot food takeaway. In some cases, there is a community centre and / or a public house adjoining the centre. For Northampton, where there are existing areas of deprivation, these neighbourhood centres provide a vital lifeline for residents in terms of social and community interaction as well as the offer of services, retail and leisure related facilities. These centres offer the potential to transform urban spaces into connected and self-sufficient neighbourhoods. Any proposals to retain and / or improve the facilities and services with these neighbourhoods are expected to be supported.

## **Policy N9 - Northampton Neighbourhood centres**

- A. The Council welcomes and supports the following:
- i. Proposals which bring assets back into appropriate use particularly where they will result in the revitalisation of existing neighbourhood centres. Proposals which will result in existing buildings being replaced by alternative uses that will continue to serve the similar needs of the neighbourhood and the wider community are welcomed;
  - ii. Proposals which aim to rationalise and combine an appropriate range of uses across the centre will also be supported. These proposals need to result in neighbourhood centres that are legible and easy to navigate, with access to a wide range of interlinked and generous green spaces, which will encourage walking and social interaction. The new scheme should be designed to provide for existing and future community needs;
  - iii. Development proposals which include a new neighbourhood centre providing localised retail commercial, flexible workplaces, community facilities and services that reduce the need to travel and contribute towards more sustainable

neighbourhood scale living will be particularly supported provided they do not result in an adverse impact (economic, social and physical) on nearby centres which are located within 10 minutes walking time of the proposed new centre. Masterplan proposals will need to demonstrate how they are adhering to the creation of 'walkable neighbourhood's through the design of a highly networked street hierarchy, providing safe, segregated lanes for different modes of travel such as cycling and walking that are equitable to all users, minimising conflict of different modes and user abilities, thereby encouraging more to cycle and feel safe on the streets. These should integrate with 'quiet way' off-street options through green routes where possible;

- iv. Proposals which will result in the loss of a neighbourhood centre or parade will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that there are existing facilities within 10 minutes' walk of the residential catchment area which can support the needs and requirements of existing residents. The developer will need to provide evidence that there are no reasonable prospects of the parade being put into uses which are suitable for a neighbourhood centre.

- C. The motor vehicle should be subordinate in importance on the street network. Opportunities for sustainable travel should be maximised to create neighbourhoods where alternative forms of transport to the private car (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport) are prioritised. New and enhanced pedestrian and cycle and wheel connections will be expected to be provided within the scheme.

**WNLN Objectives:** 7, 10

## **5.9 Burial space and related provision**

- 5.9.1 Northampton's continued growth means that demand for burial space and cremations will also increase over the plan period, highlighting the need to plan for future requirements. Evidence shows that there are changing representations of faith communities in Northampton and this will need to be reflected in the future provision of burial space.
- 5.9.2 Northampton accommodates mainly large burial sites which are owned and managed by the Council, including Towcester Road cemetery and Kingsthorpe Cemetery, and a private crematorium. In addition, several churches also provide some burial/ interment capacity, but space is very limited and insufficient to cater for need. This Plan therefore aims to ensure that sufficient land is allocated and safeguarded to meet the identified requirements for burial space. A study commissioned by the Council concluded that, by 2029, there will be a deficit of burial space capacity of 4,011 plots.

- 5.9.3 The Council has duties both as the 'responsible authority' for the Northamptonshire Coroner Area and as a 'category 1' responder for civil contingencies to make provision for properly storing bodies of the deceased and enabling post mortems to take place. The current arrangements for this are fragile and increasingly expensive. The Council is therefore proposing to construct a new public mortuary on land at Riverside, to the south of Northampton. This is subject to a current planning application.

### **Policy N10 - Northampton, Sites for Burial Space**

- A. To meet the need for future burial spaces, the following sites, as identified on the Policies Map, are allocated for this use:
- i. Land adjoining Kingsthorpe cemetery
  - ii. Land adjoining Dallington cemetery
  - iii. Land adjoining Towcester Road cemetery
- B. When considering any proposals for extensions, consideration should be given to securing the enhancement of the roles that burial grounds play in the wider community, including its greenspace/amenity/ecological and heritage values. Opportunities to improve the provision to accommodate the requirements of religious groups and people of no religion, such as washing facilities, should also be included in any design considerations.

**WNLPA Objectives:** 7, 10

### **5.10 Site Specific Policies**

- 5.10.1 The following site-specific policies for sites within Northampton have been prepared to provide detailed guidelines on the types of developments that will be supported within the development areas, and the necessary work and considerations that need to be taken into account during the stages of preparing development proposals. Some of these policies have been adopted in the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 and have been carried forward in this Plan. The Central Area Assessment (AECOM, March 2024) contain guiding principles for developments in the central area and any schemes proposed outside of the site specific areas below will be required to take these principles into account.

#### **Cattlemarket Road, the Plough and adjoining area (N3ii and N6ii)**

- 5.10.2 These are prominent sites, located along the southern edge of the town centre. They are split into two key areas by Victoria Promenade, with the Cattlemarket Road units to the south of the road, and the Plough Hotel and restaurant to the

north. There are opportunities to capitalise on this prime location through the development of high quality, heritage sensitive schemes whilst significantly improving the existing road network. These sites are located in the NWEZ where employment schemes are particularly promoted. However, it is accepted that other uses can also be accommodated, some of which can be used to support the role and function of the Enterprise Zone. The Central Area Assessment concluded that this area (which form part of a wide area within the identified All Saints/ Derngate & Brewery/ Victoria quarters) should maintain a focus on employment, small enterprise and start up businesses. It also recommended that iconic landmark buildings could be featured to define the character of the area.

- 5.10.3 This is an important historic route into the town and surviving assets need to be retained and their setting respected. Adjoining the Cattlemarket Road site, the former Latimer and Crick building and Southbridge are included on the current local list. The Malt Shovel PH occupies part of site and has done since 1883. The Plough Public House, Bridge Street NN1 1PF is an 1890s coaching inn including 37 bedrooms, function rooms and associated car parking, some historic single storey buildings and a historic linked wall facing the Victoria Promenade.

Any proposal affecting the Cattlemarket site, the Plough and its surrounding area should take the opportunity to provide safer connections. For instance, the road layout around the Cattlemarket site can be rationalised, with downgrades to the A508, thereby providing a safer environment for residents. The potential to make St Peter's Way and Bridge Street more pedestrian friendly should be investigated through enhancements to the public realm.

### **Policy N11 - Northampton, Cattlemarket Road, The Plough and adjoining area**

- A. The Council will support a comprehensive redevelopment / regeneration / refurbishment of the Cattlemarket Road area and its surrounding area, including the gyratory road network for a mix of uses, including residential, employment, hotel, leisure and ancillary retail. The Cattlemarket Road site itself is expected to deliver around 140 homes.
- B. A detailed masterplan showing how the principles below will be incorporated will be required. Development across the two key areas north and south of Victoria Promenade will need to be considered in an integrated manner;
  - i. Development schemes will need to conform with the design criteria set out in Policies PL6 and PL7 to cover matters such as height, materials, space standards, massing and acceptable density. The scheme should also provide active frontages. It will

need to take account of, and capitalise on the surrounding townscape character, its topography and its heritage;

- ii. Proposals for the site need to respect the integrity and significance of these heritage assets and ensure that they are incorporated into the scheme in a highly sensitive manner, and that their characters are enhanced and continue to contribute to, or become the key landmarks within this part of the Central Area. Proposals will need to preserve and enhance the significance and appreciation of the site, its heritage components and their setting. Design and capacity will be informed by archaeological investigations and assessment in advance of development.
- C. Proposals should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. It should also be subject to detailed assessment (including assessment of contaminated land) and the development should demonstrate how the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) can be maximised. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local Standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.
- D. Proposals will need to address the current disconnect between the sites and the town centre. A range of proposals which will result in the following will be supported: realignment of Plough junction and its gyratory, better and safer pedestrian crossings to and from the town centre and its primary shopping area. A detailed Transport Assessment / transport plan will need to accompany the proposal.

**WNLPA Objectives:** 1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17



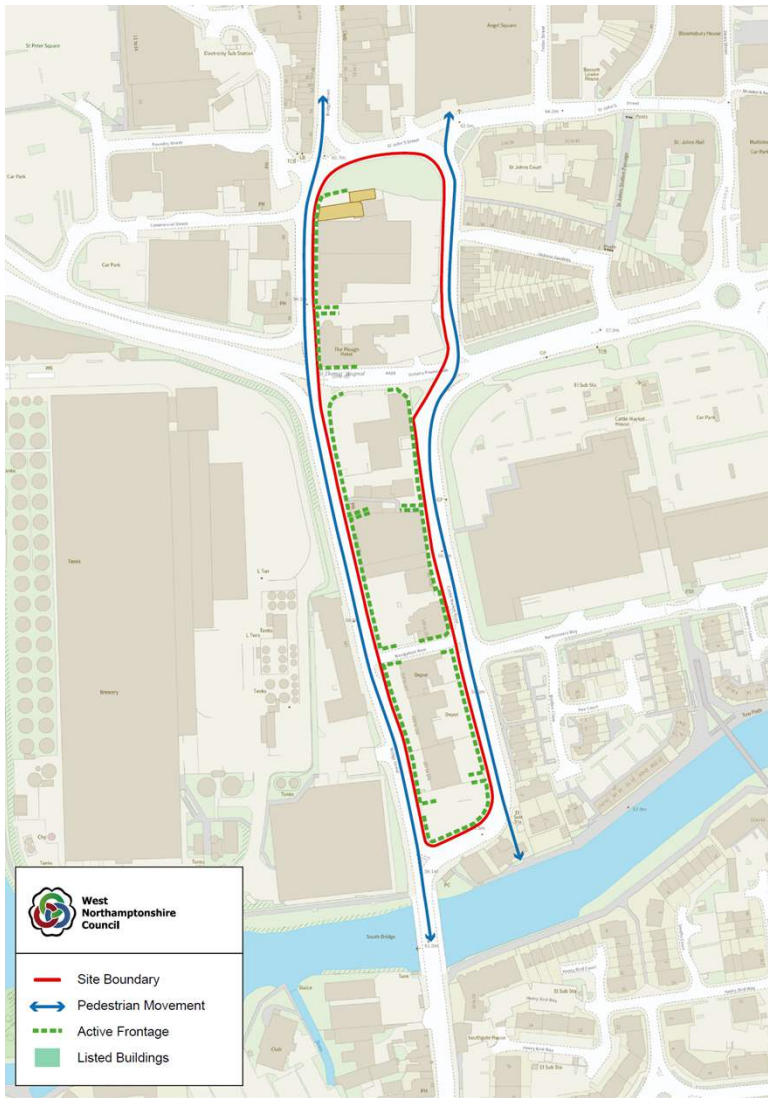


Figure 7: Development Principles for Cattlemarket Road, the Plough and adjoining area (N3ii and N6ii)

### Greyfriars Development Area (N3iv and N6iv)

5.10.4 The Greyfriars vacant site, formerly occupied by the bus station, is bounded by a range of mixed uses including employment and car parking facilities to the north, residential and commercial to the east, North Gate bus station and commercial to the west and south-west and predominantly retail and the Market Square further south. Its location within the town centre and the Primary Shopping Area makes the site ideal for a variety of mixed town centre uses including residential. The former Greyfriars bus station sits within a wider

development area and is the largest combined mixed use brownfield development opportunity within West Northamptonshire, excluding the Enterprise Zone. It represents an opportunity to deliver change that will result in a positive impact on the town centre and its wider area. It also provides a key opportunity to create a landmark development, with scale and density reflecting a creation of a town centre mixed community. In addition to the former bus station site, the development area comprises the the existing Mayorhold multi storey car park, Victoria Street surface car park, East Island and West Island. The former Greyfriars bus station site is situated immediately to the north of the Grosvenor Shopping Centre. Mayorhold multi storey car park is located to the north west of the vacant Greyfriars site, with Victoria Street car park to the north/north east. The development area is approximately 5.7 ha in size.



- 5.10.6 The development area is currently dominated by two major roads that carry fast moving traffic, Lady's Lane and Greyfriars Road. The site slopes slightly down towards the river. Pedestrian movement is demoted to subways and underpasses which in many areas no longer lead to active uses because of the demolition of the former bus station. These poor connections have resulted in the northern part of the town centre becoming severed from the core.
- 5.10.7 It is surrounded by numerous heritage assets primarily locally and Grade II listed. These include the Grade II listed Mounts Baths, the Grade I listed Church of the Holy Sepulchre to the north-west, and the Grade II listed 18th century buildings along Sheep Street. To the east of the site is the Quaker Meeting House and the former G T Hawkins Factory (part originally Hornby and West), both of which are Grade II listed buildings. It lies within close proximity to heritage assets in the All Saints Conservation Area and is therefore within the setting of this conservation area, as well as the Holy Sepulchre and Boot and Shoe Quarter conservation areas. Although the site can be accessed from the Grosvenor Centre, an opportunity exists to improve the connectivity and permeability of the site with its surrounding areas primarily to the north and south. The site is likely to contain non-designated heritage assets in the form of below ground archaeological remains.
- 5.10.8 The site therefore needs to be fully integrated into the town centre providing new north-south connections, new public spaces including green space through the provision of a new town park and opportunities for residential and commercial development of a scale reflecting its central location and the dominant buildings surrounding the site.

### **Policy N12 - Northampton, Greyfriars Development Area**

- A. The Greyfriars Development Area is available for a high density, high-quality mixed-use town centre development and residential use which complements, expands and seeks to enhance the current town centre offer and improve connectivity to the Market Square and the town centre. The Council will support around 1,000 residential units (combination of apartments and student accommodation) on the site. The development area will also provide more town centre employment opportunities and ensure activity is spread throughout the day. A landmark building, up to 10 storeys in height, will also be supported.
- B. The following development proposals and principles will be supported in the development area:
- i. residential uses for multigenerational living to create a new urban neighbourhood;

- iii. leisure and recreation uses, including green spaces and play areas, providing the new town centre residents with facilities to support good standards of health and wellbeing;
  - iv. A bus and coach interchange;
  - v. Active ground floor uses throughout but mainly onto Wood Street, Emporium Way, Sheep Street and Greyfriars;
  - vi. Reinstatement of the historic urban grain and creation of better north / south permeability into the Market Square
  - vii. Creation of a new town centre park
- C. Proposals need to include a scheme for accessible and functional connecting public open spaces along the route of the former Greyfriars Road to provide a buffer zone against the rear of the Grosvenor Centre, thereby establishing pockets of continuous public realm creating possibilities for east–west movement along the rear edge of the Grosvenor Centre. The linear park will provide substantial outdoor space for the residential community, support improved mobility with new connections, promote social interaction with spaces to relax and exercise.
- D. As part of the development proposal, Greyfriars Road will either be closed or partially closed, with elements downgraded. Detailed design proposals, traffic modelling and transport assessments will need to be undertaken. Other considerations include connectivity into the town centre through Emporium Way and Wellington Street also and changes to Lady’s Lane, which could include closure, downgrading or having it run in both directions. By omitting the Greyfriars Road, a movement network of direct pedestrian connections running north – south through Greyfriars can be formed, creating convenient and comfortable routes for walking and cycling that are punctuated by public open spaces. The development proposal will also need to demonstrate how the site can integrate to the town centre, by establishing primary thoroughfares to the Market Square.
- E. Any proposals should ensure that they:
- i. Are of a high-quality design, using high quality materials which complement the surrounding area and public realm. Proposals should include the creation of key, unique landmark buildings that reflect the location of this site and Northampton town centre;
  - ii. Provide sympathetic design of an appropriate scale taking into account the historic character of Sheep Street together with improved, safe and well-lit pedestrian and cycle connectivity north/south and reinstate a building line in the missing gap to the north of Lady’s Lane and to the south of Greyfriars. Pre-existing surface connections should also be reinstated;
  - iii. Are outward looking and maximise external active frontages particularly at ground floor level;

- iv. Are well related, sympathetic and responsive to the character and heritage assets of the surrounding areas;
  - v. Take views into and from the site into consideration, and respond to the slightly sloping nature of the topography towards the river;
  - vi. Provide appropriate levels of secure and safe vehicle parking which are consistent with parking requirements; and
  - vii. Demonstrate how they will reduce surface water run-off in the surrounding area.
- F. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (Suds) and also be designed in a manner which takes existing sewers and water mains into account;
- G. Any proposal should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.

**WNLPA Objectives:** 1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15

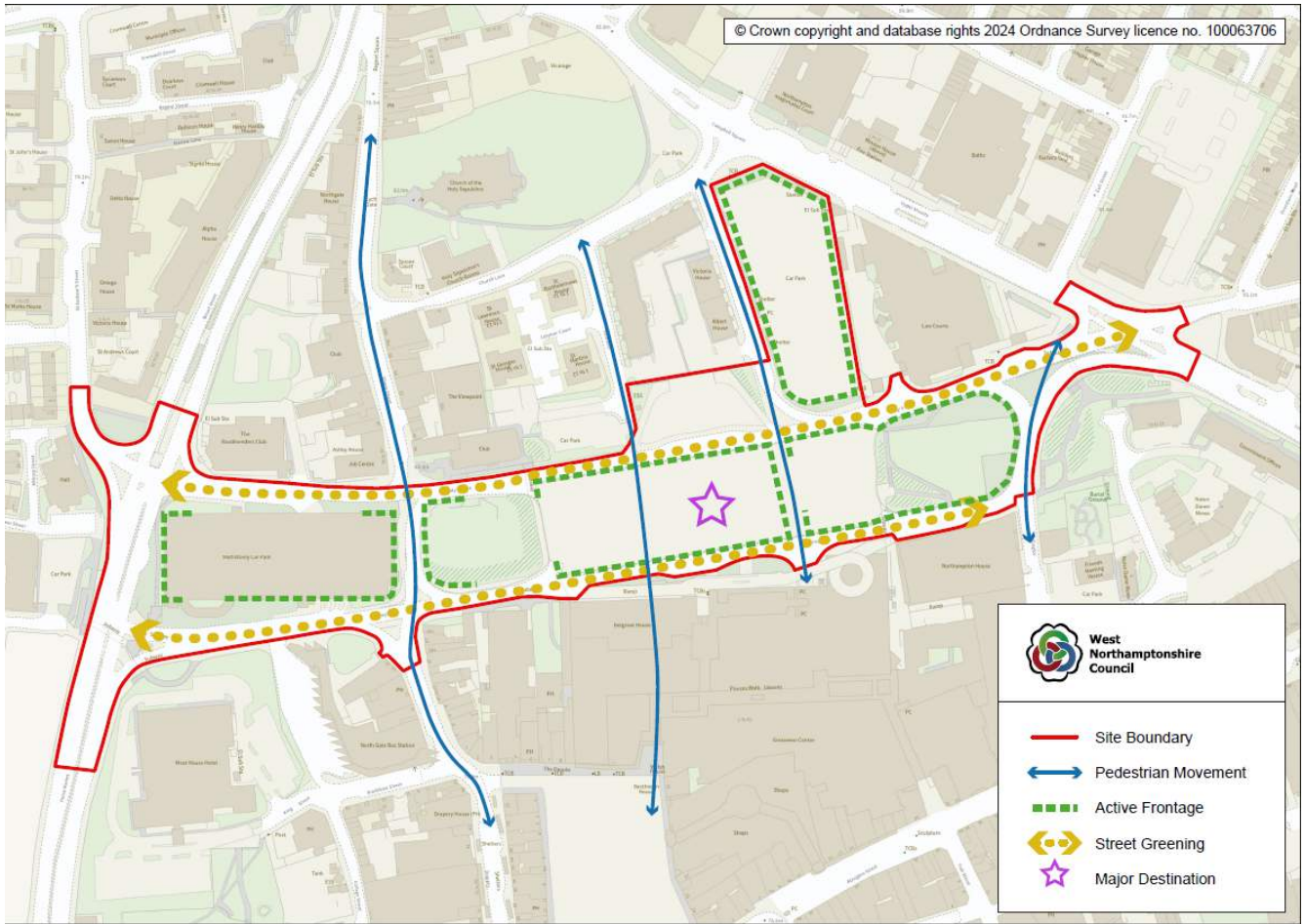


Figure 8: Development Principles for Greyfriars Development Area

## **Horizon House, St Peter's Way (N3vi)**

- 5.10.8 Horizon House sits in front of the site of a former large gas holder in the Central Area of Northampton, just south of the town centre. It is a Victorian industrial building which was formerly used as offices for the Corporation gas works.
- 5.10.9 The whole site was previously owned by National Grid and formed part of an old gas works that once covered a wider area. Horizon House has the potential to be renovated and extended to create a 2,323 sq.m office space and the remainder of the site will offer landscaping and parking. The use could meet overspill demand from occupiers who require something similar to those available at the Vulcan Works. There is potential for the refurbishment and extension of Horizon House, for units around 93 – 2,787 sq.m. In total, the site could accommodate in the region of 25,000 sq.m of office and commercial floorspace.

### **Policy N13 – Northampton, Horizon House, St Peter's Way**

- A. Proposals which will bring Horizon House back into effective office use will be supported. Proposals for extending the building, to incorporate additional office spaces will also be supported. Around 25,000 sq.m of commercial floorspace will be supported.
- B. Any proposed office spaces will need to be designed in a manner that will offer modern units, together with shared workspaces for collaborative work, workshops, community facilities and cultural influences.
- C. Any refurbishment, will need to be undertaken sensitively in light of its status as a heritage asset. Any proposal will need to be of a high quality that preserves and enhances the significance and appreciation of Horizon House, in its historical capacity as the former Corporation Gas Works offices and also its Victorian structure. Its setting and the impact on other heritage assets, including St Peter's Church (a Grade I listed building), which is located to the north west of the site and on a higher elevation, will also form part of the consideration.
- D. Any proposal will need to ensure that there are inactive frontages are reduced by providing ground floor activities.
- E. Development proposals will need to provide details of how accessible natural greenspace is to be provided from the site to its surrounding areas, including the River Nene. Any proposal will need to demonstrate how the River Nene can be integrated into the scheme in terms of its use as natural blue infrastructure, whilst enhancing its role and function within the Central Area branch of the river.

- F. Proposal must secure permeability within the site for walking, cycling and wheeling, and those with mobility concerns particularly to the town centre, public transport hubs and across the river. Any proposals must also improve the safety along the river, providing better access, overlooking and safety measures including lighting and the reduction of foliage.
- G. Opportunities should be sought to improve water flow around the site by reducing surface-water runoff and introducing areas of floodplain to reduce the risk of flooding, absorb water and reduce sediment run-off.
- H. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs).
- I. Proposals should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.
- J. Any proposal should include the safeguarding of suitable access for the maintenance of foul drainage infrastructure.

**WNL P Objectives:** 1, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15



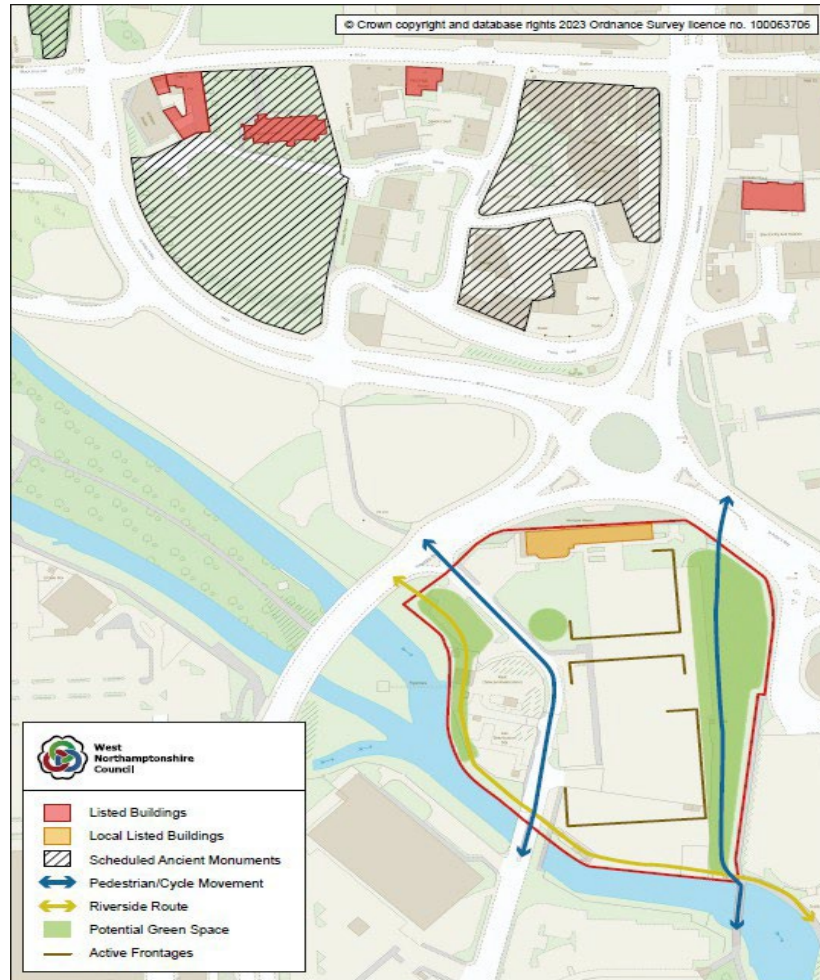


Figure 9: Development Principles for Horizon House, St Peter's Way

### Northampton Railway Station (N3viii and N6vi) and Railfreight (N3ix and N6vii)

5.10.9 The redeveloped Northampton Railway Station opened in 2015, providing a modern facility for rail passengers and visitors alike. The Northampton Local Plan Part 2, allocates this site for mixed use including residential, offices and multi storey car park. The Central Area Assessment recommended that this site, and the adjoining railfreight facility, provide an opportunity to increase scale and density in order to create a landmark mixed use new community in a gateway location.

5.10.10 The station accommodates a two storey building, provision for taxis and a temporary decked car park. To the north, the site is currently used for railfreight and further north is a small business area, a café and a lorry park. Also within the site is a scheduled monument and a listed building which form part of a range of heritage assets within and surrounding the site. The southern half of the site is located within the Enterprise Zone.

5.10.11 To the north and south of the site are employment areas, and to the east is Spring Boroughs. To the west are a residential area and a park. The site is within 10 minutes' walk of Northampton's town centre.



- 5.10.12 There is an opportunity to capitalise on the site's location for development to meet future passenger requirements as well as housing and commercial development needs. There is potential to consider a comprehensive and integrated development on this whole site, capitalising on its sustainable location on a rail network, close to the town centre and supporting modal shift. Its location also provides opportunity for high density development to be delivered.
- 5.10.13 The railway station also needs to be able to accommodate additional services including those that may arise as a result of opportunities relating to released capacity on the West Coast Main Line, including fast, long-distance services, East West Rail services and potential transport links to the north via the route of the former Northampton to Market Harborough railway.
- 5.10.14 Evidence in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment concluded that the railfreight site could accommodate medium to high capacity development within its boundary. The station is considered suitable for medium capacity development within the northern portion and low capacity within the southern development. Given the high probability of archaeological remains within the site, development should only be progressed after appropriate archaeological investigations is undertaken and that it accords with the mitigation strategy agreed by both the Council's archaeologist and Historic England.
- 5.10.15 There is an existing sewer in Anglian Water's ownership within boundary of the site and the site layout should be designed to take this into account.

## **Policy N14 - Northampton Railway Station and Railfreight**

- A. Proposals will be supported which create a town centre gateway, anchor and multimodal transport hub, with better activation of the street and interactive elements such as water features, sculptures and playful elements, to create a visual link to the heritage of the area and to the wider Central Area. Schemes should:
  - i. Create a sense of arrival and identity;
  - ii. Diversify uses and facilities to unlock regeneration;
  - iii. Create connections;
  - iv. Promote active travel and safety; and
  - v. Create a green place to live, work and play.
- B. The existing Northampton Railway Station building and associated buildings, platforms, tracks, infrastructure, security measures, car parking and associated services and facilities will be safeguarded to ensure that the provision of current and future accessible passenger railway services to and from Northampton will be maintained. This will also continue to contribute towards an increased modal shift towards rail usage whilst supporting the provision of on site and related employment. These safeguarded areas will include safeguarded road accessibility to allow for 24-hour servicing and emergency access to Northampton Railway Station via St Andrew's Road.
- C. Subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan and material considerations, proposals to provide additional capacity to facilitate improved passenger railway services will be supported.
- D. To secure the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of the character and setting of the adjacent listed building and its two adjoining listed walls that are located within the existing railway station site, public realm will be created between the heritage assets and the station building. Any proposal should result in an improvement to the sense of arrival to the town centre.
- E. The development of a permanent and secure multi-storey car park on the site with access to the main railway station building will be supported in order to create sufficient on-site car parking, bicycle and motorcycle parking, as well as provision for people with / or affected by impaired mobility to cater for the future growing demand of rail usage.
- F. The Council will support the delivery of mixed-use development including residential, a multi-storey car park, commercial offices, co working spaces, hotel and ancillary Class E uses. A scheme no higher than nine storeys will be acceptable in this location. The Council will also support the delivery of about 280 homes.

## **Railfreight**

- G. On the railfreight site, the Council will support the delivery of about 362 dwellings, subject to analysis of capacity, on the residual areas not required for commercial goods and/ or passenger rail services. A scheme which ranges being three and six storeys is considered acceptable. Residual areas not required for rail related services and residential are suitable for employment use including offices.

## **The whole site**

- H. Scale and height should generally transition from a higher point at the station and lower towards the north.

- I. Development proposals will need to provide details of how accessible natural greenspace is to be provided the northern end of the site. New development will also need to provide a contribution towards providing a woodland stepping-stone (a connected habitat) to the north of the site.
- J. Opportunities should be sought to improve water flow around the site by reducing surface-water runoff and introducing areas of floodplain to reduce the risk of flooding, absorb water and reduce sediment run-off through the introduction of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- K. Any development proposals need to demonstrate how the scheme is contributing towards improvements in pedestrian and cycle connections with the surrounding area, including connections to the town centre and to the green infrastructure network west of Chalk Lane. The following design principles are to be incorporated into any master planning and/ or planning application proposals for the two sites:
- L. A high-quality development that preserves and enhances the significance and appreciation of the former castle site, its designated components and their setting. Design and capacity will be informed by detailed archaeological investigations and assessments in advance of development;
  - i Development across the whole area needs to be considered in an integrated manner;
  - ii This high-quality development must secure permeability within the site for pedestrians and cyclists;
  - iii Improved and safe connectivity, including direct pedestrian routes, with the Spring Boroughs area and the town centre will need to be created. This will improve the relationship between the site and the town centre; and.
  - iv Opportunities should be explored for any development to enhance the site's relationship to the Brampton Arm of the River Nene.
- M. Any development proposals need to demonstrate how they are contributing to improvements in air quality in the surrounding area. There are also opportunities improve water quality, particularly at the northern boundary of the railfreight site.
- N. Development proposals for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.
- O. Any proposal should include the safeguarding of suitable access for the of foul drainage infrastructure.

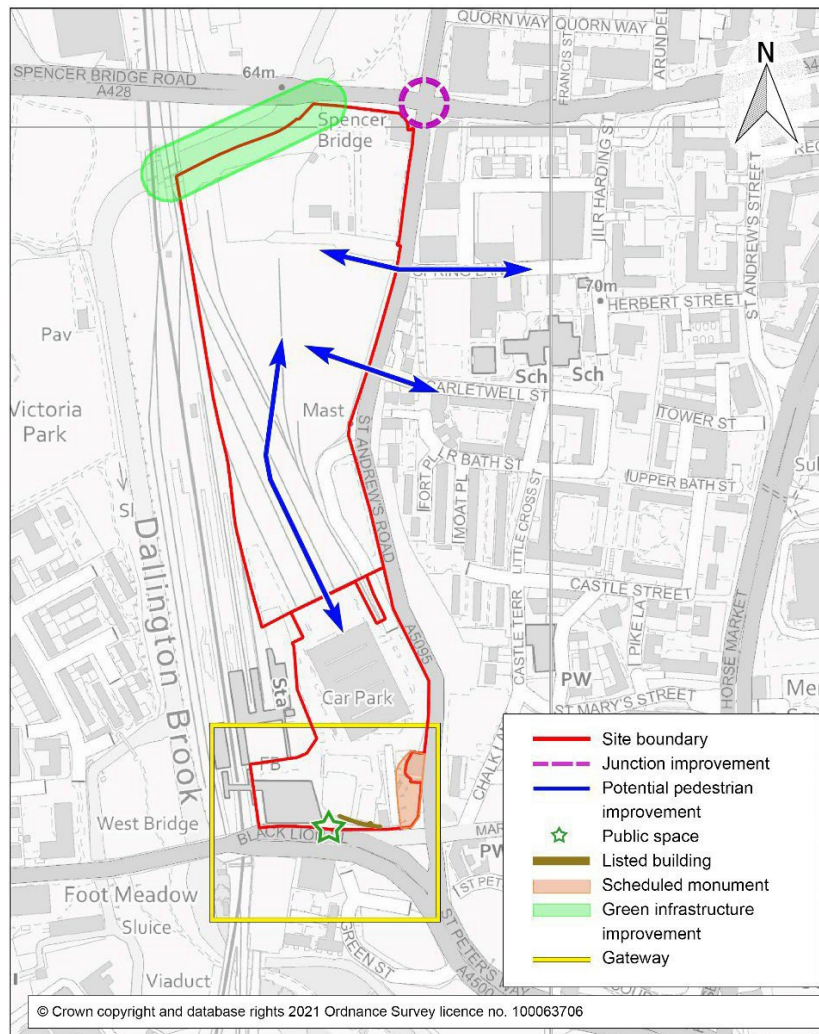


Figure 10: Development Principles for Northampton railway station car park and railfreight sites

### Ransome Road (N3xi and N6x)

5.10.16 This site is located within an area which is and will be experiencing significant regeneration activity and change. It lies immediately to the south of the NWEZ and is accessible to all the leisure activity and open spaces associated with the River Nene and its adjoining parks. The site is within ten minutes' walk of the

town centre and its Primary Shopping Area, and further opportunities exist to improve accessibility from University Drive.

- 5.10.17 The eastern section of the site is a Registered Battlefield site, and the southern and south-eastern boundaries border Delapre Park Conservation Area and its historic park. Development will need to be planned in a manner which respects the significance of these assets. To the north is the safeguarded former railway line, and further north is the University of Northampton, Becketts Park and Midsummer Meadow which accommodates the Northampton marina and the Radlands Plaza skatepark.
- 5.10.18 There are areas of historic landfill and contamination on the site, particularly within the southern and eastern areas. These are primarily associated with the haulage industry, contamination from the previous engine sheds and depots, as well as earthworks. The site is also at moderate risk of groundwater flooding and is within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 5.10.19 The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 concludes that the site varies in its heritage sensitivities, with the eastern and southern sections being the most sensitive given their inclusion and proximity to the Registered Battlefield. To the north and west, the heritage sensitivity is considered to be low medium, with the least sensitive areas being the furthest from the battlefield boundary. The HIA adds that development on the site has potential to impact on the surviving below ground assets and that a programme of on site investigation would inform a strategy to mitigate the impact of development on any archaeological assets.
- 5.10.20 The Central Area Strategy recommended that any scheme on this site should emphasise on a walkable and sustainable neighbourhood with high aspirations for net-carbon zero goals. It should accommodate energy-efficient homes with passivehouse credentials promote resource efficiency, improved air quality, and affordability. Schemes should include people priority streets which will avoid car dominance and residents will be encouraged to use active travel modes for short trips.

## **Policy N15 – Northampton, Ransome Road**

- A. Site N15 is allocated for residential development. The site will be developed in a manner which is consistent with the diagram shown in Figure 11. Proposals for this site should:
- i. Provide for about 217 dwellings;
  - ii. Generally be two to four storeys in height, with taller buildings facing along the principal movement routes and the northern section of the site
  - iii. Deliver a green space with associated footpaths and cycle links to effectively link the site to Becket's Park and Delapre Park. Suitable access to Delapre Lake and Delapre Abbey and Park from Ransome Road is encouraged;
  - iv. Respect the historic integrity and significance of on-site and nearby heritage assets. Appropriately address the site's location within and adjacent to the registered battlefield of the Battle of Northampton and also make an appropriate contribution to supporting its interpretation to the local area;
  - v. Any development should not compromise the integrity of the habitat to the north-east of the site;
  - vi. Incorporate appropriate measures to mitigate against flood risk both within the area and downstream of the sites, particularly taking account of the role of Hardingstone Dyke and residual risk associated with River Nene fluvial flood defences; and
  - vii. Be of a design and capacity which is informed by detailed archaeological investigations and assessments in advance of any planning application being submitted.
- B. The layout of any development should be designed to take into account existing sewers and water mains within the site.
- C. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the rate of surface water run-off. Any proposal should also aim to contribute to improving water quality in the area.
- D. Any development will be expected to contribute to provision of woodland and wet grass stepping-stones (connected habitats).
- E. Any proposal for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.

**WNLPA Objectives:** 1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12



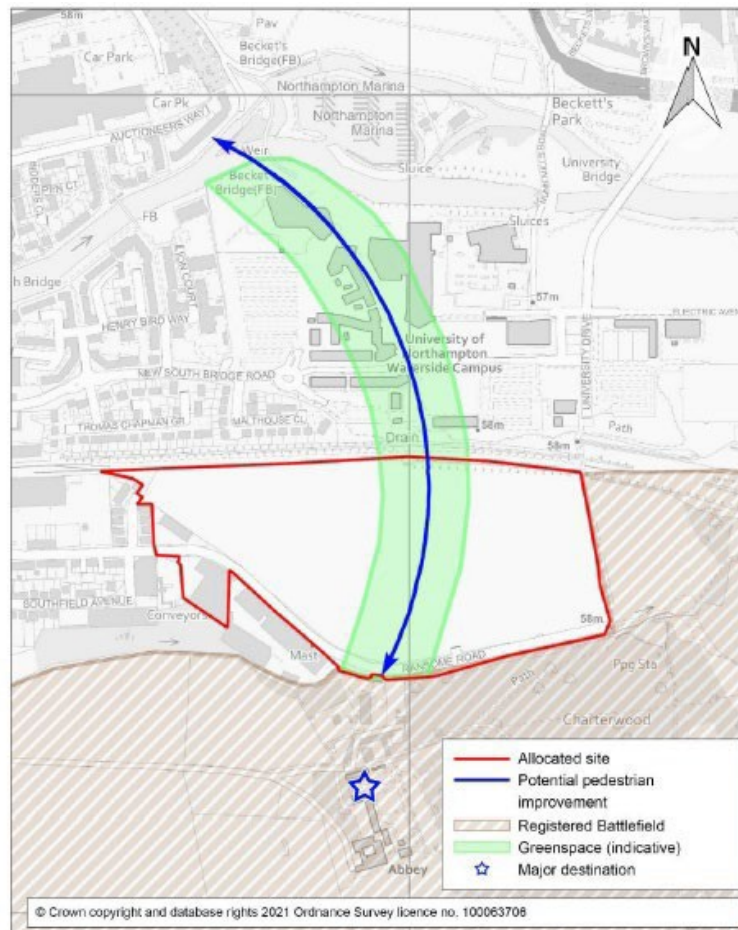


Figure 11: Development Principles for Ransome Road

### Former Abington Mill Farm (N6ix)

5.10.21 The former Abington Mill Farm is located approximately two miles (3.2km) east of Northampton's town centre and is 5.02ha in size. It is an area of open land bounded by housing to the north; a sports pitch and informal parking area to the west; and additional open space, the A45 and the River Nene to the south. The site is within five to ten minutes' walk of Billing Road, which is well served by buses and has cycle lanes.



- 5.10.22 Close to the site, on the south side of the A45 is the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and Brackmills employment area. Both are accessible from the site via an overhead bridge across the A45. To the south-east of the site, and south of Bedford Road, is the Barnes Meadow Local Nature Reserve.
- 5.10.23 The site is located mostly within Flood Zone 2 with pockets of Flood Zones 3a and 3b within the site. Flood defences have been installed around the site. Because it is close to the A45, development on this site may have an impact on the strategic road network. The site is also located close to one of the local green infrastructure networks, of which there are nine in total in the Northampton area. Component F is the 'Washlands and Eastern Nene' and comprises the floor of the Nene Valley from the town centre at Midsummer Meadow eastwards to the NRDA boundary. It broadly follows the Nene Valley sub-regional Corridor (Northampton to Wansford (Cambs)). The Green Infrastructure Plan (2016) identifies a list of projects for each component, which can contribute towards enhancing these green infrastructure networks.

### **Policy N16 – Northampton, Former Abington Mill Farm**

- A. Proposals for residential development at N16 will be supported. The site will be developed in a manner consistent with the diagram shown in Figure 12 below.
- B. Proposals will be required to:
- i. Provide approximately 125 dwellings;
  - ii. Include measures to mitigate against the impacts of noise and pollution from the A45 dual carriageway;
  - iii. Demonstrate that a safe and secure access from Rushmere Road can be provided in a manner that would pass the exceptions test;
  - iv. Include a travel plan, to demonstrate how traffic matters will be mitigated against and managed along Rushmere Road and the Barnes Meadow Interchange;
  - v. Incorporate proposals to encourage cycling and walking, taking advantage of the availability of cycle routes to the south of the A45 which have access to the town centre and areas east of Northampton;
  - vi. Contribute to improvements to the green infrastructure network to include projects within the Washlands and Eastern Nene Corridor, such as the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits and Barnes Meadow Local Nature Reserve; and
  - vii. Maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the rate of surface water runoff.
- C. Proposals for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment meeting the design standard for the Upper Nene catchment through Northampton of a 0.5% probability (1 in 200 chance of occurring in any given year)

event plus an allowance for climate change to protect against fluvial flooding. Surface water attenuation should be provided up to this standard.

**WNLP Objectives: 7,12**

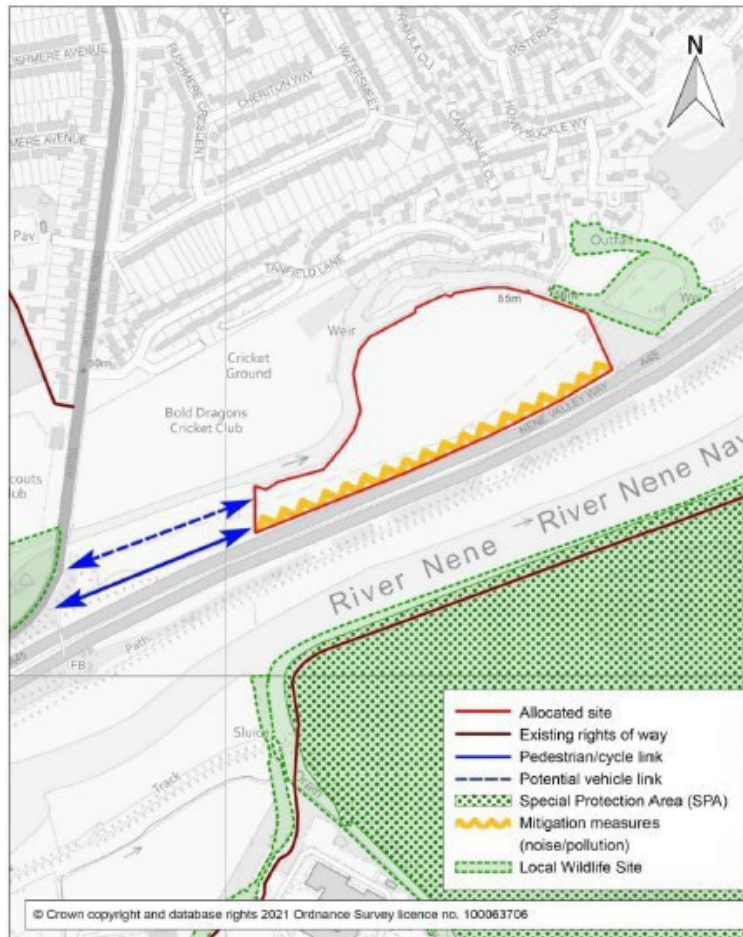


Figure 12: Development Principles for Former Abington Mill Farm

**Hill Farm Rise, Hunsbury Hill (N6xiii)**

5.10.24 The site is approximately 4.44 hectares in size and is located in Hunsbury, south-west Northampton. It is surrounded by a mix of uses including the Mereway Neighbourhood Centre with Tesco Mereway, a library and a Church to the north and north-east; residential to the east and west and the railway line and a Local Wildlife Site to the south/ south-west.

- 5.10.25 The site adjoins a railway line, which then runs in a tunnel (Hunsbury Hill tunnel) under part of the site. The railway forms part of the Northampton Loop Line of the West Coast Main Line. Also adjoining the site is an area which is used for railway operational purposes including access. In addition, there is a significant number of trees on the site, particularly along the border. There is a possibility that the site also has some priority habitat grassland that may require protecting. The majority of the site is also a potential wildlife site.
- 5.10.26 The site is located within Flood Zone 1. The site is also located within three miles of the Strategic Road Network and any development on the site could potentially impact on the M1 and the A45.

### **Policy N17 - Northampton, Hill Farm Rise, Hunsbury Hill**

- A. Proposals for residential development at N17 will be supported. The site will be developed in a manner which is consistent with the diagram shown in Figure 13.
- B. Proposals for this site should:
- i. Provide for about 80 dwellings;
  - ii. Demonstrate, through an ecological survey and landscape assessment, the opportunities and constraints offered by the existing natural environment including the high presence of established trees, potential priority habitat grassland and potential wildlife site within the site, and how these are to be protected and/ or how any adverse impacts are to be mitigated against;
  - iii. Ensure that any proposal will be designed in a manner which is sensitive towards the presence of the Local Wildlife Site adjoining the development site including the potential to make the site more resilient to visitor pressure;
  - iv. Ensure that the operational requirements of the rail network, including access, are retained within the area shown hatched on Figure N3;
  - v. Demonstrate, through the use of design and building materials, that adverse impacts from noise, particularly from the railway operations, will be reduced;
  - vi. Improve connectivity and accessibility to the Mereway neighbourhood centre to encourage walking and cycling;
  - vii. Ensure that any proposal for this site is accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment; and
  - viii. Prepare a detailed Transport Assessment that includes consideration of the impact of the scheme on the A45 and the M1.
- C. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the rate of surface water run off.

**WNLP Objectives:** 1, 9, 10, 12

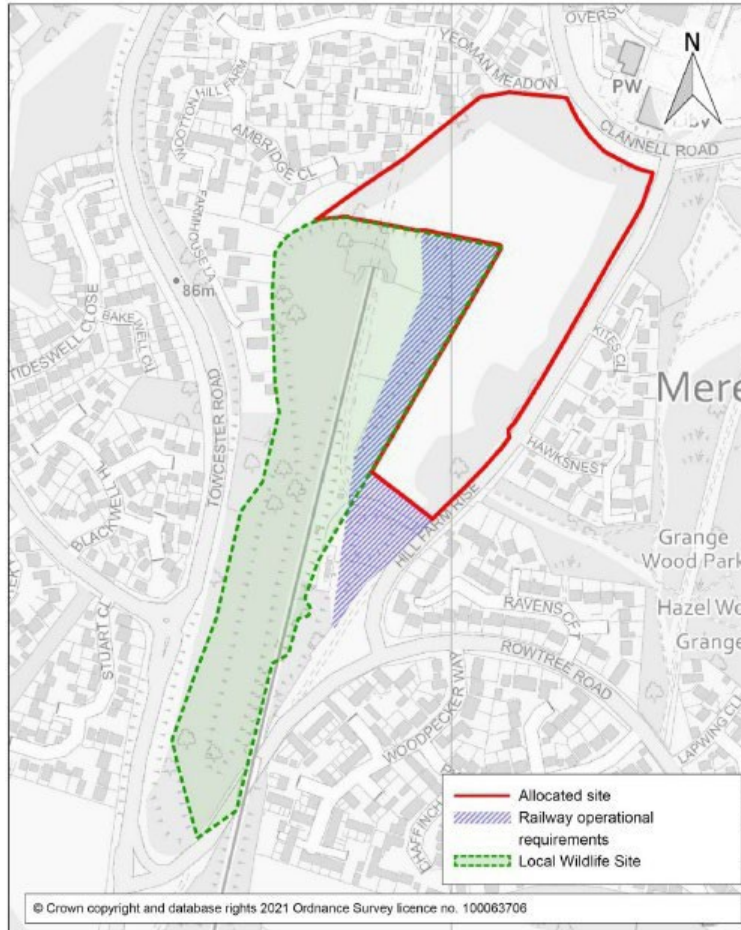


Figure 13: Development Principles for Hill Farm Rise

### Land east of Wootton Fields (N6xv)

- 5.10.27 This allocation comprises of two areas are located to the north and south of Newport Pagnell Road.
- 5.10.28 The area to the north is situated close to Brackmills Industrial Estate to the north and adjoins the Brackmills South Sustainable Urban Extension. It is also located close to Brackmills Country Park Local Wildlife Site and Brackmills Small Wood Potential Wildlife site.
- 5.10.29 The site rises towards The Green and has existing woodland on its northern and eastern boundaries and part of its southern boundary which should, where possible, be retained and form part of a wider green infrastructure network for the site.
- 5.10.30 Opportunities should be sought to maximise active travel and public transport connections.

- 5.10.31 The area to the south of Newport Pagnell Road adjoins Wootton Fields residential area to the west and agricultural land to the east. It is crossed by public rights of way which will need to be accommodated in the development.
- 5.10.32 Wootton Brook passes through the site which provides an opportunity for a blue and green infrastructure corridor with sustainable drainage ponds and swales, therefore reducing the risk of flooding and creating new habitats at the heart of the development. It is envisaged that access would be gained from Newport Pagnell Road, Wooldale Road and Wootton Road. The development will create a new edge to Northampton which will need careful treatment to help it assimilate into the environment.
- 5.10.33 Both sites are located close to Caroline Chisholm School, Northampton High School for Girls, and local facilities including a supermarket.
- 5.10.34 Both sites are agricultural land Grade 2 and in parts, Grade 3 and are within Flood Zones 2/3.
- 5.10.35 Due to their location within 5.9 km of the upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, all proposals will need to address the requirements of policy BN15.

### **Policy N18 - Northampton, Land east of Wootton Fields**

- A. Residential development at N18 East of Wootton Fields will be supported. The site will be developed in a manner which is consistent with the diagram shown in Figure 14.
- B. Development proposals for this site must be informed by a masterplan, agreed by the Council, that must demonstrate how the site can come forward comprehensively.
- C. Winter surveys shall be undertaken to determine whether the site is used by overwintering Golden Plover / Lapwing and whether it acts as functionally linked land to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area. If the site is found to be functionally linked land, appropriate mitigation will be required for the loss of habitat.
- D. Proposals for this site should:
  - i. Provide for about 2,100 dwellings;
  - ii. Make provision for appropriate infrastructure including a primary school, a local centre, open space and a contribution towards leisure/sports provision;
  - iii. Provide structural greenspace and wildlife corridors which retain important existing landscape features including hedgerows, drainage corridors, woodlands and mature trees and include appropriate landscape enhancements in keeping with the Landscape Character Type;



- iv. Be informed by assessments and suitable mitigation related to landscape and visual impact;
- v. Provide an archaeological assessment of the site and required mitigation.
- vi. Incorporate proposals to encourage cycling, walking and wheeling; taking advantage of the availability of active travel routes in the locality; and
- vii. Prepare a detailed Transport Assessment that includes consideration of the impact, including cumulative impact, of the scheme on the A45 and M1.

E. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the rate of surface water run off.

F. Any proposal for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.

**WNLP Objectives:** 1, 9, 10, 12

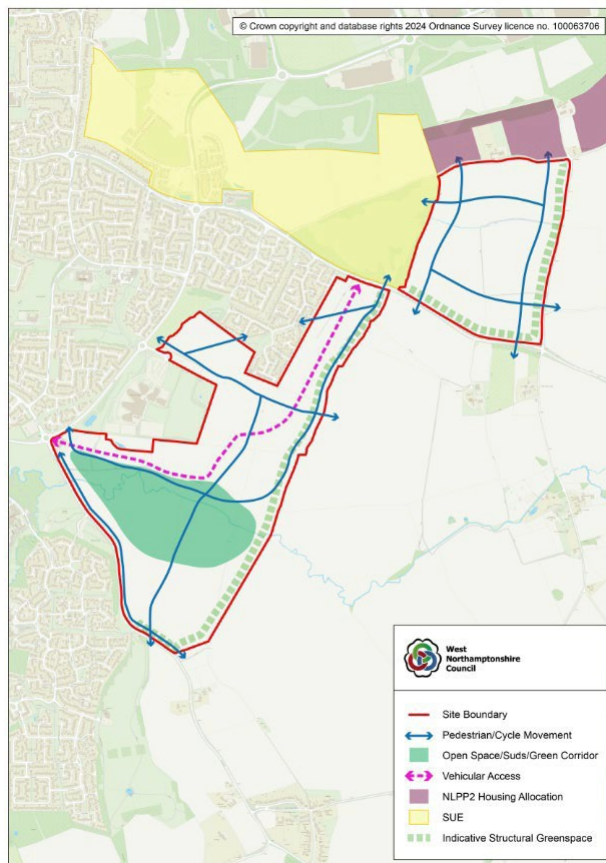


Figure 14: Development Principles for Land east of Wootton Fields

## **Land west of the A43 (N6xvii)**

- 5.10.36 The area of land to the west of the A43 accommodates a farm and agricultural land. The site is located to the north east of Moulton and to the west of the Northampton North SUE.
- 5.10.37 Whilst the A43 provides a strategic road connection for the site opportunities should be sought to maximise active travel and public transport connections.
- 5.10.38 Its location close to Moulton means that access to local facilities exists including local shops, primary school, a church, Moulton College and other facilities. Moulton also has a conservation area and a number of listed buildings and whilst there are no heritage assets identified on the site the impact of the development on the setting of those assets will need to be assessed.
- 5.10.39 The impact on the relationship to the existing urban area and Moulton also needs to be carefully considered with proposals for this site needing to be informed by a masterplan, agreed by the Council, that must demonstrate how the site can come forward comprehensively. This includes showing structural greenspace and wildlife corridors which retain important existing landscape features including hedgerows, drainage corridors, woodlands and mature trees and include appropriate landscape enhancements in keeping with the Landscape Character Type. There is also a requirement to appropriately address the relationship of the development to Moulton village to ensure the character of the village and the amenities of its residents are not harmed. This will include the provision of the sites vehicular access coming from the A43 with active travel links only to the village from the south western corner of the site.
- 5.10.39 Similarly the masterplan should identify linkages with the north of Northampton SUE to the east of the site and consider the relation of the proposed development to that community and its facilities.
- 5.10.40 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 with a small element of flood zone 2 and 3 following the watercourse in the sites south western corner. The land is classified as Grade 2 agricultural land.
- 5.10.41 Due to its location within 5.9 km of the upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, all proposals will need to address the requirements of policy BN15.

## **Policy N19 - Northampton, Land west of the A43**

- A. Residential development at N19, west of the A43, will be supported. The site will be developed in a manner which is consistent with the diagram shown in Figure 15.
- B. Development proposals for this site must be informed by a masterplan, agreed by the Council, that must demonstrate how the site can come forward comprehensively.
- C. Winter surveys shall be undertaken to determine whether the site is used by overwintering Golden Plover / Lapwing and whether it acts as functionally linked land to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area. If the site is found to be functionally linked land, appropriate mitigation will be required for the loss of habitat.
- D. Proposals for this site should:
  - i. Provide for about 2,000 dwellings;
  - ii. Make provision for appropriate infrastructure including a primary school, a local centre, open space and appropriate contribution towards leisure/sports provision;
  - iii. Include measures to mitigate against the impacts of noise and pollution from the A43;
  - iv. Provide structural greenspace and wildlife corridors which retain important existing landscape features including hedgerows, drainage corridors, woodlands and mature trees and include appropriate landscape enhancements in keeping with the Landscape Character Type;
  - v. Be informed by assessments and suitable mitigation related to landscape and visual impact;
  - vi. Provide an archaeological assessment of the site and required mitigation;
  - vii. Incorporate proposals to encourage cycling, walking and wheeling; taking advantage of the availability of active routes in the locality;
  - viii. Provide for a gap between any development and Moulton village;
  - ix. Provide active travel links with the facilities in Moulton Village and
  - x. Prepare a detailed Transport Assessment that includes consideration of the impact, including cumulative impact, of the scheme on the A43.
- E. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to reduce the rate of surface water run off.
- F. Any proposal for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding.



**WNLN Objectives: 1, 9, 10, 12**

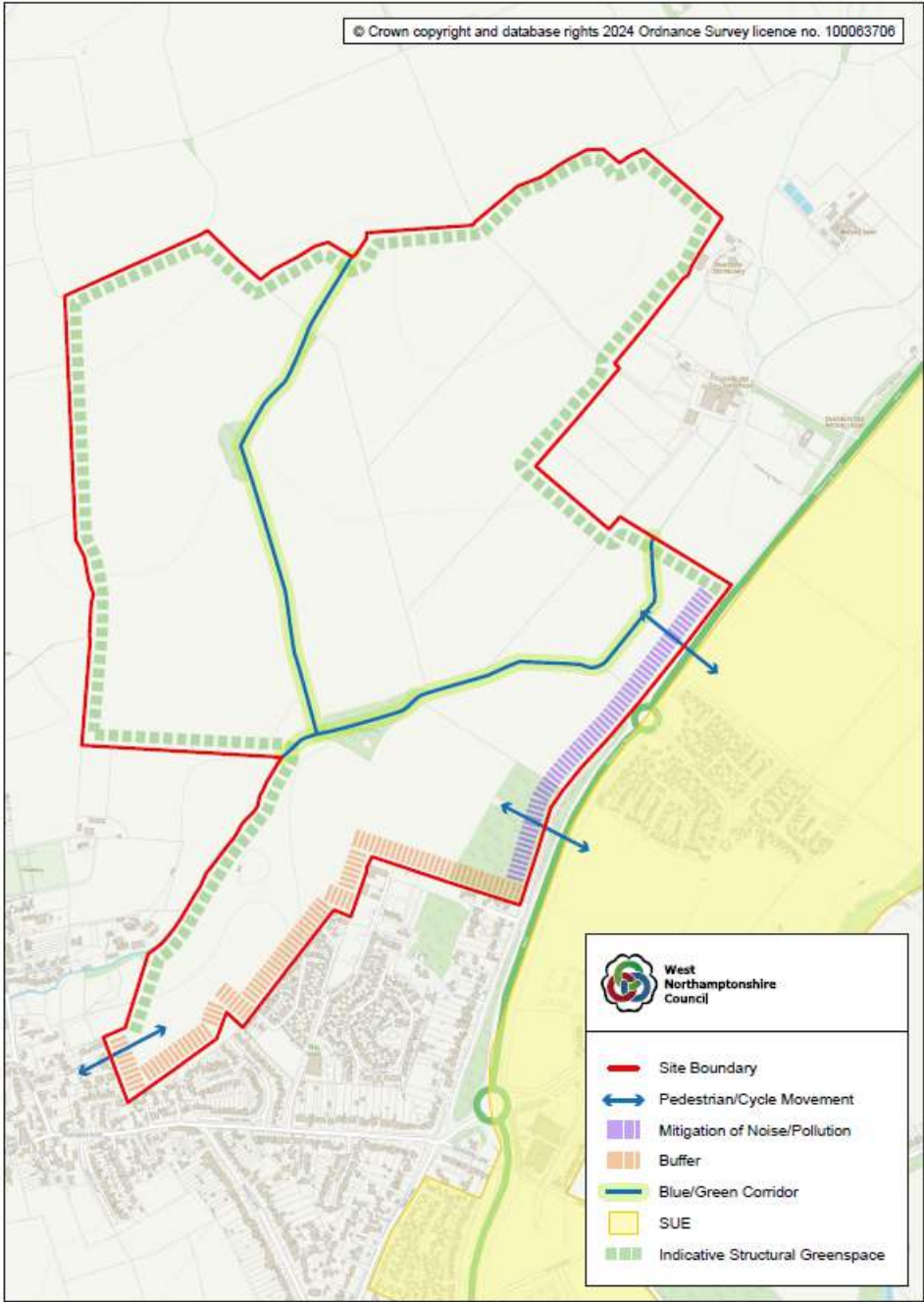


Figure 15: Development Principles for West of the A43

**The Green, Great Houghton (N6xviii)**

- 5.10.42 The site is located to the south-west of Great Houghton Village, part of which is within a Conservation Area and accommodates listed buildings. It lies to the east of the South of Brackmills Sustainable Urban Extension. This is primarily agricultural land. It borders onto a designated woodland area which creates a buffer from Brackmills Employment Area. This agricultural land is relatively flat, and there are some electricity pylons across pockets of the site. It is therefore important to ensure that there is a reasonable buffer created between this existing village and the new development on The Green to ensure that the setting of the conservation area and its heritage assets can be respected and protected, and the identity of the village is maintained. There will also be an opportunity to provide semi natural stepping-stones (connected habitats) adjacent to and within the site that will provide habitat links.
- 5.10.43 The allocated site is within 3km of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar site. In accordance with the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA Supplementary Planning Document and the WNJCS Policy BN4

(which will be replaced by Policy BN15 when this Plan is adopted), development will need to demonstrate through the development management process that there will be no significant adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA and Ramsar site and the species for which the land is designated including the loss of supporting habitat. Development should be undertaken in a sensitive manner, ensuring that disturbance from construction and operational activities do not impact upon the SPA/Ramsar bird features.

- 5.10.44 The Heritage Impact Assessment for the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 concluded that the site has high/ medium sensitivity within its eastern portion and low/ medium sensitivity within its western portions. It was recommended that development should be set away from the south-western boundary of Great Houghton, and an undeveloped buffer zone between the proposed development and the existing settlement is advised. The HIA adds that within the buffer zone, opportunities for ecological enhancement should be established. Great Houghton Village commands an important elevated setting on the edge of Northampton and forms the skyline for many views south. There is potential for small scale development within the eastern portion of the site but these need to remain sensitive to the surrounding context and allow for greenspace to be retained. For the central portion, the HIA concluded that medium and small new development could potentially be accommodated without eroding positive key features and characteristics identified to the east. Development on the site will almost certainly impact on the surviving below ground archaeological assets as they will sit just below the subsoil and cut into the natural deposits. It is recommended that a programme of archaeological investigation consisting of geophysical survey and targeted evaluation trenches take place to determine the presence/ absence, nature and extent of any such remains. This should inform a mitigation strategy for any subsequent development.
- 5.10.45 There is an existing sewer in Anglian Water's ownership within the boundary of the site and the site layout should be designed to take these into account. This existing infrastructure is protected by easements and should not be built over or located in private gardens where access for maintenance and repair could be restricted. The existing sewers should be located in highways or public open space. If this is not possible a formal application to divert Anglian Water's existing assets may be required.

### **Policy N20 – Northampton, The Green, Great Houghton**

- A. Residential development of about 800 dwellings will be supported at The Green, Great Houghton, subject to the following criteria being met:

- i. Winter surveys are undertaken to determine whether the site is used by overwintering Golden Plover / Lapwing and whether it acts as functionally linked land to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area. If the site is found to be functionally linked land, appropriate mitigation will be required for the loss of habitat;
- ii. Development must adhere to Policy BN15 of this Plan, in particular with reference to recreational disturbance and functionally linked land associated with the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area;
- iii. Schemes should be of high-quality design, and must take into account and be sensitive to the significance and the setting of the Great Houghton Conservation Area, evident through a Heritage Impact Assessment;
- iv. Proposals should include suitable measures to mitigate the impact of additional traffic generated by the development. The principal access to the site should be from The Green west of Saucebridge Farm, west of the junction of The Green with the unnamed road which leads south at this point, and the development should seek to minimise additional traffic eastwards from this point towards Great Houghton village and the Bedford Road. The intention should be to reduce the potential for traffic use to use The Green to the east or routes through the allocation to travel between the Newport Pagnell Road and the Bedford Road or vice versa;
- v. Proposals will be informed by air quality and noise impact assessments due to proximity to the Brackmills Industrial Estate;
- vi. Applications on the site will need to be accompanied by an archaeological investigation that considers any archaeological potential on the site;
- vii. Proposals must be accompanied by a landscape vision for the site including details of how views across the site into and out of the village of Great Houghton will be managed, especially views of the Grade II\* listed church. The location and layout of the SANG must assist in achieving the landscape vision for the site;
- viii. The safeguarding of suitable access for the maintenance of foul drainage infrastructure is maintained.
- ix. A suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) will be secured.
- x. Proposals must be informed by a masterplan for the whole allocation which will be expected to:
  - a. Take into consideration the surrounding townscape character and remain sensitive to the existing small-scale residential development within Great Houghton to the east and Hardingstone to the west;
  - b. Provide suitable transport links to neighbouring developments, including neighbourhood centres and facilities;
  - c. Manage and control vehicular access to and from the site to the northern / eastern section of The Green near to the village of Great Houghton, and minimise traffic arising from the development passing through Great Houghton;
  - d. Connect the site to nearby Brackmills Country Park and surrounding areas including pedestrian and cycling provision to secure connectivity and

permeability within the site, to the employment area to the north, the proposed residential areas to the west along The Green and towards Great Houghton as shown on Figure N4;

- e. Provide a SANG within the area identified in Figure N4 which provides the following:
  - i. Protection, enhancement and / or creation of habitats in line with other policies of this Plan
  - ii. Accessibility for residents' recreation including an off-lead dog walking area
  - iii. A circular walking route around the SANG and eastern development area
  - iv. A clear separation between the developed site and the village of Great Houghton in order to protect its setting and the heritage assets of the village.
  - v. Formal and informal open space
  - vi. A SANG car park
  - vii. If any part of the SANG is proposed off-site, the SANG will need to be adjoining the site.
  - viii. Ensure built development (other than as may relate to recreation and SANG functions) only takes place outside the SANG, the broad location of which is defined in Figure N4.
- B. Subject to detailed assessment (including assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) to reduce the rate of surface water run-off.
- C. Proposals for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment meeting the design standard for the Upper Nene catchment through Northampton of a 0.5% probability (1 in 200 chance of occurring in any given year) event plus an allowance for climate change to protect against fluvial flooding. Surface water attenuation should be provided up to this standard.

**WNLPA Objectives:** 1, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13

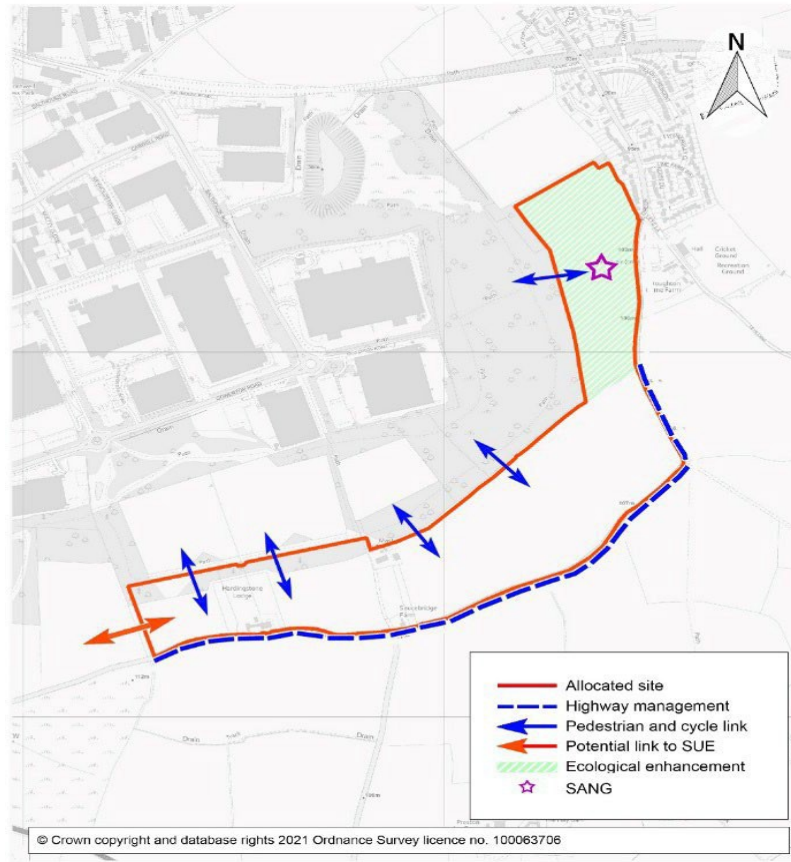


Figure 16: Development principles for Land at The Green, Great Houghton

### Martin's Yard extension (N7iii)

5.10.46 Martin's Yard is an existing safeguarded employment area which is predominantly occupied by local light engineering, waste disposal and recycling companies. They provide a valuable service for the local community, and there are very few areas which offer these services in Northampton. There are ongoing requirements from existing and interested occupiers to expand and invest in the area. Its expansion will contribute towards meeting demand as well as modernise the area and improve the ecological value of the residual land not required for employment.

5.10.47 The area which is proposed for extension is a vacant site of around 1.4ha, which was previously used for landfill. It contains superficial deposits of clay, silt and gravel. It is currently scrubland and marshland, and is dominated by semi-improved grassland and scrub containing Japanese knotweed and disturbed ground. It is located within a Local Wildlife Site and the Brampton Valley Arm of the sub regional Green Infrastructure corridor. There needs to be careful management for the lifetime of the development to ensure that the LWS does not become degraded. To the north is the Kingsthorpe Local Nature Reserve.

## **Policy N21 – Northampton, Martin’s Yard extension**

- A. The Council supports the extension of the Martin’s Yard employment area for employment purposes to meet local demand, subject to the following criteria and principles shown in Figure 17:
- i. The extension for employment use will be restricted to the area shown;
  - ii. A transport assessment will be undertaken to assess the ability of the existing highway and access to adequately cater for the existing and proposed development;
  - iii. Ecological and green infrastructure enhancements and net biodiversity gains need to be delivered in the area shown or in the site’s vicinity, taking into account its location within the Brampton Valley Arm and located immediately south of the Kingsthorpe Local Nature Reserve. There are opportunities to provide woodland stepping-stones (a connected habitat) adjacent to the site;
  - iii. A landscape barrier will be required between the employment area and the residual land;
  - iv. The layout of the development should be designed to take into account any existing sewers and water mains within the site;
  - v. Subject to detailed assessment (including an assessment of contaminated land), development on this site should maximise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); and
  - vi. Any application must demonstrate how it will improve water quality in the surrounding area.
- B. Any proposal forwarded for this site should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposal should also take into account the fact that the site is included within the Upper Nene Catchment Local standards for surface water drainage of 1 in 200 year plus an allowance for climate change to protect against pluvial flooding

**WNL P Objectives:** 2, 14, 15



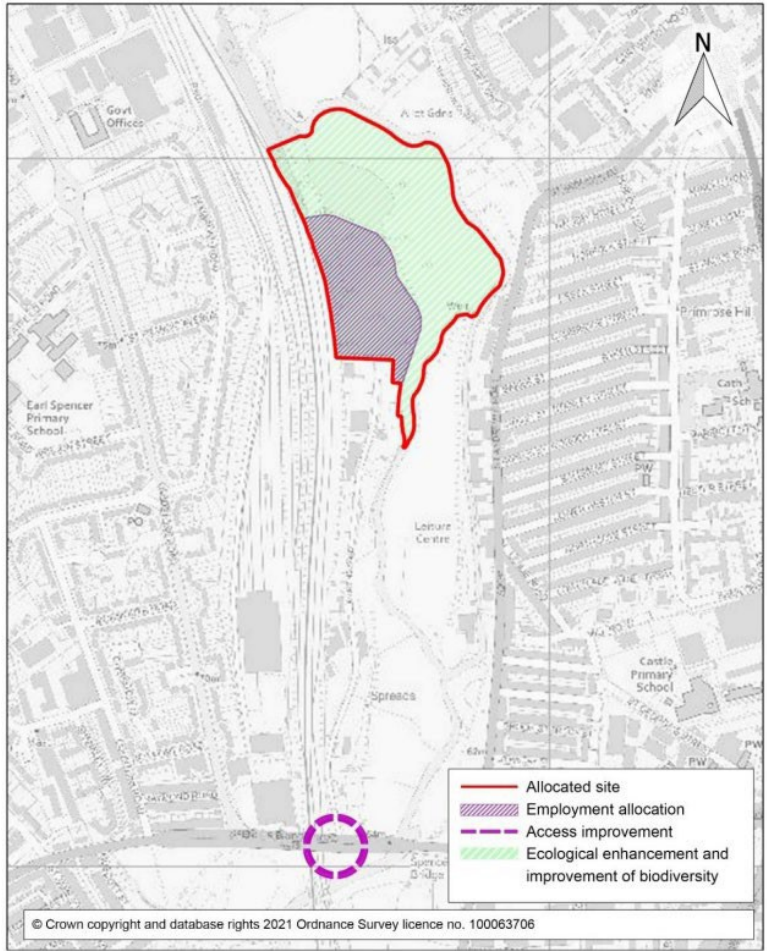


Figure 17: Development Principles for Martin's Yard Extension

## **Chapter 6: Making Great Places - Daventry**

### **6.1 Introduction**

- 6.1.1 Daventry was a small market town until the 1960s when it was identified as a location for overspill development from Birmingham. As a consequence, the population of Daventry has grown over the years from about 4,000 in 1950 to around 28,000 in 2021.
- 6.1.2 In the early 2000s, the former Daventry District Council supported the further growth of the town in order to support the town centre, which was in need of some revitalisation and regeneration. Various options studies and masterplans were commissioned by the Council to assist in the development of planning policy.
- 6.1.3 The WNJCS supports the regeneration of the town including through significant new retail floorspace in the town centre and through the allocation of land for a sustainable urban extension to the north east for about 4,000 houses. At the time the plan was adopted, it was expected that 2,600 of these would be built in the plan period (up to 2029). The plan also supports community regeneration of Southbrook.

### **6.2 Daventry Today**

- 6.2.1 Various schemes to regenerate Daventry have been implemented, including the Abbey Retail Park, the 'iCon' building and more recently the 'Arc' cinema development. However, some of the more ambitious schemes such as the significant additional retail floorspace which was initially planned for the north of the High Street and subsequently off Ashby Road have not come to fruition.
- 6.2.2 The town retains its historic core, which benefits from a recently reviewed conservation area designation and related Article 4 directions in the central area. Daventry has local green links comprising wide landscaped verges which are a particular feature related to its history as a planned expanded town. The Country Park is a key component of the green infrastructure network which connects the town to the wider countryside.
- 6.2.3 The Daventry Development Link Road, which provides a route from Daventry to Northampton and the M1 (now just a 10 minute drive), bypassing Flore and Weedon was opened in 2019.

## Homes

- 6.2.4 From the start of the WNJCS plan period (2011) to 2023 the number of homes built per year has averaged 133 (1599 in total) within a range of 2 to 233.
- 6.2.5 Currently, development is almost complete at Monksmoor, a scheme for about 1,000 dwellings. At Micklewell Park a scheme is under construction for 450 homes. An extension to this development was allocated in the S&CLP, it is anticipated that this will be built out in the period covered by this Plan. Planning applications are anticipated on the extension in 2024.
- 6.2.6 Development is also underway on a site to the south west of Daventry allocated in the S&CLP. This site was allocated for 1,100 homes, but permission has been granted in full for 140 dwellings on part and in outline for up to 1,100 on the remaining part. The scheme for 140 dwellings is under construction. Reserved Matters Approval has been granted for 222 dwellings on the part with outline for 1,100 and a further Reserved Matters application awaits determination. Given the progress made on this site it is anticipated it will be built out completely in the plan period.
- 6.2.7 Land is also allocated in the S&CLP at Middlemore, part of this site has been developed for a care home. As this and the extension to Micklewell Park do not yet have the benefit of planning permission they are re-allocated in this Plan.
- 6.2.8 Land to the north east of Daventry is allocated for 4,000 dwellings in the WNJCS. An outline planning application is expected to be determined shortly. The allocation of this site in the WNJCS is recognised in this Plan, as it is expected to gain permission before the plan is adopted, there is no need to re-allocate at this stage, however, this will be kept under review.

## Employment and Economic Growth

- 6.2.9 Employment floorspace in the town is concentrated in a small number of large industrial/commercial estates located to the north west and south east of the town. Daventry International Rail Freight terminal located some six miles to the north continues to grow and provides employment opportunities for residents of the town. The S&CLP identified the need to provide employment land to accommodate small scale businesses in the town, and accordingly a number of allocations were made to facilitate this.
- 6.2.10 Of those allocations: Land to the North West of Nasmyth Road has planning permission and is substantially under construction; Land off Newnham Drive has been partly completed and part has planning permission, a small part remains undeveloped, and is re-allocated in this Plan; The Knoll has been developed.

## Town Centre

- 6.2.11 A [study](#) of the town centre in 2022 concluded that the centre has a relatively good balance of independents and multiples and that the retail offer is anchored by its three main foodstores. It had a vacancy level of 13.1%, below the national average of 14.1%. The report also observed that the centre has benefitted from significant new investment over recent years including the new 4-screen cinema.

## 6.3 Strategy for Daventry

- 6.3.1 The strategy for Daventry is to support continued growth, recognising its role in the settlement hierarchy. Because of the significant provision for housing and economic development in the pipeline there is no need for further allocations, the approach is to consolidate through focusing growth on existing commitments and allocations.

### **Policy D1 - Spatial Strategy for Daventry (Sub-Regional Centre)**

The role of Daventry as a Sub-Regional centre will be supported and enhanced by the following:

- i. Providing for new homes within the town confines, remaining development at Daventry South West, Monksmoor and Micklewell Park; the site allocated at Daventry North East in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy; and the Micklewell Park Extension and Middlemore allocated in the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan and re-allocated in this Plan (Policies D3 and D4;

- ii. Supporting economic investment in Employment Areas in accordance with policy EC1;
- iii. Supporting new employment opportunities in the town centre, at land off Newnham Drive (Policy D7), Daventry South East Gateway (Policy D8), and land North West of Nasmyth Road allocated in the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan and local employment opportunities at Daventry North East;
- iv. Supporting mixed use development on land to the north and west of the town centre (policy D5);
- v. Supporting re-development of the former Council offices at Lodge Road for mixed/residential uses (Policy D6);
- vi. Enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre in accordance with the placemaking and town centre policies (EC7);
- vii. Improvements to connectivity and active travel in accordance with Policy D2;
- viii. Providing for sports, leisure and tourism development through new development, redevelopment and re-use of existing buildings, and better use of civic, open and green spaces;
- ix. Supporting proposals that protect, connect and extend green links within and around Daventry;
- x. Developing a green infrastructure network for the town including the canal corridor, Daventry Country Park and Borough Hill and new greenspace associated with major development sites;
- xi. Supporting proposals that secure the long-term conservation of the historic environment in accordance with policies BN1, BN2, BN3, BN4 and BN5; and
- xii. Recognising the importance the town's identity, character and setting and preventing its coalescence with neighbouring villages by requiring proposals within the designated areas of Green Wedge to be in accordance with policy BN8, and resisting development outside the confines for Daventry unless it complies with the exceptions set out in Policy R2.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

Connectivity

6.3.2 Transport connections within the town and between the town and its rural hinterland are vital. The Council has recently produced a draft LCWIP for Daventry which was consulted on in early 2024 and is currently working on a new Local Transport Plan (LTP). The next version of this Plan will take into account the emerging LTP.

### **Policy D2 - Daventry, Connectivity and Travel**

- A. Measures to promote sustainable transport modes such as walking and cycling will be supported, this will include the provision or retention of links which provide ready access between:
- Daventry Town Centre, Strategic Employment Areas, other services / facilities and residential areas
  - Daventry and surrounding rural settlements
  - Interdependent rural settlements
- B. Measures to support active travel to and through the town centre, to key destination such as the country park and secondary schools through the enhancement and improvement of the public realm and its connectivity will be supported. In particular, opportunities to promote and improve walking and cycling, with priority given to those identified in the most up to date LCWIP will be supported.
- C. Proposals will be supported that make optimum use of waterways and disused railway lines as well as developing networks of green spaces as sustainable transport routes.
- D. Where practical, proposals should incorporate appropriate infrastructure to support electric (or other sustainable fuel type) vehicle charging .
- E. Support opportunities to enhance, promote and improve public transport links including the regeneration of Daventry bus station.

**WNLN objectives:** 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14

## Provision of new housing at Daventry

### 6.3.3 Housing at Daventry will be provided as follows:

- a. the allocation at Daventry North East in the WNJCS which is subject to an outline planning application, which is expected to gain planning approval before this Plan is adopted;
- b. allocations for residential development at Middlemore and the Micklewell Extension in the S&CLP which are carried forward into this Plan;
- c. allocation for mixed uses including residential at Eastern Way in the S&CLP which is carried forward into this Plan;
- d. allocation at Daventry South West in the S&CLP which has the benefit of planning permission and is under construction; and
- e. planning permissions and windfall sites.

There is also the potential for further housing at:

- f. the former Council offices at Lodge Road, which are allocated in this Plan for regeneration

### 6.3.4 If the outline planning application relating to the allocation at Daventry North East (from the WNJCS) is not approved when the submission version of this Plan is prepared, it will be re-allocated in that Plan.

## **Micklewell Park Extension**

### 6.3.5 Micklewell Park is situated to the north of Daventry, to the east of the A361. The site to the south of this allocation was granted outline planning permission in 2015 and has subsequently gained the benefit of Reserved Matters approval in two phases. Phase 1 is currently under construction.

### 6.3.6 The southerly site includes land for a local centre, a site for a 2 form of entry primary school along with a network of open space and landscaping measures.

### 6.3.7 The site allocated at D3 forms a northerly extension which was tested through the S&CLP. It continues to form a suitable location for residential development. It is important that the proposals for this northern extension include appropriate measures to mitigate the impacts on the landscape. In addition, it is important that the development protects the setting of Welton village and avoids settlement coalescence.

## **Policy D3 - Daventry, Micklewell Park Extension**

- A. Site D3 is allocated for residential development. Proposals for this site must be informed by a Masterplan, agreed by the Council, that must demonstrate how the

site will come forward comprehensively, and fully integrated with the site to the south which has extant planning permission and is under construction.

- B. The development will make provision for all of the following;
- i. Approximately 310 dwellings;
  - ii. Structural greenspace and wildlife corridors which protect and enhance the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area and include appropriate landscape enhancements to mitigate the impact on the setting of Welton village and the Green Wedge;
  - iii. Retention of the area of Green Wedge to the north and east of the site; and
  - iv. Necessary contributions to infrastructure.
- C. Development of the site will be informed by assessments and suitable mitigation related to:
- Archaeological impact
  - Heritage impact
  - Landscape and visual impact
  - Ecological impact
  - Highways and transport
  - Flood Risk and water and water recycling infrastructure: and
  - Noise and Air Quality.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13

## **Middlemore**

- 6.3.8 The Middlemore housing estate is situated to the north of the town. It was allocated in the 1997 Daventry District Local Plan and again in the S&CLP. A significant part of the site has been developed.
- 6.3.9 Whilst the principle of development for the site has been established through previous allocations and the granting of an outline permission (since lapsed), the remaining parcel of land is allocated to provide further certainty to the market.
- 6.3.10 The site continues to provide a suitable location for housing. It benefits from connectivity to the existing services and facilities on Middlemore and is in close proximity to the Heartlands and Drayton Fields industrial estates.
- 6.3.11 These industrial areas are also a constraint affecting the site and therefore proposals will need to address the relationship with these employment areas. The site could provide in the order of 120 dwellings.



## **Policy D4 - Daventry, Land at Middlemore**

Site D4 is allocated for residential development. Proposals for this site should;

- i. Make provision for at least 120 dwellings; and
- ii. Provide necessary contributions to the Daventry to Braunston Cycle Link; and
- iii. Provide noise mitigation to the Heartlands Strategic Employment Area; and
- iv. Respond positively to the setting of Drayton Reservoir; and
- v. Protect the amenity of existing surrounding residential properties; and
- vi. Be informed by assessments and suitable mitigation related to water and water recycling infrastructure.

**WNL P objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13

## **Regeneration and Economic Growth**

6.3.12 Opportunities for regeneration and economic growth at Daventry will be provided as follows:

- a. allocation for mixed uses to the north and west of the town centre in the S&CLP which is carried forward into this Plan;
- b. allocations for employment uses at Newnham Drive and South East Gateway in the S&CLP which are carried forward into this Plan;
- c. planning permissions and windfall sites.

There is also the potential for further employment at:

- d. the former Council offices at Lodge Road, which are allocated in this Plan for regeneration

## **Land North and West of the Town centre**

- 6.3.13 Land to the north and west of the town centre has previously been identified as a potential new canal arm off the Grand Union Canal, and for major new retail provision. Both schemes have since been abandoned. Part of the area has also been considered for a secondary school.
- 6.3.14 The whole site will need to provide or improve links to the primary shopping area through public realm and environmental improvements and provide a genuine opportunity to link the town centre to Daventry Country Park and Daventry North East Sustainable Urban Extension. Such links should include legible walking and cycling routes that accommodate the distinct needs of different users including those visiting for leisure and others who may be commuting to the town centre or surrounding employment areas. It is these linkages and the opportunity for a gateway location to the town centre that justify the provision of some town centre uses in this edge of centre location as part of an appropriate mix of uses to ensure the area is active during the day and in the evening. Good quality open space, including green space, should form part of the development. Any proposals will be led by a masterplan that has been agreed by the Council as local planning authority that can demonstrate how the site can come forward comprehensively.
- 6.3.15 Proposals must be accompanied by a transport strategy that will include how walking and cycling links will be incorporated into the development, how the development will contribute towards modal shift and also set out how any increased demand for car parking will be accommodated whilst mitigating the impacts resulting from any potential loss of car parking. There are pockets of the site, in particular at the eastern edge of the site that have a high risk of flooding from surface water therefore proposals must also demonstrate how they will mitigate against surface water flooding
- 6.3.16 Given the proximity of the site to the town centre it is suitable for a variety of uses.

### **Policy D5 - Daventry, Land to the North and West of the Town Centre**

A. Site D5 is allocated for mixed uses:

- Residential (C2/C3)
- Office (E(g) )
- Hotel (C1)
- Leisure Sui Generis
- Restaurant/Pub (E(b)) & Sui Generis

- Health (E(e))
- B. Development proposals for this site must be informed by a masterplan, agreed by the Council, that must demonstrate how the site can come forward comprehensively.
- C. Proposals for this site should:
  - i. Provide suitable and legible pedestrian and cycle links that accommodate the distinct needs of different users linking to the town centre, Daventry country park, Daventry North East SUE and the Learning Quarter, including those passing through the site, through design and layout and by utilising public realm; and
  - ii. Respond positively to and respect its setting including the provision of on-site open space; and
  - iii. Ensure that siting, configuration and orientation of the buildings optimise key views into and out of the site; and
  - iv. Develop the tourism potential of the area through the addition of quality public space; and
  - v. Provide active frontage on to Eastern Way; and
  - vi. Retain areas of open and green character; and
  - vii. Be accompanied by a transport strategy; and
  - viii. Mitigate all flood risk arising as a result of development of the site including through the provision of sustainable drainage; and
  - ix. Set out further details of any required mitigation relating to water and water recycling infrastructure and any necessary phasing arrangements.

**WNLDP objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

### **Lodge Road Offices**

6.3.17 The offices formerly occupied by Daventry District Council and latterly West Northamptonshire Council are now redundant. They are located on the edge of the town centre, but given recent trends it is unlikely that a building of this size would attract a retail occupier.

6.3.18 The site is considered suitable for a range of uses, including residential use.

### **Policy D6 - Daventry, Former Council Offices, Lodge Road**

A. Proposals to utilise the former Council offices will be encouraged.

B. Proposals for this site should:

- i. Make the best use of land whilst responding sensitively to the proximity of the grade I listed Church of the Holy Cross;

- ii. Respond positively to level changes;
- iii. Respond positively to surrounding buildings to create attractive liveable space;
- iv. Retain mature landscaping to Eastern Way where possible;
- v. Be informed by assessments and suitable mitigation related to water and water recycling infrastructure.

**WNL objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

### **Daventry, Land off Newnham Drive, Heartlands Strategic Employment Area**

6.3.19 This site lies within the Heartlands employment area and provides an opportunity for further economic development. It forms part of a wider allocation in the S&CLP, the remainder of which has now either been constructed or has planning permission. The site is adjacent to a residential area separated only by an historic railway cutting, therefore any uses on the site as well as the design and layout, will need to carefully consider neighbouring residents and ensure any development does not adversely impact on their amenity with noise and light being particularly important considerations. Any proposals should also relate well to the existing units within the employment area and respond to the character of the surrounding area by ensuring the form, layout and design of any proposals are consistent. Walking and cycle links from the site to the rest of the employment area should be provided.

#### **Policy D7 - Daventry, Land off Newnham Drive**

- A. Site D7 is allocated for E(g), B2 or B8 uses.
- B. Proposals for this site should:
  - i. Optimise the design and layout to ensure that development does not result in adverse amenity impacts on neighbouring residents; and
  - ii. Relate well to the existing employment area; and
  - iii. Provide walking and cycling links from the site to the remainder of the employment area and the neighbouring residential area; and
  - iv. Set out further details of any required mitigation relating to water and water recycling infrastructure and any necessary phasing arrangements.

**WNL objectives:** 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14

## South East Gateway

- 6.3.20 The Daventry South East Gateway site is a priority for regeneration. The Gateway sites are located north and south of the A45 (London Road) to the south east of the town in a prominent gateway location. It currently features a mixture of uses which, whilst serving important functions in their own right, do not portray an attractive, welcoming arrival point into Daventry. This area therefore provides an opportunity to improve this important, strategic gateway to Daventry town to create a high quality environment and support the regeneration of the town.
- 6.3.21 The South East Gateway will provide a mix of unit sizes not exceeding 10,000sqm in order to meet the identified demand for units of this size in the 'Employment Land in Daventry: The Demand for small and medium Units, Peter Brett Associates and Aspinall Verdi (October 2017)'. These will broadly be provided in the size distribution set out in Table 7 of that report. The site will incorporate high quality design to optimise the layout of the site and enhance the gateway into the town. Walking and cycling links to the adjacent Marches employment area and nearby residential areas will also be provided.
- 6.3.22 There are a number heritage assets within and close to the site. The northern part of the site adjoins the Burnt Walls Scheduled Monument which is a fortified enclosure. The Scheduled Monument is considered to be of high heritage interest and its wider setting includes Borough Hill Scheduled Monument, which lies outside the site to the north, the non-designated asset of John of Gaunts Castle in the southern part of the site and the non-designated historic farmstead, Daventry Wood Farm adjacent to the southern part of the site. The setting of Burnt Walls was historically an open agrarian landscape and the scheduled monument derives considerable significance from its relationship with its hinterland. Land to the north and east of the monument continues to provide an open rural landscape setting. Whilst the setting to the west of the monument has been altered by urbanisation as Daventry has grown, land which forms the immediate setting remains open and connects Burnt Walls to the historic route way (the modern A45), which makes it important to the significance of the scheduled monument and sensitive to change. The open land immediately to the west of Burnt Walls is shown as a heritage buffer within the Daventry South East Gateway allocation. Maintaining its openness will contribute towards sustaining the significance and setting of the scheduled monument and safeguard the land against inappropriate development. Borough Hill, which is also a Scheduled Monument and Newnham Hill flank the site and form an important part of the setting of the town. The western part of the site has previously been quarried, however, there is potential for archaeological remains to be present in the remainder of the site.

- 6.3.23 A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the site as part of the evidence base for the S&CLP concluded that development within the site would not result in harm to the heritage significance of Borough Hill and Burnt Walls Scheduled Monuments but has the potential to impact on the setting of Daventry Wood Farm and could impact on the as yet unknown archaeological remains. However, any harm to the historic environment can be suitably mitigated to the lower end of less than substantial harm or avoided altogether through sensitive design and mitigation.
- 6.3.24 The mitigation and enhancement opportunities include the retention and enhancement of boundary hedgerows, restricting that part of the development which is to the north of the A45 of to its western side to create a green buffer to Burnt Walls, measures to enhance views towards the monument and provision of interpretation for the public. These mitigation and enhancement measures should be covered and taken forward in the assessments in support of a planning application. The HIA also identifies the need for archaeological assessment to enable further understanding of the potential and significance of archaeology to inform a mitigation strategy to reduce or remove any potential archaeological impacts. It is also considered that through sensitive design the redevelopment of the existing uses on the site could have potentially positive impact on the setting of nearby assets. It is not considered that site capacity would be significantly affected by the mitigation measures.
- 6.3.25 It will be important to ensure there is only limited harm to the landscape setting and development proposals will need to recognise the sensitivity of the location and provide appropriate green buffers to ensure the wider setting of Newnham Hill and the Borough Hill Scheduled Monument are protected and enhanced. Any development here should also refer to policies BN1, BN2 and BN4.
- 6.3.26 Part of the site is within an area that is identified as Special Landscape Area (SLA). Once further details of the scheme emerge through detailed masterplanning work the precise boundary of the SLA in this location will be adjusted accordingly to exclude the area where built development will take place.

- 6.3.27 In order to assist with improvements at this gateway location, the relocation of the vehicle recycling facility will be supported subject to meeting the criteria in policy EC8 (in the Economic Growth Chapter). Any proposals for a new site will need to demonstrate that there is no significant adverse impact on local landscape and heritage assets and this would be clearly set out by, as applicable, a visual impact assessment and HIA that would accompany any application. Further to this any proposal should not harm the form, character and setting of an existing settlement. It will be important that the proposed location for relocation has good access to existing junctions of the strategic highway network via main roads. Residential amenity must not be adversely affected by traffic movements through the centre of existing settlements and any application must be accompanied by a noise assessment. The nature of this use can be very noisy and any application that would harm the amenity of existing residents will not be supported.
- 6.3.28 Existing water mains cross the site and the site layout should be designed to take these into account. This existing infrastructure is protected by easements and should not be built over or located where access for maintenance and repair could be restricted. The existing water mains and sewers should be located in public highway or public open space. If this is not possible a formal application to divert Anglian Water's assets may be required.

### **Policy D8 - Daventry, South East Gateway**

- A. Site D8 is allocated for E(g), B2 or B8 uses.
- B. Development proposals for this site must be informed by a masterplan, agreed by the Council, that must demonstrate how the site can come forward comprehensively.
- C. Proposals for this site should:
  - i. Provide a mix of unit sizes not exceeding 10,000 sq.m; and
  - ii. Incorporate high quality design to optimise the layout of the site; and
  - iii. Enhance the gateway into the town along the A45; and
  - iv. Demonstrate that they respond to the local landscape and its features; and
  - v. Be sympathetically designed to mitigate the impacts on the setting of Burnt Walls, and Borough Hill Scheduled Ancient Monuments and the non-designated John of Gaunts Castle and Daventry Wood Farm; and
  - vi. Retain the openness of the area shown as a heritage buffer on the Policies Map in perpetuity to sustain the significance and setting of the Walls Scheduled Monument. Proposals for positive and appropriate land management and works that would better reveal the significance of Burnt Walls will be supported; and

- vii. Be informed by an archaeological evaluation and mitigation strategy to understand the potential and significance of the remaining archaeological resource and to reduce or remove potential impacts; and
- viii. Integrate with the Marches Employment area; and
- ix. Provide walking and cycling links from the Gateway to the Marches employment area and neighbouring residential areas; and
- x. Provide walking and cycling links from the site to the remainder of the employment area and the neighbouring residential area; and
- xi. Set out further details of any required mitigation relating to water and water recycling infrastructure and any necessary phasing arrangements; and
- xii. Ensure that suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of water supply infrastructure.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15

## **Daventry Country Park**



- 6.3.29 Daventry Country Park is a key component of the green infrastructure network which connects through the town to the wider countryside. It is a high quality green space that is jointly owned and managed by the Council and the Canal and River Trust and extends to approximately 37 hectares. It is centred on Daventry Reservoir within easy reach of residential areas and the town centre and contains trails, different types of habitats and various visitor facilities. It is well used, mainly by residents of the district but also from further afield, for informal exercise, education, children's play, leisure, organised events and wildlife watching. Its importance for biodiversity and heritage are recognised by a number of statutory (Local Nature Reserve and Conservation Area) and non-statutory designations (Local Wildlife Site).
- 6.3.30 The boundary of the Daventry Reservoir Conservation Area extends beyond the country park to the north as far as the Grand Union Canal and was designated in recognition of its historic connection to the Canal as a feeder reservoir. The area beyond the country park contains a spillway and channel that are still used to feed the canal.
- 6.3.31 Although currently on the edge of the urban area, planned strategic developments to the north and east will effectively enclose the country park. It is important that green links are maintained to the north and the wider countryside for the purposes of wildlife corridors, health and wellbeing and because of the historical link between the reservoir and the Grand Union Canal. Extensions to the country park to the Grand Union Canal are secured through the Monksmoor development and planned in connection with the Daventry North East SUE. This will provide an increased area for informal recreation and wildlife habitats and will bring it within reach of around 5,000 new dwellings. However the increased usage, together with visitors to the canal will need to be appropriately managed to protect the biodiversity and heritage value of the Country Park. More intensive use should be directed towards the less sensitive areas.
- 6.3.32 The Daventry North East SUE (WNJCS) will deliver a structural green corridor which will run close to the eastern boundary of the park and connect the town centre with the Grand Union Canal providing a high quality recreational route for pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Policy D9 - Daventry Country Park**

- A. The Council will support proposals that enhance Daventry Country Park's recreation, leisure, health and wellbeing and cultural assets providing they protect, manage or enhance important existing habitats and heritage assets.

- B. The Daventry North East Sustainable Urban Extension will be expected to make provision for an extension to the Country Park and a link between the Grand Union Canal and the town centre. This should:
  - i. Incorporate areas of linked natural and semi natural green space including a transitional landscape zone between the Country Park and the Sustainable Urban Extension; and
  - ii. Provide a linear park including footpath and cycleway connections to the Grand Union Canal; and
  - iii. Not impede the operation of, or maintenance access to, the reservoir feeder, spillway and channel; and
  - iv. Provide opportunities for recreation; and
  - v. Integrate with the existing Country Park
  
- C. Future development in close proximity to Daventry Country Park should preserve or enhance the setting of the Daventry Reservoir Conservation Area and the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13

## **Chapter 7: Making Great Places - Brackley**

### **7.1 Introduction**

- 7.1.1 Located at the southern tip of Northamptonshire the historic market town of Brackley is surrounded by open countryside. Whilst the town has experienced significant growth over the last 40 years, with its current population now at approximately 16,000, it is still characterised by its important market town heritage reflected in its built form, listed buildings and conservation areas and function as it continues to provide a range of services and facilities for town residents and the occupants of surrounding villages and countryside.
- 7.1.2 Being located alongside the A43, a short distance from the M1 and M40 (a 20 and 10 minute drive respectively), the town has excellent road links to Northampton and Oxford and is served by the nearby markets towns of Banbury and Bicester with access to the Chiltern railway line.
- 7.1.3 The landscape setting of the town is important and includes areas of high landscape sensitivity to the north, the Great Ouse area to the east and the historic parkland landscapes at Evenley and Steane Park.
- 7.1.4 The WNJCS adopted in 2014 supports the regeneration of the town including through the allocation of sites to the north and east of the town for approximately 1,700 homes, a primary school, medical centre, shops and 9.4ha of employment land. Much of which has, today, been successfully delivered on the ground.

### **7.2 Brackley Today**

- 7.2.1 The majority of new housing since the 1990s has been developed to the north and north-west of the town centre, where the strategic road layout has not geographically constrained expansion. Brackley has a wide range of housing choice, but some neighbourhoods are disconnected from the town centre.
- 7.2.2 Housing growth has outstripped employment growth over the last 20-30 years, which has reinforced Brackley's role as a commuter town providing good access to larger towns and cities within an hour's drive. Notwithstanding this, Brackley does offer a range of employment facilities, ranging from smaller town centre sites in Burgess Square, to the larger industrial estates located around the town. For example, the industrial estate on Buckingham Road accommodates a mix of employment uses, although many of the premises are outdated by modern standards. Brackley's close ties with the Silverstone Circuit have also resulted in several high technology motorsport companies locating research and

development facilities in the town, including Mercedes AMG Petronas.

## **Homes**

- 7.2.3 During the plan period of the WNJCS, the number of homes built in Brackley has totalled 1,580 – an average of 131 dwellings per annum. Housing delivery has been irregular over this time, ranging from 3 units in the first year to a peak of 285 dwellings in 2017/18. Annual delivery over the previous three years has averaged approximately 100 dwellings.
- 7.2.4 Brackley North SUE, made provision for up to 1,380 dwellings, and was completed in 2023. Consequently, there is no need to re-allocate this site.
- 7.2.5 The existing Brackley East SUE allocation comprises mixed use development. The non-residential elements of the scheme to the north of Turweston Road have achieved strong delivery; however, at the residential land allocation to the south of Turweston Road progress has been limited. Despite this, it is currently envisaged that ground and infrastructure works will commence during 2024, with the first dwellings being completed during 2025. The site was originally granted outline consent in 2014 with an extant Section 73 outline consent granted in 2018 and reserved matters for the entirety of the site (350 dwellings) granted in 2019.

## **Employment and Economic Growth**

- 7.2.6 Employment floorspace in the town is concentrated in a small number of industrial/commercial estates located to the south and east of the town. The WNJCS identified the need to provide further employment land to accommodate businesses in the town and allocated land accordingly to facilitate this.
- 7.2.7 That allocation which formed part of the Brackley East SUE (9.5ha) has been built out and is now partly occupied.
- 7.2.8 The Brackley Business District is shown on the Policies Map and comprises two areas: the Buckingham Road and Oxford Road Industrial Estates which will be the focus for new employment uses.

7.2.9 Revitalisation of Brackley Business District is a key element of the spatial strategy for the town. In support of this, the Council has recently approved an application for an expansion of the Mercedes-AMG Petronas headquarters in the town through a scheme that would deliver environmental benefits in addition to the likely generation of around 500 new full-time jobs with a predicted expenditure of approximately £70m which would further feed into the local economy and create additional full time jobs during construction.

## **Town Centre**

7.2.10 The town's linear High Street extends from Brackley Park in the north, to its junction with Banbury Road in the south. The current form of Brackley developed from the 13th century, with Market Place at its heart. The town centre is characterised by a number of Listed Buildings and is almost entirely located within a Conservation Area.

7.2.11 The town supports a range of independent businesses, and a small number of national multiples. It is also home to the largest antiques centre in the Midlands (Brackley Antiques Cellar). Its retail offer is anchored by Waitrose at Drayman's Walk, with Market Place and the High Street offering a range of quality services and independent retailers.

7.2.12 The Burgess Square mixed-use and residential scheme off Market Place comprises a number of high street brands, including Costa Coffee and Co-op. Courtyard Mews opened in September 2010 on a former supermarket site and comprises small specialist retail shops, designed in the style of a Victorian street. A general market is held weekly outside the Town Hall, the origins of which date back to the early 1700s. Operated by the Town Council it is characterised by a varied selection of traders selling groceries, fish and plants. A farmers' market is held every third Saturday of the month.

7.2.13 A [study](#) of the town centre in 2022 concluded that the centre has a relatively good balance of independents and multiples and that the retail offer is anchored by a main foodstore which also acts as an important generator for trips, footfall and linked expenditure. It had a vacancy level of 10.9%, below the national average of 14.1%.

## **7.3 Strategy for Brackley**

7.3.1 The strategy for Brackley is to focus growth on existing commitments and allocations and brownfield/regeneration opportunities.

## **Policy B1 - Spatial Strategy for Brackley (Rural Service Centre)**

The role of Brackley as a Rural Service Centre town will be supported and enhanced by the following:

- i. Providing for new homes within the town confines and the remaining development at Brackley East as allocated in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy;
- ii. Supporting economic investment in Employment Areas in accordance with policy EC1;
- iii. Supporting new employment and regeneration opportunities in the Brackley Business District, as shown on the proposals map;
- iv. Enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre in accordance with the placemaking and town centre policies (EC7);
- v. Improvements to connectivity and active travel in accordance with Policy B2;
- vi. Providing for sports, leisure and tourism development through new development, redevelopment and re-use of existing buildings, and better use of civic, open and green spaces;
- vii. Supporting proposals that protect, connect and extend green links within and around Brackley;
- viii. Supporting proposals that secure the long-term conservation of the historic environment in accordance with policies BN1, BN2, BN3 and BN4; and
- ix. Recognising the importance of the town's identity, character and setting and preventing its coalescence with neighbouring villages by resisting development outside the confines for Brackley unless it complies with the exceptions set out in Policy R1.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16

### **Connectivity**

7.3.2 Transport connections within the town and between the town and its rural hinterland are vital. The Council has recently produced a draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Brackley and is currently working on a new Local Transport Plan (LTP). The next version of this Plan will take into account these documents.

### **Policy B2 - Brackley, Connectivity and Travel**

- A. Measures to promote sustainable active travel modes such as walking and cycling will be supported, this will include the provision of links which provide ready access:
  - i. within the settlement confines; or
  - ii. between Brackley and its surrounding rural settlements and employment areas. Priority will be given to those measures identified in the most recent Brackley LCWIP.
- B. Existing links that are used by active travel modes such as walking and cycling either within the settlement confines or between Brackley and surrounding rural settlements and employment areas will be retained.
- C. Opportunities to enhance, promote and improve public transport links will be supported.

**WNLPP objectives:** 1, 7, 8, 9

### **Provision of new housing at Brackley**

7.3.3 Housing at Brackley will be provided as follows:

- a. The allocation at Brackley East which is subject to a planning approval,
- b. Planning permissions and windfall sites within the town confines of Brackley.



## **Brackley East**

- 7.3.4 The Brackley East development was allocated as a mixed use development in the WNJCS. A significant part of the non-residential elements of the site have been completed.
- 7.3.5 Whilst the principle of development for the site has been established through previous allocation and the granting of planning permissions, the remaining parcel of land is re-allocated to provide certainty to the market.
- 7.3.6 The site continues to provide a suitable location for housing. It benefits from connectivity to the existing services and facilities at Brackley East and is in close proximity to the town centre.
- 7.3.7 The adjoining recently developed areas are both a constraint and opportunity affecting the site and therefore proposals will need to address their inter-relationships.

### **Policy B3 – Land at Brackley East**

- A. Site B3 is allocated for residential development. Development proposals must be accompanied by a Masterplan and necessary infrastructure is required to be phased alongside the delivery of the development.
- B. Proposals for this site should provide for:
- i. At least 350 dwellings;
  - ii. The realignment of and traffic calming to Turweston Road;
  - iii. Improved public transport provision, including town and intra-urban services;
  - iv. Improvements to A43 junctions at Brackley;
  - v. A landscape buffer/ noise mitigation to the A43;
  - vi. Archaeological and ecological assessment of the site and required mitigation;
  - vii. High quality design and layout which respects the character of the Great Ouse landscape character area;
  - viii. The enhancement of local green infrastructure networks;
  - ix. An integrated transport network with sustainable transport modes including access to Brackley Business District;
  - x. Flood risk management including surface water management and from all other sources; and
  - xi. Safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

**WNL objectives:** 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13

## **Chapter 8: Making Great Places - Towcester**

### **8.1 Introduction**

- 8.1.1 Whilst evidence of earlier habitation has been recorded, it was with the Romans that Towcester (*Lactodorum*) became established and has remained continuously inhabited ever since.
- 8.1.2 Historic occupation is noticeably evident in the town's built form, with prominent features such as Bury Mount - a 12th century motte – and burgage plots. The influence of the wool trade and the importance of the town as a staging post for coaches travelling between London and Holyhead are also evident with Watling Street passing through the heart of the town, which has fundamentally shaped the town's history and development.
- 8.1.3 The town is strategically located with good accessibility to the M1 to the east and the M40 to the west, and is at the crossroads of the A5 (running north-south) and A43 (running east-west) trunk roads.

### **8.2 Towcester Today**

- 8.2.1 As a market town, Towcester meets the essential needs of its local community, whilst also acting as a service centre for its rural catchment of surrounding villages, hamlets and farms.
- 8.2.2 Towcester has experienced significant recent housing growth and today has a population of around 11,500 people (census 2021), which represents population growth of nearly 30% over 20 years.
- 8.2.3 Growth has principally occurred to the north, south and west of the town centre, with the east of the town proudly protected by the Eason Neston Grade II\* historic registered park and garden that incorporates the publicly owned Watermeadows, which provides Towcester with a community green space that is rich in biodiversity.
- 8.2.4 Most recent development has been delivered through the WNJCS which supports the regeneration of the town including mixed use development in the town centre and the allocation of approximately 3,000 homes in a mixed-use development to the south of the town, which includes the delivery of the Towcester Southern Relief Road. Allocations in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 also proposed a further 66.5ha of employment land, including sports

pitches for the creation of a Towcester Town Football Club home ground, to the north of the town.

- 8.2.5 The town centre is linear in form and runs from above the Northampton Road junction in the north, through to its junction with Richmond Road to the south. The Primary Retail Area includes Sponne Shopping Centre and Park Street, larger foodstores and a mix of independent specialist shops. The town centre has seen growth and revitalisation in recent years through the Moat Lane heritage led regeneration scheme, a mixed-use development comprising housing, employment, shops and services.
- 8.2.6 The town centre is characterised by numerous listed buildings, as well as Bury Mount, (the remains of a 12th century motte), and is almost entirely located within a Conservation Area.
- 8.2.7 There are a number of assets surrounding Towcester that make a significant contribution to the town and its local economy. These include the Silverstone Circuit at the heart of 'Motorsport Valley', which is home to globally significant high performance engineering companies that extend beyond motorsport to include aerospace, electronics and material technology.

### **Towcester South Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE)**

- 8.2.8 The existing Towcester South SUE allocation comprises sustainable mixed-use development. The original allocation was approved through two outline planning consents, which became known as:
- Wood Burcote Court (up to 210 dwellings), and
  - Towcester Vale (up to 2,750 dwellings).
- 8.2.9 As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, development is nearing completion at Wood Burcote Court, with the remaining dwellings anticipated to be completed imminently. Consequently, there is no need to re-allocate this site.
- 8.2.10 At Towcester Vale, as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, reserved matters consent has been granted for 1,544 dwellings, with 924 of these completed.
- 8.2.11 A further full planning permission (211 dwellings), for land inside the Towcester Vale boundary was approved, March 2023, following an over-allocation of land for employment in the Masterplan, which was not required to achieve the floor spaces approved. The delivery of these additional dwellings will occur in parallel with those at Towcester Vale.
- 8.2.12 In accordance with the Spatial Strategy for this Plan, sufficient additional homes will be provided at Towcester in the plan period, through the continued delivery

of this site along with any windfall opportunities that may arise within the settlement confines.

### **8.3 The Strategy for Towcester**

8.3.1 The strategy for Towcester is to support continued growth that recognises its role in the settlement hierarchy.

8.3.2 Because of the significant provision for housing and economic development in the pipeline there is no need for further housing or employment allocations. The approach for Towcester is therefore to focus growth on existing commitments, whilst preserving and enhancing those elements of the town that make it special.

#### **Policy T1 – Spatial Strategy for Towcester (Rural Service Centre)**

The role of Towcester as a Rural Service Centre will be supported and enhanced by the following:

- i. Providing for new homes within the town confines;
- ii. Providing for new jobs within the remaining developments at Towcester South Sustainable Urban Extension; Land at Bell Plantation (Policy T3); Woolgrowers Field (Policy T4); and Tiffield Lane (Policy T5) as allocated in the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan and re-allocated in this Plan. Smaller employment opportunities will also be supported where appropriate within the existing urban area;
- iii. Enhancing the viability, vitality and role of the town centre in accordance with the town centre Policy EC7;
- iv. Improving connectivity and active travel in accordance with Policy T2;
- v. Providing leisure, tourism and exhibition facilities at Towcester Racecourse in accordance with Policy T6;
- vi. Providing for sports, leisure and tourism development through new development, redevelopment and re-use of existing buildings, and enhanced use of civic, open and green spaces;
- vii. Developing and enhancing the green infrastructure network in the town that links with existing green infrastructure at Watermeadows, Silverstone Brook, Racecourse and new greenspace associated with major development sites;

- viii. Supporting proposals that secure the long-term conservation of the historic environment in accordance with policies BN1, BN2, BN3, BN4 and BN5; and
- ix. Recognising the importance of the town's identity, character and setting and preventing its coalescence with neighbouring villages by resisting development outside the confines for Towcester and by requiring proposals within the designated areas of Green Wedge to be in accordance with Policy BN8.

**WNLN objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

## **8.4 Improving Travel**

- 8.4.1 The A5 in Towcester has longstanding issues with the high levels of traffic passing through the historic town centre, causing environmental, safety and accessibility concerns to residents and businesses.
- 8.4.2 A new link road is currently being built around the south-west of Towcester, between the A5 and A43, with the new A5 roundabout and first phase of the link opening to traffic, December 2023. When complete, the scheme will encourage through traffic, particularly goods vehicles, to use the new link road and the A43 as an alternative to the A5. This will alleviate some of the more disruptive traffic from the town centre, improving accessibility and quality of life in Towcester.
- 8.4.3 In conjunction with this, National Highways is developing a range of measures to improve road safety, accessibility, air quality and noise impact by reducing traffic through the town centre. The measures will also support economic growth by making the high street through Towcester a more attractive place to visit and preserve the history and identity of the town.
- 8.4.4 Travel connections throughout Towcester and between the town and its rural hinterland are vital. The Council is currently working on a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) and in the process of producing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Towcester. The next version of this Plan will take into account these emerging documents.

### **Policy T2 – Towcester, Connectivity and Travel**

- A. National Highways improvements to enhance the A5 corridor through Towcester will be supported.

- B. Measures to promote sustainable active travel modes such as walking and cycling will be supported, this will include provision of links which provide ready access:
- i. Within the settlement confines, or
  - ii. Between Towcester and its surrounding rural settlements and employment areas. Priority will be given to those measures identified in the most recent Towcester LCWIP.
- C. Existing links that are used by active travel modes such as walking and cycling either within the settlement confines or between Towcester and surrounding rural settlements and employment areas will be retained.
- D. Opportunities to enhance, promote and improve public transport links will be supported.

**WNLPP objectives:** 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17

## **8.5 Employment and Economic Growth**

- 8.5.1 In accordance with the Spatial Strategy for this Plan, sufficient additional employment land will be provided at Towcester in the plan period, through the delivery of previously allocated sites along with any windfall opportunities that may arise within the settlement confines.
- 8.5.2 Towcester employment sites that were allocated in the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan and re-allocated in this Plan comprise:
- Land at Bell Plantation,
  - Land at Woolgrowers Field, and
  - Land at Tiffield Lane
- 8.5.3 As of 1 December 2023, planning applications were under consideration at both Bell Plantation and Woolgrowers Field. A hybrid application has been approved at Tiffield Lane; however, construction has yet to commence.
- 8.5.4 As these allocations come forward through the development management process it is expected that they shall be accompanied and supported by an independent study providing market-evidence on the proportion of E(g) (Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) required, with supporting uses that are demonstrably subservient and complementary in both scale and nature to an existing or proposed class use. This study shall be undertaken by an independent expert. It shall provide advice on the appropriate mix of uses in terms of demand and achieving a range and mix. The scope of the

study will be agreed between the Local Planning Authority and the applicant prior to its commencement.

- 8.5.5 The allocations shall be brought forward with regard to a variety of site specific design and place shaping principles in addition to those required in the wider policies of this Plan, as well as being in accordance with adopted Supplementary Planning Documents, including the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document.
- 8.5.6 A detailed Heritage Impact Assessment will be required for each site including detailed consideration of any archaeological impacts including the need for initial archaeological assessment, including in relation to the archaeological potential of the sites due to their proximity to the Roman Road (Watling Street), including field evaluation to identify areas of archaeological activity and to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy. This may lead to archaeological mitigation which could involve preservation in situ by design or record or a combination of the two. Both the heritage and archaeological assessments need to be undertaken in advance of the submission of any planning applications so as to inform the master planning work. The assessment for the Bell Plantation and Tiffield Lane sites must also include an assessment of the heights of new buildings and any impact on the Easton Neston Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and other heritage assets.
- 8.5.7 The Northamptonshire Bus Strategy (April 2018) expects that all employment developments are provided with a high quality bus service from first occupation, both to reduce low-occupancy car travel, peak time highways impacts, and overall car dependency and their associated emissions. They also permit access to employment opportunities for a wide range of people and are essential to social inclusion.
- 8.5.8 In line with the general principle that developers should be required to mitigate the impacts of their own proposals, the Council will, within the constraints imposed by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, expect developers to fund any new bus-related infrastructure required to improve access to their development, and to fund the resources required for the provision of any altered, extended or new bus services required until such a time as the anticipated revenue makes them commercially sustainable. In line with best practice, the Council will generally require all major developments to demonstrate that bus services can be accessed at stops within a 400m (about 10 minutes) walk of any part of the development. Internal development layout and urban design should have full regard to the location of existing bus stops, and clearly signal where new stops are to be provided. Higher density development near existing or proposed bus stops is strongly recommended. However, it is accepted that

achieving the 400m target may not always be strictly achievable. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that the great majority of their development is within 400m of a reasonable and safe walking route of bus stops served by regular services to the nearest major facilities and centres. Where this is not the case, new stops and/or service diversions shall be provided by the developer. To achieve higher levels of modal shift, it is recommended that the majority of occupiers are within 250m of stops, through careful consideration of urban design and density. Early dialogue with the Council will be required to determine whether a diversion of existing routes to the site is feasible or a contribution to support existing routes is preferred.

- 8.5.9 Employment land has also been allocated within the Towcester South SUE mixed-use development, which remains to be delivered.

### **Land at Bell Plantation**

- 8.5.10 The Bell Plantation site is located at the A43/A5 junction, north of Towcester and represents an appropriate employment location for the provision of additional small and medium sized commercial buildings close to the town as its planned expansion takes place. The strategic road network and local distributor routes can be readily accessed from this area, so avoiding lorry movements through residential areas. Development in this area provides an opportunity for high visibility economic investment. Approximately 4ha of the site is developed as a mixed use that has expanded from its former predominant use as a garden centre.
- 8.5.11 The Bell Plantation site provides an opportunity for the creation of a new and improved community facility for use by the Towcester Town Football Club. The Club was formed in 1988 and is now a Chartered Standard Community Club. Currently the teams play on the recreation ground in Towcester as well as on pitches in Greens Norton and Pattishall. This is because there are no facilities currently available within the town itself and the club does not own any land or facilities. The Club itself continues to grow but this will be severely limited by the lack of dedicated pitch provision in the future and it will be unable to meet the demands of the growing population. The South Northamptonshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2018) refers to the proposal for a new home for Towcester Town Football Club and supports the allocation of a 6ha site for football at the Bell Plantation. The Strategy considers that the Bell Plantation proposed allocation would provide a 6ha site with the potential for further expansion in the future. The delivery of this site is considered to be a high priority for action in the Strategy. The site is served by a traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing at the A43/A5 roundabout and a footpath link on the A5. The Bell Plantation site is



considered to be the most appropriate location for this community facility as it is relatively close to the town and already well served by safe pedestrian access.

- 8.5.12 The site reserved for the Football Club is yet to be determined but should be as close to the main built-up part of the town as feasible (subject to suitable topography). The site is considered suitable to meet the needs of the Club in the future without detriment to any nearby residents. The design and layout of the employment element of the mixed-use site should be compatible with, and not prejudice the delivery of, the football facilities.
- 8.5.13 The provision of land for the Town Football Club on the Bell Plantation site is an important step towards the provision of such an important facility for the community of Towcester. It is also critical to ensure that the project is delivered on the ground. The South Northants Playing Pitch Strategy (2018) evidences the need for additional pitch provision within Towcester and supports the provision of facilities at Bell Plantation. Northamptonshire Football Association and the Football Foundation are supportive of the proposals to provide additional pitch provision and continue to assist in the ongoing dialogue surrounding the funding of the facilities. However, ownership of, or long leasehold interest in, a site is a pre-requisite for several funding bodies, and a development plan allocation or planning permission is a relevant consideration for others. Consequently, these are important steps in the delivery of the project. Nevertheless, inclusion of the football facilities in updates to the Local Authority's Infrastructure Delivery Plan taken together with the possibility that the project may be funded in part by contributions from the Community Infrastructure Levy evidence both the commitment to and the deliverability of the allocation. The delivery of the facilities will be closely monitored.

### **Policy T3 – Towcester, Land at Bell Plantation**

- A. Site T3 is allocated for 35ha of mixed employment generating development together with 6ha of land for the creation of a Towcester Town Football Club home ground. A variety of employment types will be sought to reflect the need for diversity and resilience in the local economy as expressed in the Council's economic growth strategy.
- B. An integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be taken for the site and a masterplan must be prepared, in consultation with the local planning authority and the local highway authority, Towcester Town Council and other statutory undertakers prior to the submission of a planning application covering the development of the whole site.
- C. The uses on the site will be:

- i. A mix of E(g) (Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) with supporting uses that are demonstrably subservient and complementary in both scale and nature to an existing or proposed B class use; and
  - ii. 6ha to be provided within the allocated site for Towcester Town Football Club with the precise location dependent on suitable topography.
- D. The design and layout of the employment element of the mixed use site should be compatible with, and not prejudice the delivery of, the football facilities.
- E. The football club may, in part, be funded by contributions from the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy.
- F. Access to the employment site will be from the A5; and
- i. Access to the football club site will be provided by the developer of the employment part of the site, from either within the employment site or from a new separate access on the A5 and provide an unfettered road access point to the edge of the football club site; and
  - ii. Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including contributions to the cost of diverting existing routes through the site or to support existing local services and promote sustainable travel; and
  - iii. A transport assessment and travel plan will be required to assess the transportation implications of the proposed development and to identify appropriate mitigation measures; and
  - iv. New footpaths and cycleways will be provided that link to existing networks and safe crossing points on the A43.
- G. A detailed heritage impact assessment will be required for the whole site, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England, prior to the design of the scheme in order to inform the height of any proposed buildings, layout and extent of the development. This will explicitly include an assessment of the height of any new buildings and impact on the Easton Neston Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden as well as detailed consideration of any impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets and subject to the assessment being agreed a programme of informed mitigation to be included with any application.
- H. Prior to the submission of an application, a detailed assessment for the whole site will be required to characterise archaeological remains and identify direct impact of development proposals to inform design and a programme of archaeological mitigation.
- I. A detailed strategic landscape assessment of the whole site will be required to deliver a high quality landscaped setting within and around the boundary of the proposal.

- J. Proposals will be required to provide utilities up to the edge of the site for the football club.
- K. An assessment demonstrating compliance with the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document will be required.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15

### **Land at Woolgrowers Field**

8.5.14 The Woolgrowers Field also lies to the north of Towcester at the A5/A43 junction. The site is close to existing commercial uses including a car showroom, the existing Bell Plantation mixed-use development, a petrol filling station and a building goods supplier.

### **Policy T4 – Towcester, Land at Woolgrowers Field**

- A. Site T4 is allocated for mixed employment generating development. A variety of employment types will be sought to reflect the need for diversity and resilience in the local economy as expressed in the Council's economic growth strategy.
- B. An integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be required for the employment site and a masterplan must be prepared, in consultation with the local planning authority, the local highway authority and other statutory undertakers prior to the submission of a planning application covering the development of the whole site.
- C. The uses on the site will be a mix of E(g), (Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) with supporting uses that are demonstrably subservient and complementary in both scale and nature to an existing or proposed B class use.
- D. Access to the employment site to be from the A5 and/or the Greens Norton Road; and
  - i. Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including contributions to the cost of diverting existing routes through the site or to support existing local services and promote sustainable travel; and
  - ii. A transport assessment and travel plan will be required to assess the transportation implications of the proposed development and to identify appropriate mitigation measures; and

- iii. New footpaths and cycleways will be provided that link to existing networks and safe crossing points on the A43.
- E. A detailed heritage impact assessment will be required for the whole site to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England, prior to the design of the scheme in order to inform the height of any proposed buildings, layout and extent of the development. This will explicitly include an assessment of the height of any new buildings and impact on the Easton Neston Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden as well as detailed consideration of any impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets and subject to the assessment being agreed a programme of informed mitigation to be included with any application.
- F. Prior to submission of an application, a detailed assessment for the whole site will be required to characterise archaeological remains and identify direct impact of development proposals to inform design and a programme of archaeological mitigation.
- G. A detailed strategic landscape assessment of the whole site will be required to deliver a high quality landscaped setting within and around the boundary of the proposal.
- H. An assessment demonstrating compliance with the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document will be required.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15

### **Land at Tiffield Lane**

- 8.5.15 Hybrid planning consent was granted on this site in June 2022. As such, the principle of development on this site is established; however, works have yet to commence.
- 8.5.16 The site is located to the north of Towcester, next to the A43, and adjoins the urban area of Towcester town adjacent to the Bell Plantation employment allocation. Development on the land will therefore form a natural expansion to the urban area of a sustainable town and adjoin an employment cluster. The land will also create a significant number of jobs to support recent housing development in the area.
- 8.5.17 Proposals must allow improvements to the dangerous road crossings at Northampton Road/A43 and Tiffield Lane/A43, and any scheme either approved or forthcoming, will only be progressed if there is demonstrable support from the highways authorities that a new roundabout access at the Hulcote turn on the

A43 is deliverable and that the A43 crossing point at the Tiffield Lane can be removed. Further evidence will also need to be provided that the Highways Authority is satisfied with the proposed road improvements and traffic implications, through transport modelling and travel plans.

### **Policy T5 – Towcester, Land at Tiffield Lane**

- A. Site T5 is allocated for new mixed employment generating development. A variety of employment types will be sought to reflect the need for diversity and resilience in the local economy as expressed in the Council's economic growth strategy.
- B. An integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be required for the employment site and a masterplan must be prepared, in consultation with the local planning authority, the local highway authority and other statutory undertakers prior to the submission of a planning application covering the development of the whole site.
- C. The uses on the site will be a mix of E(g) (Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) with supporting uses that are demonstrably subservient and complementary in both scale and nature to an existing or proposed B class use.
- D. Access to the sites will be provided by a new roundabout facility that will be provided at the junction of the A43 and the Northampton Road (Hulcote Turn) and the layout of the proposal will enable the closure of the central reservation turn at the Tiffield Lane junction in order to improve road safety on the A43; and
  - i. Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including contributions to the cost of diverting existing routes through the site or to support existing local services and to promote sustainable travel; and
  - ii. A transport assessment and travel plan will be required to assess the transportation implications of the proposed development and to identify appropriate mitigation measures; and
  - iii. New footpaths and cycleways will be provided that link to existing networks and safe crossing points on the A43.
- E. A detailed heritage impact assessment will be required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England, prior to the design of the scheme in order to inform the height of any proposed buildings, layout and extent of the development. This will explicitly include an assessment of any new buildings and impact on the Easton Neston Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden as well as detailed consideration of any impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets and subject to the assessment being agreed a programme of informed mitigation to be included with any application.

- F. Prior to submission of an application, a detailed assessment for the whole site will be required to characterise archaeological remains and identify direct impact of development proposals to inform design and a programme of archaeological mitigation.
- G. A detailed strategic landscape assessment of the whole site will be required to deliver a high quality landscaped setting within and around the boundary of the proposal including the protection of the Green Infrastructure Corridor that crosses the site.
- H. An assessment demonstrating compliance with the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document will be required.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15

## **8.6 Towcester Racecourse**

- 8.6.1 Whilst no longer a horse-racing venue, the Racecourse is an important feature of the town and it is generally accepted that it represents a much under-used facility. As such, there is potential for an intensification of the site's use for leisure, recreation, visitors or tourism-related development that will be of benefit both to the increasing population of the town and tourism for the wider area.
- 8.6.2 The Racecourse site falls almost entirely within the Grade II\* registered park and garden of Easton Neston and includes a Grade I listed building. The northern part of the site also abuts the Easton Neston Conservation Area. Any development at the site will need to ensure that the designated heritage assets and their settings are protected.
- 8.6.3 Leisure and recreation is becoming an increasingly important feature of modern life and Government policy promotes the development of sport and recreation to enable all people to participate in a choice of leisure activities. Encouraging leisure and recreation creates a variety of social benefits such as improved physical health and inner well-being, enhanced social skills and sense of community. It has an important environmental role, particularly through maintaining and improving the quality of urban areas and can also be valuable in economic terms through promoting inward investment, visitors and tourism.
- 8.6.4 The objectives for Towcester Racecourse are:
  - To give long-term protection to existing leisure and recreational facilities at Towcester Racecourse in the interest of amenity for residents and visitors to the area;

- To improve the range, quality and standard of provision of the leisure and tourism offer at the Racecourse to meet people's needs; and
- To encourage greater participation by local residents in sport and recreation.

8.6.5 In addition to providing employment itself, it can also have beneficial spin-offs for the local economy, visitor and tourist trade. It is therefore recognised that the Racecourse's role in the town should be encouraged; however, development must be designed to respect the countryside which has open views in a particularly prominent location.

### **Policy T6 – Towcester Racecourse**

Proposals at Towcester Racecourse involving the development of leisure, recreational, tourism and exhibition facilities will be supported, subject to proposals meeting all of the following criteria:

- i. A Transport Assessment will be required to ensure that any increase in traffic generation can be satisfactorily accommodated; and
- ii. It is demonstrated that the proposals prioritise the re-use of existing buildings; and
- iii. Any new buildings that may be required should be built in close proximity to existing permanent buildings and in a manner sympathetic to their location;
- iv. Existing footpaths should be retained; and
- v. Appropriate landscaping schemes will be required to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority as part of any development proposal; and
- vi. Any development proposals must not adversely affect the significance of heritage assets, including archaeology, or their settings or harm the registered Park and Garden; and
- vii. An archaeological assessment of the site will be undertaken and mitigation measures identified; and
- viii. The provision of an integrated transport network with sustainable transport modes including access to Towcester town centre; and
- ix. The provision of surface water management and flood attenuation schemes; and
- x. Safeguarding and enhancement of Towcester's Green Infrastructure Network.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17

## **Chapter 9: Making Great Places: Rural Areas**

### **9.1 Introduction**

- 9.1.1 Much of West Northamptonshire is rural in nature and is home to around a third of the area's population. The rural area has a dispersed network of almost 190 settlements of varying sizes and functions.
- 9.1.2 The Submission Version (Regulation 19) of this Plan will set out a rural settlement hierarchy and will guide development proposals outside of settlements, in the open countryside.
- 9.1.3 Chapter 3 of this Plan sets the hierarchy for the main towns in the area; this chapter will set the hierarchy for the settlements in the rural areas. Work on a methodology to inform the rural settlement hierarchy is ongoing, and will be informed following direct engagement with Parish Councils as well as responses to the consultation on this Plan.
- 9.1.4 A settlement hierarchy is a way of categorising settlements based on factors such as the range of services and facilities they provide and access to public transport. The purpose of a settlement hierarchy is to help direct new development to the most sustainable locations.
- 9.1.5 In the current development plan, the WNJCS sets an overarching framework for the rural settlement hierarchy, with the allocation of settlements within the hierarchy delegated to the Part 2 Local Plans. The Part 2 Local Plans for the former Daventry and South Northamptonshire areas took slightly different approaches to their Settlement Hierarchies and methodologies; this Local Plan will need to establish a single hierarchy for the whole of West Northamptonshire which will inform new planning policies to guide future development in the rural areas.
- 9.1.6 The Council has recently engaged directly with relevant parish councils on the rural settlement hierarchy. This has included updating evidence regarding services and facilities within settlements, as well as reflecting on their settlement's position within the existing hierarchy and sharing future aspirations. The information from this engagement is being analysed and will help inform the Submission version.
- 9.1.7 Wider views are also now sought on what the rural hierarchy for the area should be.



## **Settlement confines**

- 9.1.8 Settlement or village confines represent the extent of a settlement's main built up area and where certain policies apply. They are used to direct development to the most sustainable locations whilst protecting the character of the countryside, villages and towns.
- 9.1.9 The former Daventry and South Northamptonshire Councils developed their own approaches to defining settlement confines, which have been applied within the respective part 2 local plans. A single settlement confines methodology for West Northamptonshire is now needed to inform the new rural area settlement hierarchy. Appendix D reviews the two existing approaches and suggests new criteria for West Northamptonshire, which we welcome comments on.

## **Open Countryside**

- 9.2.1 It is important that the Open Countryside is protected and the NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (paragraph 180). To ensure a sustainable pattern of development across the WN area, policy S1 of the WNJCS concentrates growth at Daventry town and limits development in the rural areas. It refers to maintaining the distinctive character and vitality of rural communities and respecting the level of tranquillity. This approach is endorsed within the NPPF, where one of the core planning principles refers to recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the environmental dimension of sustainable development, which refers to contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF also sets out that, to ensure a sustainable pattern of development, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and that isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there are special circumstances. The policy below provides a local context to these special circumstances, acknowledging that certain forms of development are acceptable, in particular replacement dwellings, and the conversion of premises to support an existing rural business.
- 9.2.2 In order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, the NPPF recommends housing is located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (paragraph 83) and as such, isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided (paragraph 84). Proposals for isolated homes will only be supported in the circumstances prescribed by paragraph 84 of the NPPF. Such proposals should demonstrate exceptional design quality and it is expected that they are supported by the Design Review Panel. Applicants should engage with the panel prior to submission of any application.

9.2.3 This Plan recognises the important role that agriculture and other rural enterprises play in the rural economy. Such uses are often located in the open countryside because of their operational needs. Proposals which sustain and enhance the rural economy are supported where they accord with Policy EC5 and have no adverse impacts on the open countryside.

### **Policy R1 – Open Countryside**

The intrinsic character, beauty and tranquility of the open countryside of West Northamptonshire will be recognised.

To achieve this, only the following forms of development will be supported in the open countryside:

- i. Development, including the re-use or conversion of existing buildings, essential to ensure the continuing function of a rural business that meets the requirements of Policy HO12 (Rural Worker’s Accommodation); or
- ii. The replacement of an existing building of the same general size, massing and bulk predominantly on the same footprint, for the same use, that respects the character of its rural surroundings; or
- iii. Agricultural development that respects the character of its rural surroundings both in relation to its physical location, scale and design and also the operational impacts that it would have on the area in which it is located and the communities of that area; or
- iv. Individual dwellings of exceptional design quality; or
- v. The optimal viable use of a heritage asset in accordance with Policies BN1 (West Northamptonshire’s Historic Environment), BN2 (Designated Heritage Assets) and BN3 (Non-designated Heritage Assets); or
- vi. The re-use of redundant or disused buildings that lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or
- vii. Extensions to existing buildings that respect their form and character; or
- viii. Essential investment in infrastructure including utilities; or
- ix. Development that accords with Policy EC5 (Rural Economy), and has no significant adverse impacts on its character, beauty and tranquillity; or
- x. Lorry Parking that otherwise accords with policy TR6; or
- xi. Development that otherwise accords with the Rural Settlement Hierarchy; or
- xii. A Rural Exception Site which complies with Policy HO4 or Local Needs Site which complies with Policy HO5.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17

## **Chapter 10: Homes**

### **10.1 Maintaining a supply of homes**

- 10.1.1 Providing housing of the right type and in the right locations is critical to achieving positive health outcomes and in promoting well-being; it also plays a critical role in supporting the local and wider economy.
- 10.1.2 This chapter initially sets out the scale of new housing that this Plan needs to provide for. Much of that need is already met by existing permissions and allocations in existing plans and therefore should be able to be delivered more quickly than if it were being allocated for the first time in this Plan.
- 10.1.3 This section then sets out expectations for new housing, including tenure, size and standards. Other policies in the Plan, such as those relating to mitigating climate change will also be relevant.

### **10.2 Scale and distribution of housing development**

- 10.2.1 The development strategy for the area aims to meet the need for new housing in a way that maximises the opportunities to renew and regenerate our existing towns, minimises the need for new greenfield land 'take' and sustains our existing communities.
- 10.2.2 Using the national methodology, there is a need for 2,173 dwellings per annum in West Northamptonshire. This is similar to the number of completions on average over the last seven years.
- 10.2.3 Over the Plan period (2023 to 2041) this amounts to a further 39,114 homes. Further housing will be provided to meet need arising from the extension of Magna Park in neighbouring Harborough District. Rounding the combined figure gives a requirement of 39,150.
- 10.2.4 Existing commitments (allocations in existing plans, planning permissions, resolutions to grant permission and allocations in neighbourhood plans) make up the bulk of the existing supply. A proportion is made up of a windfall allowance, this source of supply will continue to come forward because policies in existing plans and this Plan provide for this.

10.2.5 Further information on the detail of this supply, including a trajectory, is provided in the 'Homes' Background Paper. It will be updated as this Plan progresses and will be included as an appendix to the submission version.

### **Policy HO1 - Housing Requirement**

- A. Provision will be made for about 39,150 new homes to be built in West Northamptonshire over the Plan period 2023-2041.
- B. This provision will be achieved by allocations made in this Plan, by policies in this Plan which provide for new homes, existing commitments and allocations in Neighbourhood Development Plans.

**WNLP objectives:** 12

### **10.3 Housing and housing led allocations**

10.3.1 Policies allocating sites for housing or housing led development are included in the place-based sections of this Local Plan. For convenience all of these allocations are included in figures 18 to 21 below.

10.3.2 Most of the sites in those figures are already allocated in the WNJCS or part 2 plans (all of which will be replaced by this Plan, when adopted). Recognising those sites in this Plan confirms that these sites make a very significant contribution to the housing requirement in this Plan and provides certainty that the Council continues to support housing or housing led development on these sites.

10.3.3 In addition to the allocations included in the tables below, the Northampton Part 2 Local Plan allocates a number of sites for less than 50 dwellings. Because of their scale, it is not the intention to re-allocate any of these sites in this Plan, therefore, any sites that have not come forward when this Plan is adopted would be judged against the relevant policies in this Plan.

Figure 18 – Housing Supply in allocations – Northampton (Ordered by: SUEs in WNJCS, allocations in Part 2 Plan, new allocations)

<b>Policy Reference in this Plan (where applicable)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>Units Completed as at 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Not applicable. Northern part may need to be allocated if permission not granted before submission.	Northampton North	3,550	591	2,959	Site is allocated as N3 in the WNJCS. Southern part has outline permission for up to 2,000 dwellings and majority of that has Reserved Matters approvals. Several phases of the site are currently under construction, and it is well established.  Northern part has a resolution to grant outline planning permission for 1,600 dwellings. This area may need to be included as an allocation if the permission is not issued prior to submission.
Not applicable Southern part may need to be allocated if permission not granted before submission.	Northampton West	2,550	52	2,498	Site is allocated as N4 in the WNJCS. Small part of site completed. Majority of site has outline permission for 1,750 dwellings and parts of that have Reserved Matters approval. Site preparation is currently underway and houses are under construction. Southern part does not yet have the benefit of permission. This area may need to be included as an allocation if a permission is not issued prior to submission.
Not applicable	Northampton South	1,000	198	802	Site is allocated as N5 in the WNJCS. All of the site has outline permission for 1,000 dwellings, and most of that has reserved matters approvals. It is currently under construction.
Not applicable	Northampton South of Brackmills	1,525	138	1,387	Site is allocated as N6 in the WNJCS. All of the site has outline permission, part of that has reserved matters. It is currently under construction.

<b>Policy Reference in this Plan (where applicable)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>Units Completed as at 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Not Applicable	Northampton Kings Heath	3,000	0	3,000	Site is allocated as N7 in the WNJCS. All of the site has outline permission. Two Reserved Matters applications have been submitted on part.
Not applicable	Northampton North of Whitehills	1,103	716	387	Site is allocated as N8 in the WNJCS. Most of the site is complete, the remainder has either outline or full permission and is currently under construction.
Not applicable	Northampton Upton Park	860	273	587	Site is allocated as N9 in the WNJCS. All of the site has Full permission and is currently under construction.
Not applicable Upton Lodge part may need to be allocated if permission not granted before submission.	Northampton Norwood Farm/Upton Lodge	3,418	129	3,289	Site is allocated as N9A in the WNJCS. Norwood Farm has outline permission and part of that has reserved matters. It is currently under construction. Upton Lodge has a resolution to grant permission. This area may need to be included as an allocation if the permission is not issued prior to submission.
Not applicable	Former Lings Upper School, Birds Hill Walk	60	0	60	Site is allocated as LAA0193 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part2 Plan
Not applicable	The Farm, Hardingstone	55	0	55	Site is allocated as LAA0204 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part2 Plan
Not applicable	Northampton Railway Station Car Park	280	0	280	Site is allocated as LAA0288 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part2 Plan
Not applicable	Northampton Railway Station (railfreight)	188	0	188	Site is allocated as LAA0333 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part2 Plan
Not applicable	Ryland Soans	62	0	62	Site is allocated as LAA0720 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part2 Plan

<b>Policy Reference in this Plan (where applicable)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>Units Completed as at 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Not applicable	Hawkins Shoe Factory	105	0	105	Site is allocated as LAA0903 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan. Permissions granted to convert building. Under construction.
Not applicable	Pineham	80	0	80	Site is allocated as LAA1006 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	University of Northampton Park Campus	585	510	75	Site is allocated as LAA1013 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan. Most of site is already developed. Capacity for 75 remaining
Not applicable	University of Northampton Avenue Campus	170	0	170	Site is allocated as LAA1014 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan. Permissions have been granted.
Not applicable	Belgrave House	122	0	122	Site is allocated as LAA1022 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Land to the West of Towcester Road	230	0	230	Site is allocated as LAA1102 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	The Green, Great Houghton	800	0	800	Site is allocated as LAA1098 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Hill Farm Rise, Hunsbury Hill	80	0	80	Site is allocated as LAA1100 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Site East of Towcester Road	60	0	60	Site is allocated as LAA1102 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Watering Lane, Collingtree	265	0	265	Site is allocated as LAA1104 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Former Abington Mill Farm, land off Rushmere Road,	125	0	125	Site is allocated as LAA1107 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Greyfriars	400	0	400	Site is allocated as LAA1113 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Wootton Fields	74	0	74	Site is allocated as LAA1137 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan

<b>Policy Reference in this Plan (where applicable)</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>Units Completed as at 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Not applicable	Ransome Road	230	0	230	Site is allocated as LAA1139 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Land north of Milton Ham	224	0	224	Site is allocated as LAA1140 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
Not applicable	Land to west of Northampton South SUE	361	0	361	Site is allocated as LAA1144 in policy HO1 of Northampton Part 2 Plan
N18	Land East of Wootton Fields	2,100	0	2,100	Proposed allocation in this Plan. Some development on this site may extend beyond the plan period.
N19	Land West of A43	2,000	0	2,000	Proposed allocation in this Plan. Some development on this site may extend beyond the plan period

Figure 19 – Housing Supply in Allocations - Daventry (Ordered by: SUEs in WNJCS, allocations in Part 2 Plan, new allocations)

<b>Policy Reference</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>Units Completed as at 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Not applicable May need to be allocated if permission not granted before submission.	Daventry North East	3,400	0	2,920	Site is allocated as D2 in the WNJCS. An outline application has been submitted for the whole site. It is not yet determined. Part of this site is expected to be built after the plan period. It is expected that the application will be approved on this site before the plan adopted therefore, there is no need to re-allocate. However, this area may need to be included as an allocation if the permission is not issued prior to submission.



<b>Policy Reference</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>Units Completed as at 1/4/2023</b>	<b>Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Not applicable	Daventry South West	1,240	8	1,232	Site is allocated as HO1 in the S and CLP. Part of site has Full permission for 140 dwellings and is under construction. Remaining part has outline permission for 1,100 dwellings. A reserved matters application has been approved for part, and a reserved matters application has been submitted for a further part.
D3	Daventry Micklewell Park Extension	310	0	310	Site is allocated as HO2 in the S and CLP.
D4	Daventry – Land at Middlemore	120	0	120	Site is allocated as HO4 in the S and CLP
D5	Daventry, land to North and West of Town Centre	216	0	216	Site is allocated as EC3 in the S and CLP. It continues to provide a suitable opportunity for mixed-use development and is therefore re-allocated in this Plan.
D6	Former Council offices, Lodge Road	-	0	-	The Council offices are now surplus to the Council's requirements and therefore available for an alternative use or redevelopment. Could be developed for a range of uses including housing. No capacity identified as uncertainty about future use.

Figure 20 – Housing Supply in Allocations - Brackley

Policy Reference	Name	Total Capacity	Units Completed as at 1/4/2023	Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period	Notes
Not applicable	Brackley East Sustainable Urban Extension	350	0	350	Site is allocated as B2 in the WNJCS. Planning permission has been granted for housing
Not applicable	Brackley North Sustainable Urban Extension	964	949	15	Site is allocated as B3 in the WNJCS. Site is substantially complete, expected to complete in 23/24.

Figure 21 – Housing Supply in Allocations - Towcester

Policy Reference	Name	Total Capacity	Units Completed as at 1/4/2023	Remaining Capacity expected to be built in the Plan Period	Notes
Not applicable	Towcester South sustainable Urban extension	<b>3,171</b> [Towcester Vale (2,750) + Wood Burcote (210) + Park Hall Farm (211)]	<b>1,132</b> [Towcester Vale (924) + Wood Burcote (208) + Park Hall Farm (0)]	<b>2,089</b> [Towcester Vale (1,826) + Wood Burcote (2) + Park Hall Farm (211)]	Site is allocated as T3 in the WNJCS. All of site has outline permission, parts have Reserved Matters / Full. Various phases/parcels are currently under construction.

## **10.4 Affordable Housing**

- 10.4.1 Policy HO2 will set out the percentage requirements and the site size threshold for on-site provision of affordable housing based on the findings of the HENAU.
- 10.4.2 The final percentage targets will be set in the submission version (Regulation 19) of this Plan and will be subject to viability testing and will need to be considered alongside the requirement for First Homes. The HENAU identifies that there is a need for 1,800 affordable dwellings to rent per annum in West Northamptonshire. This equates to around 83% of all need although there is some overlap between the two calculations.
- 10.4.3 In terms of the site size threshold, in the absence of evidence to support a lower threshold, the national threshold of 10 dwellings will be applied.
- 10.4.4 The subdivision of sites or the development of sites at artificially low densities to avoid the provision of affordable housing by circumventing the size thresholds will not be permitted. Where the Council considers that a site has been artificially subdivided in order to avoid the application of the affordable housing policies, the entire area, assumed to be developed at a suitable density, will be used to assess the required provision of affordable housing.
- 10.4.5 Whilst there is a preference for on-site provision it is recognised that on smaller sites this may not be practical. In these cases, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision should ensure that at least an equivalent number of affordable homes can be built off-site.
- 10.4.6 The HENAU did not identify a net need for affordable home ownership (AHO) products, however, in line with national policy it recommends that at least 10% of all new homes on sites of 10 or more dwellings should be AHO, unless the exemptions stated in the NPPF apply. Shared ownership is generally the most affordable form of AHO. Planning policy guidance states that First Homes can form all or part of the 10% AHO.

## **10.5 First Homes**

- 10.5.1 The First Homes scheme was introduced by the Government in May 2021 as an affordable housing product and is designed to provide new build homes for first-time buyers. In line with national policy the expectation is that on developments of 10 or more dwellings or 0.5ha or more, 25% of affordable homes delivered through planning obligations will be First Homes. This requirement is likely to impact on the viability of providing on-site affordable homes to rent, which will be reflected in the final percentage targets.

## **10.6 Community led housing**

- 10.6.1 The Council will support community led housing groups to deliver affordable housing and will work with town and parish councils and community groups to deliver rural affordable schemes and community led homes for residents. Local communities may take the opportunity to identify and plan for local housing needs through neighbourhood planning or other community planning documents. In all cases, the local housing need will be evidenced by an up-to-date parish level housing needs survey (HNS) undertaken by the Council or a housing needs assessment (HNA) prepared by an applicant using an approach agreed with the Council. HNSs and HNAs are considered to be up-to-date for three years.

### **HO2 – PSID Affordable Housing**

- A. Affordable housing will be provided as a proportion of the total number of dwellings to be delivered on individual sites of 10 or more dwellings (net gain). (In the submission version of this Plan, the requirements in this policy will be expressed as a %age and will be informed by the HENAU and viability evidence).
- B. Where the Council considers that:
- i. a site has been artificially subdivided in order to avoid the application of this policy, or
  - ii. a scheme is proposed at an artificially low density the entire area assumed to be developed at a suitable density will be used to assess the required provision of affordable housing.
- C. Levels of affordable housing below the requirements identified will only be acceptable where evidence of viability or other constraints is clearly presented to and agreed by the Council. Developments over 500 units will be expected to include an upward only review clause.
- D. A minimum of 10% of the total number of dwellings on sites of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to be a form of Affordable Home Ownership.
- E. A minimum of 25% of affordable dwellings secured through planning obligations should be First Homes, to which a local connection test will apply.
- F. The affordable dwellings will be provided on-site unless off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution can be robustly justified, and the agreed approach must contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities. 25% of these contributions should be used to secure First Homes.

- G. The Council will support community led affordable housing schemes where they are supported by a local housing needs survey or assessment and have been subject to extensive and meaningful community consultation and engagement prior to the submission of a planning application. This includes sites brought forward through neighbourhood development plans.
- H. All developments incorporating affordable dwellings should ensure that:
  - i. The affordable dwellings are designed to be indistinguishable from market dwellings and should be distributed throughout the site in small groups or clusters; and
  - ii. The affordable dwellings are located to maximise opportunities for future residents to access services and facilities by walking, cycling or public transport; and
  - iii. The affordable dwellings will be owned by a registered provider; and
  - iv. Arrangements will be in place for the management and occupation of the affordable dwellings to ensure that they will be available and affordable in perpetuity for people in local housing need.
- I. With the exception of affordable home ownership all affordable housing will be allocated in accordance with the West Northamptonshire Council Allocations Scheme.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 12

## **10.7 Build to Rent**

- 10.7.1 Build to Rent is a distinct asset class within the private rented sector that has been defined in the NPPF glossary, in order to simplify its treatment within the planning system.
- 10.7.2 Build to Rent typically comprises developments of multiple units (often above 100 units), that are institutionally owned and managed, and subject to longer tenancies designed to offer greater security and stability. Moreover, they can contribute to the delivery of affordable housing in the form of Affordable Private Rent. Because of this, and on account of the non-sale covenants Build to Rent schemes usually carry, the stipulation for 10% of new build dwellings to be affordable housing does not apply to Build to Rent development.
- 10.7.3 The HENAU identifies that the Council should consider a means of supporting Build to Rent in Northampton; however, it is acknowledged that other locations may be proposed over the lifetime of the Plan period.

- 10.7.4 In granting planning permission for Build to Rent the Council will consider the use of planning obligations to ensure the appropriate continued management of both affordable and private rent units; along with a mechanism to recoup ('clawback') the value of the affordable housing provision that is withdrawn if affordable private rent dwellings are converted to another tenure.

### **Policy H03 - Build to Rent**

- A. Schemes for Build to Rent will be supported in:
- i. Northampton; and
  - ii. Other locations where the applicant demonstrates that this type of dwelling would meet an identified need.
- B. Where Build to Rent dwellings are supported, applicants will need to demonstrate that:
- i. All the units are self-contained and let separately; and
  - ii. At least 20% of the dwellings are for affordable private rent; and
  - iii. Affordable private rental dwellings will be broadly representative of the mix and type of the overall development; and
  - iv. Affordable private rent is provided with a minimum 20% discount of local market rents (inclusive of service charges); and
  - v. The discount on the affordable private rent dwelling will apply in perpetuity; and
  - vi. Units are to be in a single ownership and management control; and
  - vii. There is to be an agreed professional and on-site management scheme, run by a member of an accredited ombudsman scheme and a recognised professional body; and
  - viii. The dwellings are to be used as build to rent properties for at least 15 years.
- C. In granting planning permission for build to rent the Local Planning Authority will impose a planning condition requiring scheme operators to offer tenancies of 3 or more years to all tenants in the development, who are eligible to live in the country for that period (under the right to rent).

**WNLP objectives: 12**

## **10.8 Rural Exception Sites**

- 10.8.1 Affordability is a key issue in West Northamptonshire’s rural areas where average house prices are significantly higher than in the urban areas. For this reason, policy HO4 seeks to support the provision of affordable housing through rural exception sites, which can comprise any form of affordable housing, providing it is supported by appropriate evidence of local need, in other words, an up-to-date HNS or HNA. In most cases HNSs or HNAs are undertaken at an individual settlement level, however, where it can be demonstrated that there is a functional relationship between a small number of settlements, the combined need can be assessed.
- 10.8.2 A rural settlement hierarchy is being devised based on a variety of factors including the availability of services and facilities. This will determine the settlements where rural exception sites will be considered acceptable. This will be included in the Submission Version (Regulation 19) of this Plan. For a site to be considered “adjoining”, its boundary must have a clear and physical connection to the defined settlement confines and appear as a natural extension to the confines.
- 10.8.3 Rural exception sites are expected to be small scale and usually developed solely for affordable housing. However, they can be mixed tenure where an element of market housing is necessary to deliver the identified need for affordable housing. In such cases, the scale of market housing should be the minimum required to secure the delivery of the affordable housing. The market housing proposed should be informed by the HNS or HNA so that it also meets local needs, such as accommodation for older people who wish to remain in their local community, or live/work units for activities which are particularly suited to a rural area. Where affordable housing is provided under the provisions of policy HO4 this must remain affordable in perpetuity.
- 10.8.4 Community led schemes, as defined in Annex 2 to the NPPF, will also be supported.
- 10.8.5 Policy HO4 will, in the submission version of this Plan, identify which villages in the Settlement Hierarchy it applies to. The Settlement Hierarchy is still being developed (see Making Great Places: Rural Chapter).

### **Policy HO4 - PSID Exception Sites**

- A. The Council will support schemes for the provision of affordable housing on rural exception sites. Community led schemes and First Homes exception sites at xxx

villages (to be determined in the Regulation 19 version of this Plan) that are of a suitable scale, design and tenure.

- B. In the case of rural exception sites the following criteria must be met:
  - i. The proposed quantum and mix of affordable and market housing (if any) is clearly justified by evidence of need through an up-to-date local housing needs survey or assessment (the number of dwellings should not exceed this need); and
  - ii. The quantum of market housing (if any) is the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable; and
  - iii. A local connection test will apply.
- C. In the case of First Homes exception schemes the following criteria must be met:
  - i. The quantum of market housing (if any) is the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable; and
  - ii. A local connection test will apply; and
  - iii. The scheme should demonstrate that products have regard to local income and local house prices.
- D. In all cases the following criteria must be met:
  - i. The site immediately adjoins the confines of a rural settlement; and
  - ii. Arrangements for the management and occupation of the affordable dwellings must ensure that they will be available and affordable in perpetuity for people in local housing need.
- E. With the exception of shared ownership and affordable home ownership products all affordable housing will be allocated in accordance with the West Northamptonshire Council Housing Allocation Scheme.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 12

## **10.9 Sites Meeting a Local Need**

- 10.9.1 In addition to traditional rural exception sites where the focus is on providing affordable housing, there may be scope for additional new dwellings in prescribed circumstances in the more sustainable settlements where the proposal would meet a demonstrated local housing need. This could include both market and affordable dwellings, providing the need is evidenced through a HNS or HNA. In the case of the local market dwellings, the expectation that they would be marketed for households with local connections for a minimum of 12 weeks would apply in perpetuity. In some cases a site will not be large enough to meet all of the identified need, in such cases it would be expected that the different types of need are met proportionately.



- 10.9.2 Policy HO5 will, in the submission version of this Plan, identify which villages in the Settlement Hierarchy it applies to. The Settlement Hierarchy is still being developed (see Making Great Places: Rural Chapter).

### **Policy HO5 - PSID Local Needs Sites**

- A. Development outside the confines at xxx villages (to be determined in the Regulation 19 version of this Plan) will be supported where the development would clearly meet a local housing need identified through an up-to-date housing needs survey or housing needs assessment.
- B. In all cases all of the following criteria must be met:
- i. The site immediately adjoins the confines of a rural settlement; and
  - ii. The proposed housing mix, type and tenure precisely meets the needs identified in the housing needs survey or housing needs assessment; and
  - iii. In cases where only part of the need is met, it would be expected that the different types of need are met proportionately; and
  - iv. Arrangements for the management and occupation of the affordable homes must ensure that they will be available and affordable in perpetuity for people in local housing need; and
  - v. Arrangements are in place for the continuous marketing of the local market units for qualifying households for a minimum of 12 weeks - such arrangements should only provide for release to the open market if no purchasers are found in that period.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 12

## **10.10 Mixed communities**

- 10.10.1 In order to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities it is important that new housing caters for West Northamptonshire's needs based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different communities. Policy HO6 is informed by the HENAU which provides a detailed understanding of housing need based on the local housing needs for the West Northamptonshire area.
- 10.10.2 The HENAU provides the basis for developers, housing providers, the Council and neighbourhood planning groups to identify the mix of housing that will best meet identified housing needs and demands and help to create a more balanced housing market.

## **10.11 Housing mix**

- 10.11.1 The HENAU provides the basis for developers, housing providers, the Council and neighbourhood planning groups to identify the mix of housing that will best meet identified housing needs and demands and help to create a more balanced housing market.
- 10.11.2 Mixes in rural areas outside the main settlements will be expected to meet the mix unless there is a more up-to-date parish HNS or HNA. Due to the practical difficulties of securing this mix on smaller sites, the recommended mix does not apply to sites of less than 10 dwellings.
- 10.11.3 In individual sites, regard will be had to the nature of the site, character of the area and up-to-date evidence of need, as well as existing mix and turnover of properties locally. The Council will update the HENA every five years to ensure it remains up-to-date, the most up-to-date version would need to be taken into account to establish a suitable mix for development proposals.

## **10.12 Specialist housing**

- 10.12.1 In order to meet the housing needs of the growing older population, which ranges from people approaching retirement to the very frail elderly, a variety of dwellings will need to be considered. This includes mainstream housing that is adapted or built to the optional accessibility standards, as well as specialist housing for older people, such as age restricted market housing (generally 55+ years), supported housing, housing with care and residential/nursing care homes. Accessible homes which would be suitable for the elderly and wheelchair users are addressed in policy HO8.
- 10.12.2 The HENA makes recommendations for the number of additional older person's dwellings, for West Northamptonshire as a whole (4165 market supported housing; 1976 with care of which 34% affordable; and 3344 care beds spaces). It provides parameters for specialist housing need and that the Council's broader strategy for older person's housing and care should ultimately inform the level of provision.
- 10.12.3 Specialist housing should form part of mixed communities and not be developed in isolation. Proximity to services and facilities is particularly important to provide opportunities for active lifestyles and safe and accessible spaces to enable socialising.
- 10.12.4 The Council will also work with partners to provide suitable accommodation for other groups including children living in care or leaving care, housing that supports people with learning and physical disabilities and people escaping domestic abuse.

## **Policy HO6 - Mixed Communities Dwelling**

### **Dwelling mix**

- A. New residential development will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures to meet the identified needs of local communities and to contribute towards the creation of sustainable mixed and inclusive communities. This includes category for the needs of younger people, care leavers, families with children, older people, people wishing to build their own homes and people with disabilities and special needs.
- B. Developments of 10 or more dwellings should demonstrate how the mix of market and affordable dwellings will reflect the Council's most recent evidence of housing need in a Housing and Economic Needs Assessment.
- C. Variations within the ranges will be acceptable and alternative dwelling size mixes will be supported where this is evidenced by a more up-to-date local level housing needs survey or assessment, other local needs data, provision in the local area, or where it is necessary to respond to individual site characteristics.

### **Specialist housing**

- D. New residential development of 500 or more dwellings will be expected to make provision for a range of specialist housing types.
- E. The Council supports schemes for specialist accommodation for older people including age restricted general market housing; retirement living or sheltered housing; extra care housing or housing with care; and/or residential care homes and nursing homes.
- F. The Council supports schemes for a range of specialist housing to meet the needs of those with disabilities and special needs.
- G. In all cases the following criteria must be met:
  - i. The type of specialised accommodation meets an identified need and contributes to maintaining the balance of housing stock in the locality; and
  - ii. The proposal provides convenient access to existing or planned services and facilities which may be an integral part of the scheme or wider development; and
  - iii. The accommodation is suitable for the intended residents in relation to the quality and type of facilities and the provision of support and/or care; and
  - iv. The proposal should not result in an excessive concentration of such housing.

**WNLP objectives:** 7, 8, 10, 12

## **10.13 Technical Housing Standards – Accessibility, Space and Water Efficiency**

### **Housing Standards: Accessibility**

- 10.13.1 Following the Housing Standards Review, the Government introduced optional accessibility standards, with criteria for age friendly, accessible and adaptable housing. Local planning authorities can adopt levels of accessibility, above the current minimum Building Regulations standards, to meet local needs, according to local circumstances and subject to viability testing.
- 10.13.2 As identified in the HENAU, the level of identified need for wheelchair user accommodation equates to around 4% all new housing over the Plan period. In reality not all sites will be able to meet accessibility requirements and therefore a slightly higher requirement of 5% is justified, and a higher percentage is appropriate for affordable homes as households in this sector are more likely to have some form of disability.

### **Housing Standards: Space**

- 10.13.3 It is important that dwellings are fit for purpose, with enough space for occupants to maintain their wellbeing through being able to socialise, have privacy, store belongings, pursue leisure activities, circulate, relax and study, prepare food, play, and deal with waste and recycling. The need for space to work has increased following the pandemic as an increased number of people work from home for at least some of their working time.
- 10.13.4 Ensuring sufficient space within the home is recognised as an important factor in helping to maintain people’s wellbeing with associated benefits of improved physical and mental health. In particular, dwellings designed for people with mobility needs arising from frailty, disability or ageing will tend to require more generous space for circulation.
- 10.13.5 The Government has introduced a nationally described space standard for new housing which offers a consistent set of requirements with regard to the internal area of new dwellings and storage. These standards will be applied to all new development across the area.

## **Housing Standards - Water Efficiency**

- 10.13.6 As part of the housing standards review the Government introduced optional standards for water. The national maximum of 125 litres per person per day will continue to apply nationally, applied through the Building Regulations. However, in cases where there is an appropriate policy in a local plan this can be reduced to 110 litres per day. This would be imposed via a condition on planning permissions and applied through Building Regulations.
- 10.13.7 The Environment Agency 'Water Stressed Areas Final Classification' (2021) is a primary source of evidence which supports a tighter water efficiency standard. It identifies areas of serious water stress where household demand for water is (or likely to be) a high proportion of the current effective rainfall available to meet that demand. The Environment Agency advises the Secretary of State that the areas classified as 'Serious' in the final classification table should be designated as 'Areas of serious water stress'.
- 10.13.8 The Anglian Water region, which covers almost all of the West Northamptonshire area, is identified as an area of serious water stress. In order to ensure future demands on the water supply are sustainably managed the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day will be required for all new homes.

### **Policy H07 - Standards for Accessibility, Space and Water Efficiency in New Homes**

- A. To meet the needs of residents and to deliver homes which are capable of meeting people's changing circumstances over their lifetime the following standards will need to be met:
- i. a. An appropriate proportion of homes, based on the latest available evidence, must be designed to meet the requirements of Building Regulations Part M4(2) (Accessible and adaptable dwellings) or its successor standard.
  - iv. 10% of homes, where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating occupants, are to be constructed to Building Regulations Part M4(3) (2) (b) or their successor and 5% of all new market dwellings are to be built to Building Regulations M4(3) (2) (a). These standards will be implemented proportionately across the housing mix.
- B. Where it can be robustly evidenced that site specific factors such as vulnerability to flooding, site topography and other circumstances make a site unsuitable for M4(2) and M4(3) the requirements for part M will not be applied.
- i. The internal floor area and storage provision of all new build homes must meet the National Space Standards as a minimum.
  - ii. All new homes shall include water efficiency measures to comply with a limit of 110 litres per person per day, as set out in Building Regulations Part G2.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 5, 7, 12

## **10.14 Self and Custom Home Building**

- 10.14.1 Self and custom build housing is housing built by individuals or groups for their own use, either by building the dwelling on their own or by working with builders. The Government is promoting this type of homebuilding, and requires local authority assistance by placing a duty on local authorities to maintain a register of interest through the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, and subsequently a duty to grant sufficient planning permissions for self-build and custom housebuilding to meet this demand. The Council maintains such a register and further information can be found on its website.
- 10.14.2 National planning policy also requires the housing needs of those who wish to commission or build their own homes to be reflected in planning policies. In the base year (31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 53 applicants were entered on to the register, giving an indication of the level of demand for which the Council needs to ensure provision. Whilst the market has made provision for some self-build and custom build homes, it is important that the supply continues to come forward through various mechanisms and in a variety of locations. Therefore, in order to add to the supply the Council requires that 5% of plots on development sites of more than 100 dwellings be provided as serviced plots for self-build and custom build dwellings.
- 10.14.3 Applications for self-build housing will often be for individual plots. However, self-build can also come forward as part of a larger residential scheme. Applications on multi-lot sites must be accompanied by a design code to clearly set out what form of development is proposed to be pre-approved. This will ensure that development of individual plots within a multi-lot scheme is designed in such a way that they would not stifle development of the neighbouring plot, ensuring that a consistent development is delivered that is well integrated into the surrounding area, but allowing for design variation, creativity, innovation and originality.

### **Policy H08 - Self-Build and Custom Build Homes**

- A. On sites of more than 100 dwellings, 5% of the total number of plots should be provided as serviced plots for self and custom build to contribute towards meeting the evidenced demand for self-build and custom build housing in the area. Serviced plots of land for self-build and custom build housing will also be supported on other allocated sites or permitted windfall sites where, overall, this would not result in an over-provision of this type of housebuilding when compared to the Council's supply/demand balance.
- B. Plots which remain vacant after 12 months following the installation of roads and utilities, sufficient to make them serviced plots, can revert to other forms of

housing provision if marketing evidence, following implementation of a marketing strategy agreed by the Council, demonstrates that there have been no expressions of interest for the plots.

- C. Outline applications for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding schemes of more than one dwelling must be accompanied by a design code. The design code must address all of the following issues:
- Plot particulars (plot boundary and plot size)
  - Land use and type of home
  - Plot ratio percentage and minimum coverage requirements
  - Ridge height ranges (expressed in metres)
  - Building Lines
  - Side/rear elevations
  - Bin storage locations
  - Landscaping – hard and soft
  - Public boundary treatment

**WNLP objectives:** 12, 13

### **10.15 Houses in Multiple Occupation**

- 10.15.1 HMOs primarily provide accommodation for people who are seeking short to medium term lettings including students, young professionals seeking work opportunities but not necessarily a commitment to a mortgage, deprived social groups who are unable to afford their own homes and international migrants.
- 10.15.2 Mapping showing the distribution of HMOs in West Northamptonshire (ONS, Census 2011), identified particular concentrations in parts of Northampton. There are a range of contributory factors that impact on this spatial emergence, including Northampton being a university town, and having employment opportunities tied to logistics/distribution centres and industrial estates. Furthermore, the relocation of the University of Northampton to its Waterside campus has resulted in a shifting geographical demand for HMOs.
- 10.15.3 To effectively manage the distribution of HMOs, a study of Housing in Multiple Occupation (Loughborough University, November 2018) confirmed that to regulate the possible formation of new over-concentrations, a saturation threshold of 10% of dwellings within a 50-metre radius should be adopted across Northampton. An updated evidence base is being commissioned which will inform policies in the submission version (Regulation

19) of the Plan, until then the policy from the Northampton Part 2 Local Plan is included at HO9.

- 10.15.4 Further guidance on HMOs including space standards and the provision of adequate facilities and amenities is provided in the 'Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document' adopted in November 2019.
- 10.15.5 HMOs contribute towards the area's housing supply and perform a vital role within the community. However, evidence shows that over-concentrations of HMOs can lead to detrimental social, economic, cultural and environmental conditions, leading to adverse impacts on local neighbourhood characteristics. These include increased noise levels, parking issues and litter, all of which can have a negative impact on people's health and wellbeing. There are also concerns associated with the impact on the community mix, following changes of use from dwellinghouses to HMOs, whereby there is a perception that there are fewer families living permanently within the streets.

### **Policy HO9 PSID - Houses in Multiple Occupation**

- A. Within Northampton, all planning applications for change of use from dwellinghouses to a small house in multiple occupation (Class C4) or a large house in multiple occupation (sui generis) will be supported provided that less than 10% of the dwellings within a 50m radius of the application site are houses in multiple occupation.
- B. All proposals for change of use from dwellinghouses to a small house in multiple occupation (Class C4) or a large house in multiple occupation (sui generis), applicants, throughout West Northamptonshire, will need to demonstrate:
  - i. Compliance with the Council's space standards for houses in multiple occupation; and
  - ii. Appropriate provision is made for car parking and secure cycle storage; and
  - iii. Sufficient secure refuse storage can be made within the curtilage of the site; and
  - iv. Proposals will not result in an increase in flood risk and risks arising from surface water drainage; and
  - v. Future occupants of any ground floor bedrooms are protected from flood risk.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 11, 12



## **10.16 Student Accommodation**

- 10.16.1 West Northamptonshire, is host to a range of higher and further education establishments, including The University of Northampton, a young university that has evolved from its educational institution origins, since the beginning of the 20th century.
- 10.16.2 There are around 2,500 bed spaces across the University Estate. These are split between three sites: the Waterside Campus (962 bed spaces), St. Johns Halls & House (485 bed spaces) and the Scholars Green (900 bed spaces). A private scheme that will deliver 201 units is currently under construction in the town centre (The Drapery) on the site of the former Debenhams store.
- 10.16.3 Given the very limited supply of purpose-built student accommodation in Northampton either associated with the University or delivered by private sector developers, the University is very reliant, firstly, on the private rented sector to provide accommodation for students and, second, many being able to live with their parents.
- 10.16.4 The University plans to close the Scholars Green halls of residence with a loss of 900 bed spaces; these may be replaced with 282 bedspaces at the Waterside Campus. This may create additional demand for private rented sector accommodation in Northampton. The impact of this does not justify a change to the number of homes the Council should seek to deliver over the Plan period or active intervention in the market to deliver additional purpose- built student accommodation.
- 10.16.5 Despite the above, it is acknowledged that proposals for purpose-built accommodation may be forthcoming. Whilst such accommodation can contribute to the development of balanced and mixed communities, careful consideration should be given to the scale and impact of such the developments on local residential amenity, whilst ensuring students are able to live in a convenient location, and in a well-managed development subject to restrictions on car usage to help maintain the character of residential areas.

### **Proposed Policy HO10 - Student Accommodation**

- A. Proposals for new student accommodation will be supported if they meet identified needs of an existing educational institution within the town within which they are located.

- B. Schemes should demonstrate that they have entered into a formal agreement with an existing educational establishment to confirm that the proposed accommodation is suitable in type, layout, affordability and maintenance regime for the relevant institution. The Council will seek appropriate controls to ensure that, within academic terms, the approved schemes are occupied solely as student accommodation for an identified institution.
- C. Applications will be supported subject to:
- i. There being a proven need for student accommodation to serve the institution; and
  - ii. The development not resulting in the loss of existing market housing and affordable housing; and
  - iii. It being in an appropriate location for the institution served; and
  - iv. The location being well served by sustainable transport modes; and
  - v. Having appropriate management arrangements in place to discourage students from keeping cars; and
  - vi. Rooms and facilities being of an appropriate size for living and studying; and
  - vii. Minimising any potential for antisocial behaviour and, if appropriate, being warden- controlled.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 12

## **10.17 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

- 10.17.1 Local Plans must adhere to the NPPF (December 2023), Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (2015) and the Equalities Act (2010).
- 10.17.2 The PPTS states that local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, covering, where possible, a fifteen-year timeframe.
- 10.17.3 Of relevance to this Plan, local planning authorities should, within their local plans:
- Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets;
  - Identify a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and where possible for years eleven to fifteen;
  - Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific site and location of the sites and the surrounding population's size and density;
  - Protect local amenity and environment

- 10.17.4 As part of the evidence base for the local plan West Northamptonshire Council had a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA) prepared, to identify current and future need between 2022-2037.
- 10.17.5 The GTANA methodology considers two methods for determining Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need. Firstly, a need figure based on ethnic identity; and secondly, a figure based on the PPTS (2015) definition. Whilst this results in different levels of need, using this approach futureproofs the Accommodation Needs Assessment and ensures that the definitions can be applied in a fair and objective manner. In summary, there is a need over the period 2022-2037 for 53 pitches (ethnic definition), or 38 pitches (PPTS definition).
- 10.17.6 In terms of the need for Travelling Showpeople plots, the issue of definition does not arise and the GTANA identifies the need over the period 2022-2037 to be 11 plots.
- 10.17.7 For the purposes of this Local Plan, WNC considers that it is appropriate to firstly identify deliverable sites in accordance with the PPTS definition. The criteria-based element of Policy will then enable more detailed consideration to facilitating the demand identified in the ethnic definition, as well as the assessment of any planning applications that might materialise over the plan period from households not considered by the GTANA. To maintain existing provision, existing permanent sites with planning permission for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be protected from alternative forms of development.
- 10.17.8 The process of identifying specific sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople has been incorporated within the Call for Sites that is happening in conjunction with this Regulation 18 consultation, thus enabling specific sites, as required by the PPTS (2015), to be identified in the Regulation 19 local plan.
- 10.17.9 In the interests of sustainability, and in line with the other housing policies, there is a presumption that demand for accommodation will be within the settlement confines or identified housing allocations. The availability (or lack) of alternative accommodation for applicants will be a relevant matter in the consideration of any applications for pitches and plots outside of settlement confines or identified housing allocations.
- 10.17.10 In all cases, where new or extensions to existing sites are proposed, early engagement with the Council is strongly recommended. Where proposals are being considered that may be contrary to this policy approach, WNC will assist in an assessment of alternative options that may exist in more sustainable locations.

## **Proposed Policy HO11 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

- A. Provision will be made for the accommodation of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to meet the needs identified in the most recent Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople needs assessment.
- B. Applications for planning permission must meet the following criteria:
  - i. The site has safe and convenient vehicular access from the public highway, and provides adequate space for parking, turning and servicing on-site; and
  - ii. The site is reasonably accessible to a range of services set out in national policy, i.e. shops, public transport, primary health care and schools; and
  - iii. The site will provide an acceptable standard of amenity for the proposed residents. Sites which are exposed to high levels of flood risk and noise and air pollution are not acceptable; and
  - iv. The site will be capable of providing adequate on-site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage disposal, waste disposal, composting and recycling facilities; and
  - v. The scale and location of the site will not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape, local infrastructure and existing communities; and
  - vi. In the case of sites for Travelling Showpeople there will be sufficient space for the storage and maintenance of equipment and the parking and manoeuvring of all vehicles associated with the occupiers. Additional screening may be required having regard to the nature of the equipment that is stored.
- C. The Council will seek to protect existing permanent sites with planning permission for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, from alternative forms of development, unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer required to meet identified need.
- D. Where applications relate to sites outside of settlement confines, a lack of alternative accommodation for the applicants should be demonstrated in an accompanying statement, unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.
- E. New sites or extensions to existing sites should be accompanied by a proportionate management plan, to ensure effective management of the site in line with the above policy requirements.

**WNLP objectives:** 7, 8, 10, 12

## **10.18 Rural Workers Accommodation**

- 10.18.1 To promote sustainable development within rural areas the NPPF requires local authorities to resist new isolated homes within the countryside. However, the NPPF does identify the special circumstances that may make it appropriate for an isolated home and this includes the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work within the countryside.
- 10.18.2 This Plan has a positive approach to supporting the rural economy and supports proposals which sustain and enhance the rural economy by creating or safeguarding jobs and businesses where they are of an appropriate scale for their location and respect the environmental quality and character of the rural area.
- 10.18.3 The rural nature of the area both in terms of its settlements and economy means that rural workers accommodation is an important issue which requires guidance. Policy HO12 seeks to ensure that there is adequate provision of rural worker accommodation within the area provided certain tests are met. Any such proposals will be required to demonstrate the need, through the provision of independent evidence that the dwelling is essential and is justified through the nature and demand of the work that requires workers to be located at or near to their place of work. Other tests that will need to be met relate to the function, financial viability and design of the proposal to ensure its necessity and that it does not adversely impact the rural character of the surrounding area.
- 10.18.4 As part of this process the applicant will have to demonstrate financial sustainability through the provision of information such as certified accounts over a minimum one-year period, or a suitable business plan. It will also be expected that such rural accommodation will be subject to a restrictive occupancy condition and permitted development rights may also be removed.
- 10.18.5 In some circumstances, where it may be difficult to demonstrate long term financial sustainability, such as for a new rural enterprise, it may be appropriate to grant a temporary planning permission for the proposed associated rural workers accommodation, for example to allow for temporary accommodation to assist with establishing the viability of the business. This will normally be for a period of three years, after which period the enterprise would be regarded as well-established.

## **Policy HO12 - Rural Worker's Accommodation**

- A. The provision of accommodation for a Rural Worker will be acceptable when it is demonstrated that there is an essential need for the dwelling to ensure the function of the rural business and where all of the following criteria can be satisfied;
- i. The functional need cannot be accommodated within an existing settlement, an existing dwelling or provided through the re use or conversion of existing buildings; and
  - ii. The proposal is of a scale commensurate with the function and need; and
  - iii. The proposal relates to a demonstrably financially viable well-established activity; and
  - iv. The proposal is appropriately sited to meet the functional need, with
  - v. Appropriate access and servicing; and
  - vi. The proposal is well related to existing rural buildings and other dwellings or positively integrates with the surrounding countryside and appropriately reflects the distinctive rural character.
- B. Temporary accommodation for new rural enterprises will be acceptable where it is demonstrated that there would be an essential need to ensure the function of the rural business, so as to enable the long term financial sustainability of the enterprise to be assessed when well established, subject to meeting criteria A i, ii, iv and v.

**WNLP objectives:** 3, 10, 12, 16

### **10.19 Residential Canal Moorings**

- 10.19.1 Both the Grand Union Canal and a short stretch of the Oxford Canal pass through West Northamptonshire. Residential boats and their dwellers on both permanent and temporary visitor moorings can contribute to diversity of housing in West Northamptonshire.
- 10.19.2 Policy HO13 sets out the criteria against which new residential canal moorings will be assessed. The Council will resist proposals for permanent residential moorings where they would result in the loss of visitor/short term moorings or boatyard services.
- 10.19.3 Where residential moorings are demonstrated to be needed, they will need to be situated in mooring basins, marinas or boatyards within or adjacent to

defined settlement confines and be proportionate to the size of the settlement.

### **HO13 - Residential Canal Moorings**

The Council will support proposals for permanent residential moorings provided that:

- i. The mooring(s) is in a mooring basin, marina or boatyard that is within or adjacent to a defined settlement confines boundary. The scale of the proposal should be proportionate to the size and form of the settlement it adjoins; and
- ii. An adequate and appropriate range of services and ancillary facilities to meet the needs of the occupiers of the residential moorings exists or can be provided; and
- iii. It would not result in the loss of moorings available to visitors/short stay use; and
- iv. It would not impede the use of or navigation of the waterway; and
- v. It would not have an adverse impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area and the amenities of neighbouring occupiers; and
- vi. It would not have an adverse impact upon protected species, priority habitats and designated wildlife sites; and
- vii. It has adequate car parking and makes provision for safe access for service and emergency vehicles and pedestrians; and
- viii. It makes adequate provision for recycling and the disposal of waste; and
- ix. It provides for the installation of pump-out facilities (where on mains sewer) unless there are adequate facilities in the vicinity.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12

# Chapter 11: Economic Growth

## 11.1 Introduction and overview

11.1.1 West Northamptonshire has and continues to benefit from its strategic location at the centre and heart of England. It is located at the crossroads of the M1 north - south route and the A14 / M6 east – west route, with the A5, A43 and M40 also providing strategic connections. Its excellent road and rail connections to London, Birmingham and the rest of the country, as well as to mainland Europe via the Haven ports mean that easy access to commercial centres nationally and abroad are achievable. Connections by train to both London and Birmingham can be achieved within the hour.

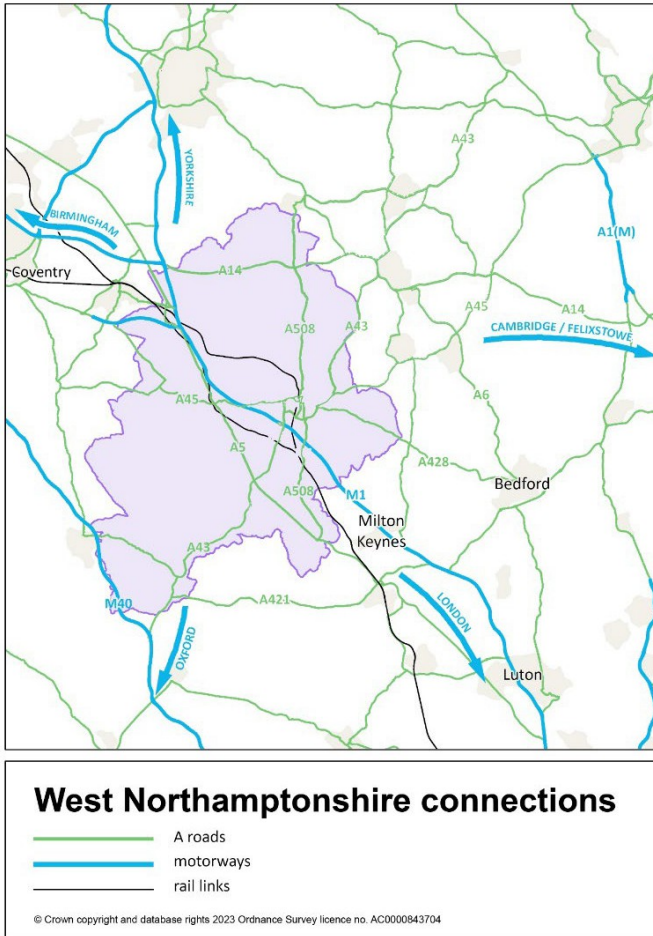


Figure 22: West Northamptonshire Connections

11.1.2 West Northamptonshire falls within the area formerly covered by the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP), which promoted



sustainable economic growth across the South East Midlands area. SEMLEP's responsibilities were transferred to WNC on 1 April 2024. However, some of the evidence base documents produced remain relevant to planning for the economic growth of West Northamptonshire.

- 11.1.3 The Government has expressed its support towards the progression of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc by backing for the Pan Regional Partnership, which unlocks access to around £2.5million government funding for the Partnership to support its priorities in delivering sustainable growth and environmental enhancements for the region.
- 11.1.4 Although the West Northamptonshire economy has experienced an expansion during this period (1997 to 2022), it has been impacted by the recession in 2008 and the Pandemic in 2020. Employment continued to grow until the onset of COVID19. Various sources of information indicate a similar trend:
  - a. According to HENAU (LSH, December 2023), there were an estimated 214,700 jobs across West Northamptonshire in 2022. Employment in West Northamptonshire grew by 49,800 from 1997 to 2022. Sectors with the largest growth in this time period were "Transport & Storage" (21,300 or 288%), "Human Health" (11,400 or 72%), and Professional, Scientific & Technical (7,800 or 95%). In 2022, the economic activity rate in West Northamptonshire was 81.6%. This is above the regional rate (75.5%) and the national rate (75.7%).

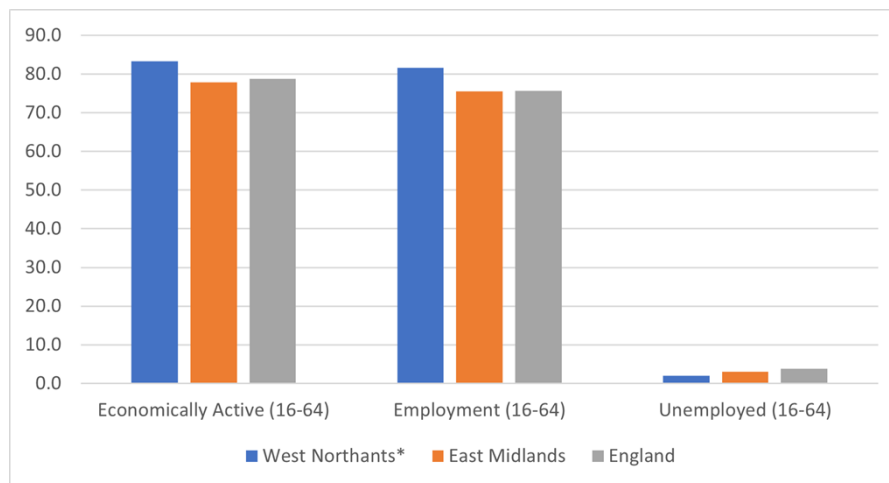


Figure 23: Economic activity rates (2022), West Northamptonshire and wider comparators

Source: [Annual Population Survey](#)<sup>1</sup>, 2022

<sup>1</sup> The asterisks signify that the unemployment estimate, and confidence interval are unreliable since the group sample size is small (3-9)

- b. The 2021 Census states that the proportion of the West Northamptonshire resident population employed in wholesale and repair of motor vehicles is 18.1%, which is higher than the national average of 15%. 7.6% are employed in transport and storage compared to 5% nationally. Manufacturing continues to decline (to 8.7% in 2021) but remains higher than the national average proportion of 7.3%. This decrease is compensated by increases in construction (up 45%), transport and storage (up 28.1%), health and social work (up 25.3%). The greatest changes can be found in elementary construction occupations (116.4% change), Chief Executives and Senior Officials (103.9% change) and research and development Managers (101.6% change).
- c. According to NOMIS, West Northamptonshire had a population of 426,700 in 2021. 217,600 are economically active, of which 209,900 are in employment and 8,300 unemployed. When compared to the East Midlands and Great Britain, this data shows that the level of unemployment across West Northamptonshire is equal to the level across the East Midlands but lower than the average across Great Britain. Employment levels are also higher than East Midlands and Great Britain (see Figure 24).

	<b>West Northamptonshire (numbers)</b>	<b>West Northamptonshire (%)</b>	<b>East Midlands (%)</b>	<b>Great Britain (%)</b>
Economically active	217,600	83.2	78.0	78.6
In employment	209,900	80.1	75.1	75.6
• Employees	180,800	69.4	66.1	66.0
• Self employed	29,100	15.8	12.4	12.0
Unemployed	8,300	2.9	3.6	3.8
Source: NOMIS 2021 <a href="https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/">Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)</a>				

Figure 24: Employment and unemployment (July 2022 – June 2023)

- 11.1.5 One example of a successful employment area is the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone (NWEZ) which continues to be a key area of regeneration and development opportunity. Since its establishment in 2012, a wide range of schemes have been completed or are in the development pipeline in the NWEZ including the redevelopment of the railway station, the WNC offices in Angel Square, the refurbishment of Vulcan Works for a creative hub and the relocation and development of the University of Northampton Waterside campus. A masterplan for the land at FOUR Waterside is underway with a development partner to progress the schemes. Over 6,000 jobs have been created since its inception, including those within the construction industry (as of December 2023).
- 11.1.6 Northampton is home to a number of strategic employment sites including Brackmills (which accommodates the Barclaycard Headquarters), Moulton Park and Swan Valley / Pineham and Panettoni Park at Junction 16. At Junction 15, the Northampton Gateway railfreight interchange development is underway and when completed, is expected to create around 7,500 jobs. These sites meet the needs of larger, national companies and employers who are looking for modern, flexible premises.
- 11.1.7 In addition to these strategic employment sites, there are a number of local employment sites which offer second hand small and medium sized premises which are cheaper and cater for local provisions and services. These also need to be supported to ensure that a wide range of employment assets are available to cater for all requirements. These can be found in Round Spinney, Kingsthorpe and the Central Area
- 11.1.8 Outside Northampton, diversification of farms and rural businesses will continue to play an important role in the economy providing opportunities for new businesses and economic clusters. Around 74% of residents live in the rural areas and they continue to bring vitality to the economy. Rural employment extends beyond traditional agricultural practice and includes small employment parks that act as incubators for companies and home-based businesses. The re- use of redundant agricultural buildings will continue to play an important part in ensuring the vitality of rural communities.
- 11.1.9 In the Daventry area, the majority of the current employment land supply is in the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT III), a strategic B8 development scheme. There are other strategic employment sites which are vital to supporting Daventry's economy. These include a number of niche sectors and small and medium sized enterprises. Of particular importance is

the growth in modern manufacturing, including advanced engineering and automotive industries. These include Drayton Fields (incorporating Apex Park and Heartlands), Royal Oak Industrial Estate, the Marches, Catesby Innovation Centre, Brixworth, Crick, Long Buckby, Weedon and Woodford.

- 11.1.10 The South area has low unemployment rates and higher level of skilled employment on offer. In addition to securing land and infrastructure for new businesses, there is a need to consider how a continuous delivery of skilled workforce can be supported, and how different sectors (such as tourism and the visitor economies and the rural economy in terms of small, rural trades and agriculture) can be encouraged to grow. The area accommodates some key organisations which contribute to the economy including Silverstone Circuit and Caswell Science & Technology Park. The Tourism Strategy (January 2024) confirmed that festivals and events are an important component of Northamptonshire's visitor economy, with 256 events annually distributed evenly across the area. The larger flagship events (such as Formula 1 and Moto GP at Silverstone) attract hundreds of thousands of people and have significant economic impact.
- 11.1.11 The visitor economy plays a significant role in the area's economy. According to the Tourism Strategy (January 2024), Northamptonshire has over 18 million visits spending well over £1 billion a year which supports over 30,000 jobs across the county and 3,000 businesses. It provides a valuable source of employment and growth which is vital for the sustainability of rural areas. Major attractors include:
- Silverstone Circuit, an internationally known landmark for motorsport;
  - Heritage assets including Sulgrave Manor, the ancestral home of George Washington; and
  - Sporting and entertainment assets such as Towcester Racecourse with its Greyhound races courses.
- 11.1.12 Silverstone Circuit is home to the British Grand Prix, and therefore plays a significant role in delivering high precision engineering, sport and performance technology to the West Northamptonshire economy. Added to this is the tourism and education sector, with hotels and spas benefitting from this facility as well as a technical college which provides apprenticeships and additional qualifications for those who wish to enter the industry. They offer Key Stage 4 GCSE's and professional and technical courses, as well as 6<sup>th</sup> form offering AS/A-Levels, BTECs/EALs and professional and technical courses.
- 11.1.13 The 2021 Census shows a swing towards home working during the pandemic rather than travelling to work. This is evident across West Northamptonshire

(although the percentage was 2.4 percentage points below the national average). <sup>[1]</sup> ONS (2022). [Is hybrid working here to stay?](#). May 2022

11.1.14 According to the HENAU 2023, recent ONS research has assessed the impacts of the pandemic on hybrid working practices in Great Britain.<sup>[1]</sup> In February 2022, the research found that around 42% of workers who worked from home during the Pandemic were planning to spend most of their working hours at home. West Northamptonshire is likely to have to continue with a step-change toward remote or hybrid working practices across many sectors. The following industry sectors are more likely to adopt homeworking permanently (5 days in a week):

- information and communication;
- professional and scientific activities;
- education; and
- arts, entertainment and recreation.

## **11.2 The Number of Jobs Required**

11.2.1 This Plan has been informed by the HENAU, which recommends that it sets an employment target of 38,451 in West Northamptonshire from 2022 to 2041. This includes supporting notable increases in manufacturing, transport & storage and professional services as well as those expected in Northampton Gateway and DIRFT.

### **a. Securing jobs growth through safeguarding existing sites**

11.2.1 The plan area already has a considerable amount of employment floorspace in the planning pipeline, including those already consented through planning applications and those allocated in the part 2 local plans. HENA 2023 concludes that there is a sufficient supply of employment land for both B and E(g) Classes to meet local growth demand as long as the current supply pipeline is safeguarded.

11.2.2 Smaller, older business units play an important role in servicing the needs of local businesses looking for affordable premises to start or sustain their operations. These units are sometimes located within residential areas rather than employment areas, and in or within close proximity to neighbourhood level centres. For example, there are cheaper premises in Bunting Road, Northampton as well as within the central area which are small in scale second hand premises as they can be reused for similar purposes. It is essential that these are also safeguarded to ensure that there is a sustained supply of smaller, affordable premises.

11.2.3 Since its inception in 2012, the NWEZ has delivered predominantly commercial growth including the expansion of Cosworth and substantial industrial developments. The NWEZ has delivered a net increase in just over 6,000 jobs including those within the construction industry. To accommodate the changes in the market, and to contribute towards revitalising and regenerating the Central Area of Northampton, other uses including hotels and residential have been promoted (including through the Northampton Local Plan Part 2). Residential use in particular will bring communities back into the town centre and this itself will generate investment, attract mixed-use developments and unlock brownfield sites. Although employment uses need to continue to be safeguarded within the NWEZ, regeneration schemes which will bring about significant community benefits and generate investment will be supported. A separate policy on the Enterprise Zone can be found in Policy N4.

### **Policy EC1 - Safeguarding Existing and Allocated Employment Sites**

- A. To help create jobs and to support a vibrant, successful and developing local economy, existing and allocated employment sites and industrial estates across West Northamptonshire will be retained for employment uses.
- B. Existing and allocated employment sites will therefore be safeguarded for employment purposes (Classes E comprising offices, light industrial and research and development, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order). Alternative uses or redevelopment which will result in the net loss of employment activity will only be supported if reliable evidence is provided demonstrating that the employment provision is:
  - i. No longer required; and
  - ii. No longer viable and/or has no realistic prospect of being re-used for employment purposes through refurbishment, adaptation, sub-division or redevelopment; or
  - iii. There is a clear conflict with adjoining uses.
- C. Evidence to be supplied includes details of active marketing information for a continuous period of at least 12 months which shows that the site has been actively marketed for employment use and that no suitable interest has been expressed. For sites within the Enterprise Zone, alternative uses will be considered positively where evidence shows that benefits of these uses significantly outweighs the loss of employment use.

**WNLP objectives:** 14, 15

#### **b. Securing new jobs**

11.2.4 The NPPF requires planning policies to create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, therefore ensuring that businesses in areas with high levels of productivity can capitalise on their performance and potential.

11.2.5 As stated in paragraph 11.2.1, the HENAU concluded that West Northamptonshire needs to provide a total jobs growth of around 38,451 from 2022 to 2041. This includes supporting notable increases in manufacturing, transport & storage and professional services. Northampton, the Waterside Enterprise Zone, Daventry, Towcester, Brackley and Silverstone, as well as the rural and visitor economies, will play a significant role in the net creation of jobs within West Northamptonshire. They will continue to develop a diverse economy with accessible employment and deliver significant increases in the number of businesses and jobs.

11.2.6 Demand for new jobs could also be met by:

- Ensuring that a wide range of high-quality economic development locations continue to be made available and attractive to the market including regeneration sites within Northampton, Daventry, Towcester, Brackley, Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone, DIRFT, Northampton Gateway, developments at J16 and Silverstone.
- Strengthening and clustering growth sectors including financial, business and professional services / retail, leisure and health / knowledge based economy / advanced manufacturing and engineering / life science / research and development
- Enhancing the digital infrastructure and the introduction of "Smart Communities"
- Diversifying and expanding the local economy and growth in leisure, heritage, culture and tourism
- Increasing, attracting and supporting the creation of a skilled labour force including those with the life sciences industry
- Nurturing the entrepreneurial ecosystem for new employers to start up and grow, creating new businesses, new employment opportunities and local economic benefits
- Delivering quality business support to ensure business survival rates and the viability of employers in the local region, particularly in regards to issues such as decarbonisation and securing funding.

11.2.7 Provision of affordable workspaces, and facilitating small and medium sized enterprises (like the Vulcan Works in Northampton) will assist in the increase in the take up of businesses and opportunities to provide these will be supported as these will result in further job creation.

## Policy EC2 – Job Creation and Provision of Affordable Workspaces

- A. Provision will be made for at least **38,450** net new jobs in West Northamptonshire in the plan period, which will be achieved by employment allocations made in this Plan, existing commitments and allocations in Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- B. Ancillary uses will be supported (for example, gyms, nurseries, small scale retailing) where it can be demonstrated and evidenced that they are required and these provisions will minimise the need to travel by car to the nearest facility.
- C. The Council will support new developments which will provide affordable workspaces.

**WNLP objectives:** 14, 15

### c Existing projects/employment sites

11.2.8 Employment sites are allocated in the WNJCS and the Part 2 Local Plans. In order to meet identified needs and to provide continuity and certainty, these sites are re-allocated in this Plan. In most cases these allocations are within existing settlements and therefore they are re-allocated in the relevant 'Making Great Places' chapter of this Plan. There are two cases (namely Shacks Barn, Whittlebury and Furtho Pits, Old Stratford/Cosgrove) where allocations in the Part 2 plan for South Northamptonshire are not located in existing settlements. They are therefore re-allocated at Policies EC3 and EC4.

11.2.9 The allocations in this and existing plans are set out in figure 25 below:

Location	Address	Policy Reference
Daventry	Land off Newnham Drive	D7
Daventry	South East	D8
Northampton	Waterside Enterprise Zone	N4
Northampton	Sixfields East	N7i
Northampton	Land at Waterside Way	N7iv
Northampton	Crow Lane	N7ii
Northampton	Martins Yard Extension	N7iii
Northampton	South of Junction 15 M1	N8
Northampton	Horizon House, St Peter's Way	N13



Towcester	Bell Plantation	T3
Towcester	Woolgrowers	T4
Towcester	Tiffield Lane	T5
Whittlebury	Land at Shacks Barn	EC3
Cosgrove and Old Stratford	Furtho Pit,	EC4

Figure 25: Employment Land allocations

### **a Shacks Barn, Whittlebury**

- 11.2.10 Shacks Barn Farm site is located on the boundary of Silverstone and Whittlebury parishes. There are 10 businesses currently on site employing approximately 72 people, 25 subcontractors and 10 volunteer positions, as well as various training provisions for apprentices and students at local colleges. The potential new development is expected to see a rise in the total number of jobs to 275 over the course of the development. The site is located alongside the main A43 trunk road with existing direct access to the site. The A43 provides good access to the M40 to the West and the M1 to the East allowing good direct transport links to the main conurbations in both the Midlands and London and the South East and as such will be attractive to incoming businesses looking to access those markets.
- 11.2.11 This allocation proposes to extend the business park with a range of new small and medium sized business units including uses that are ancillary or complementary to an existing or proposed B Class. This will enable a wider class of uses to be considered, provided that it can be demonstrated that there is a link to an existing or proposed B1, B2 or B8 class use. A variety of employment types will be sought to reflect the need for diversity and resilience in the local economy.
- 11.2.12 The proposed site is located within the setting of the scheduled monument of Lordsfields Farm moated site. The potential impact of development in this location should be assessed to enable understanding of the effect on the significance of the monument prior to any planning applications being submitted, including the potential for non-designated archaeological remains contributing to the significance the scheduled monument derives from its setting in consultation with the relevant stakeholder. Consideration must also be given to the line of the Roman road between Towcester and Alchester to the west of the scheduled area and the archaeological remains identified during the A43 Towcester to M40 Dualling Project.
- 11.2.13 Policy EC3 (Land at Shacks Barn, Whittlebury) therefore seeks to deliver this land for economic development in the interest of delivering jobs and

investment by an appropriate extension to an existing site served by trunk road access. There is an existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted October 2022) which supports the allocation.

### **Policy EC3 - Land at Shacks Barn, Whittlebury**

- A. Site EC3 is allocated for 10ha of mixed employment generating development.
- B. An integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be taken and a masterplan must be prepared, in consultation with the Local Planning Authority and statutory undertakers prior to the submission of a planning application covering the development of the whole site.
- C. The uses on the site will be a mix of E(g) (Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) with supporting uses that are demonstrably subservient and complementary in both scale and nature to an existing or proposed B class use. The overall mix of uses will be required to be supported by an independent market assessment.
- D. Access to the site will be based on the existing access only; and
  - i. Provision of new footpaths and cycleways that link to existing networks; and
  - ii. Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including contributions to the cost of diverting existing routes through the site or to support existing local services to help promote sustainable travel as well as the enhancement of pedestrian cycling and walking links between the site and Towcester town; and
  - iii. A transport assessment and travel plan will be required to assess the transportation implications and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.
- E. A detailed heritage impact assessment will be required for the whole site, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England, prior to the design of the scheme in order to inform the height of any proposed buildings, layout and extent of the development. This will explicitly include an assessment of the height of any new buildings and impact on Lordsfield Farm (a scheduled ancient monument) as well as detailed consideration of any impacts on the designated and non-designated heritage assets and subject to the assessment being agreed a programme of informed mitigation to be included with any application.
- F. Prior to the submission of an application, a detailed assessment for the whole site to characterise archaeological remains will be undertaken to identify the direct

impact of development proposals and to inform the design and programme of archaeological mitigation.

- G. A detailed strategic landscape assessment of the whole site will be required to deliver a high quality landscaped setting within and around the boundary of the proposal.
- H. An assessment demonstrating compliance with the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document will be required.

**WNLP objectives:** 4, 10, 14, 15, 17

### **b Furtho Pit, Cosgrove and Old Stratford**

- 11.2.14 Furtho Pit site is well situated lying east of the A5/A508 junction in the south of the district. The site is a mixture of farmland, derelict former (now filled) gravel pit, plant hire testing and builder's storage facility. The strategic road network and local distributor routes can thus be readily accessed from this area, avoiding lorry movements through residential areas. Development in this area provides an opportunity for high visibility economic investment on a site of poor environmental quality at a sustainable location at a gateway to the district.
- 11.2.15 Parts of this allocation have been identified as being in Flood Zones 2 and 3 and a full flood risk assessment will be required for the site and agreed with the Environment Agency (EA) Necessary mitigation measures must be implemented.
- 11.2.16 The proximity of the allocation to a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets means that a heritage impact assessment is also necessary. This should provide specific reference to the layout, extent and height of future development. These include the Conservation Areas of the Grand Union Canal, and Cosgrove and the scheduled monument of the Roman villa SE of Cosgrove Hall together with numerous listed buildings, including Old Wolverton Mill and the Grade I Listed Church of St Peter and St Paul. Northamptonshire County Council has previously confirmed that the site is likely to contain minerals of economic importance. These are located to the eastern part of the site where a Country Park is proposed and the proposal would not therefore sterilise this resource.
- 11.2.17 The allocated site is crossed by an approximate 500m stretch of the route of the former Old Stratford Arm of the Grand Union Canal, and although this

stretch of canal is no longer in water, it is still owned by the Canal & River Trust as far as the southern boundary of the site. This stretch is a designated conservation area. The Buckingham Canal Society (BCS) is actively pursuing the restoration of the canal, using the original route where possible. Whilst it is recognised that there are some locations (such as immediately south of the A5) where use of the original route will not be possible, a feasibility study undertaken by Halcrow in 2010 on behalf of the BCS concluded that restoration of the canal was possible. A new channel just north of the A5 linking the canal to the River Great Ouse provides an option for crossing under the A5 via the Great Ouse before eventually re-joining the original canal route south of Old Stratford. It is important that proposals recognise the active restoration work undertaken by the BCS by making specific reference to the canal arm and the wider context of the aspirations of the BCS to achieving its restoration to navigable status between Cosgrove and Buckingham. The policy therefore includes a requirement to protect the existing canal route through the site and for the layout of the country park to have regard to the potential future need for new sections of canal to cross it to facilitate restoration. As the canal route adjoins the area identified as forming the proposed new country park, and any potential new stretches linking to the Great Ouse would fall within the proposed new country park, there should be no significant impact on the ability of the site to deliver the quantum of employment land proposed. A restored canal could form an integral feature of the country park and provide an opportunity to enhance both its ecological and recreational value.

11.2.18 There is an existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted October 2022) which supports the allocation.

#### **Policy EC4 - Land At Former Furtho Pit, Old Stratford/Cosgrove**

- A. Site EC4 is allocated for 16 ha. of mixed employment generating development. A variety of employment types will be sought to reflect the need for diversity and resilience in the local economy as expressed in the Council's economic growth strategy.
- B. An integrated, coordinated and comprehensive planning approach will be taken for the employment site and a masterplan must be prepared, in consultation with the local planning authority, the relevant highway authorities and other statutory undertakers prior to the submission of a planning application covering the development of the whole site.
- C. The uses on the site will be a mix of E(g) (Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity), B2 (general industrial) and B8

(storage and distribution) with ancillary with supporting uses that are demonstrably subservient and complementary in both scale and nature to an existing or proposed B class use. The overall mix of uses will be required to be supported by an independent market assessment.

- D. Access to the site will be from the A508; and
  - i. New footpaths and cycleways will be provided that link to existing networks including to a proposed new adjoining country park and utilise the existing pedestrian crossing over the A5 linking to Old Stratford having appropriate regard to the retention and enhancement of the existing public rights of way through the site; and
  - ii. Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for including contributions to the cost of establishing bus services including stops to the site, to promote sustainable transport; and
  - iii. A transport assessment and travel plan will be required to assess the transportation implications of the proposed development (including noise from the A5 and A508) and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.
  
- E. A detailed heritage impact assessment will be required to be agreed with the local Planning Authority in consultation with Historic England, prior to the design of the scheme in order:
  - i. To inform the height of any proposed buildings, their layout and the extent of the development. This will include a detailed assessment of the effects of the development of the site on the significance of the scheduled monument 1013660 'Motte and Bailey Castle' Deserted Village and Monastic Grange at Old Wolverton; as well as detailed consideration of the development's effects on the significance of other designated and non-designated heritage assets, if any. The agreed assessment will inform any mitigation works required to ensure that the development of the site would avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets; and
  - ii. To provide detailed consideration of the safeguarding of the existing canal route through the site and how the layout of the country park has regard to the potential future need for new sections of canal to cross it to facilitate restoration.
  
- F. Prior to the submission of an application, a detailed assessment to characterise archaeological remains will be undertaken to identify the direct impact of development proposals and to inform the design and programme of archaeological mitigation which could involve preservation in situ by design or record or a combination of the two. This to be agreed with Historic England.
  
- G. A detailed strategic landscape and visual impact assessment of the whole site will be required to deliver a high quality landscaped setting within and around the boundary of the proposal.

- H. Detailed impact assessments will be required explaining how the proposals will safeguard the local wildlife site within its boundary and contribute towards biodiversity net gains.
- I. Proposals will need to provide protection of the existing Anglian water drainage and water infrastructure that crosses the site.
- J. An assessment demonstrating compliance with the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document will be required.
- K. An assessment demonstrating compliance with the South Northamptonshire Employment Site Allocations Development Brief (October 2022), or any equivalent successor document will be required.

**WNLP objectives:** 3, 10, 14, 15, 17

- 11.2.19 Jobs will also be created from the ongoing implementation of key projects such as DIRFT and Northampton Gateway.
- 11.2.20 For DIRFT, planning permission approval is for around 731,000 sq.m. As of 2023, around 328,000 sq.m has been completed. If an employment density of 95 sq,m per job is applied, an estimated 4,000 jobs is expected to be created from the remainder of the scheme.
- 11.2.21 For Northampton Gateway, planning approval was granted for up to 468,000 sq.m of warehousing and ancillary buildings, with additional floorspace of up to 155,000 sq.m provided in the form of mezzanines. Around 7,500 jobs are expected to be created.
- 11.2.22 Both of these schemes have been consented through a Development Consent Order. Should any proposals not comply with the terms of that order they would require the benefit of planning permission. A set of development principles has been established (Policy EC9) to guide any such applications.

**11.3 Provisions for warehousing and logistics**

- 11.3.1. According to the SEMLEP report on warehousing and logistics (ICENI, September 2022), warehousing employment is still an important component of the area's economy. Between 2015 and 2020, the total employment count within this sector increased by over 50% from 31,750 to 47,500. Although the report acknowledges that there are both opportunities and challenges in managing the growth of this sector, it recommends that the demands of the

logistics sector be considered as part of a balanced policy approach towards securing good growth and sustainable places.

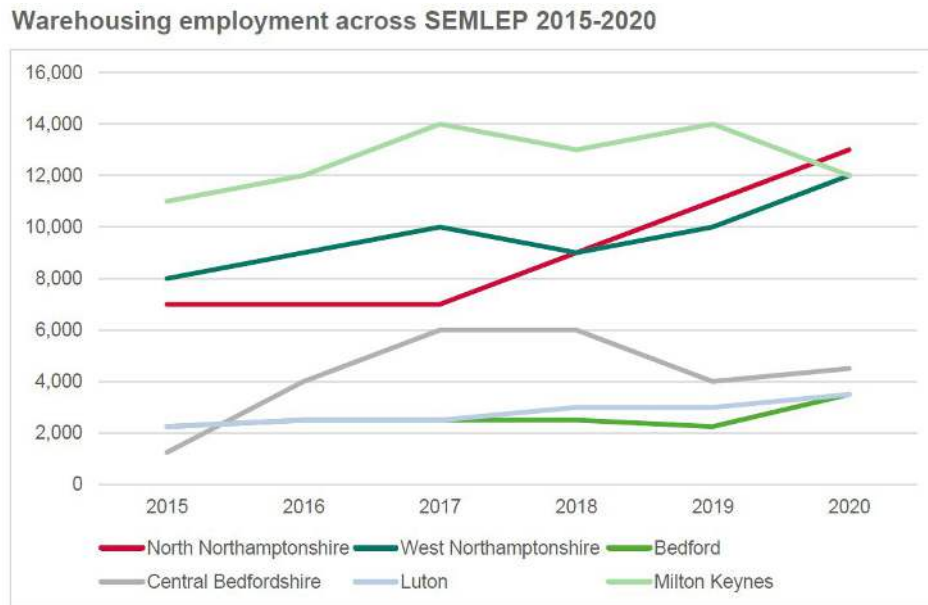


Figure 26: Warehousing across SEMLEP 2015 - 2020

11.3.2 The HENAU has taken into account the sub-regional evidence and approaches used to estimate strategic warehousing needs, including the SEMLEP Logistics and Warehousing Study. The HENAU concluded that the plan needs to provide for around 9ha shortfall in West Northamptonshire.

11.3.3 In order to meet this shortfall a site has been identified to the south of Junction 15 of the M1. Details of this allocation can be found in the 'Making Great Places: Northampton' Chapter. There is therefore no further need for strategic warehousing in West Northamptonshire.

## 11.4 Supporting the rural economy

11.4.1 The majority of West Northamptonshire is rural in nature, with a dispersed network of almost 190 villages and hamlets. These rural communities account for approximately one-third of West Northamptonshire's population. Economic growth in the rural areas needs to be supported by encouraging the diversification and expansion of agricultural and other businesses and enterprises. It is accepted that there are benefits for farms to diversify use of land and buildings for other suitable activities or development. These might include converting redundant barns for office use or workshops, storage, farm shops, bed and breakfast, energy crops, or acceptable sport and leisure uses like campsites. These can be important in supplementing

agricultural business income to ensure long-term viability and, alongside suitable small-scale rural enterprise and provide rural job opportunities. Suitable uses will allow more efficient use of buildings and land while fitting in with farming practices, rural surroundings and maintaining openness of the rural environment. This will also support the growth in the visitor economy where conversion to short term holiday lets is growing.

- 11.4.2 In encouraging economic resilience and agricultural diversification, it is important that the countryside is not spoilt, whilst balancing the need to ensure that farms remain viable business operations. Diversification proposals should contribute effectively to the agricultural business and the rural economy while integrating new activities to the environment and the rural scene. Diversification must be seen within the context of the future of the farm or estate as a whole. In determining what is 'small-scale' for purposes of Policy EC5 regard will be had to the physical scale and nature of the proposals and also the operational impacts that it would have on the area in which is located and the communities of that area.

### **Policy EC5 - Rural economy**

- A. Development proposals which sustain and enhance the rural economy by creating or safeguarding jobs and businesses will be supported where they are of an appropriate scale for their location, respect the environmental quality and character of the rural area and protect the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- B. The following types of development are considered acceptable within the rural areas:
  - i. The re-use of farm buildings.
  - ii. Schemes for farm diversification involving small-scale business and commercial development.
  - iii. Small-scale tourism proposals including visitor accommodation.
  - iv. Proposals that recognise the economic benefits of the natural and historic environment as an asset to be valued, conserved and enhanced.
  - v. The expansion of small-scale businesses in their existing locations depending on the nature of the activities involved, the character of the site and its accessibility.
  - vi. The use of land for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and equestrian activity.
  - vii. Small scale employment development to meet local needs.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 14, 15, 16, 17

## **11.5 Supporting the visitor economy**



11.5.1 West Northamptonshire has a diverse visitor economy primarily because of the wide range of tourist attractions within the area. These include:

- Sporting venues including those which host national and international sporting events such as football (Northampton Town Football Club in Sixfields), rugby (Northampton Saints Rugby Club in Franklins Gardens), cricket (Northamptonshire County Cricket Club in Abington), motor racing, including Formula 1 (Silverstone), dog races and hospitality (Towcester Racecourse), Radland skatepark (Northampton), bike park (Northampton)
- Spa and country clubs including Whittlebury Park Hotel, Spa Golf and Country Club which is located on a 600 acre parkland south of Whittlebury village, Sedgebrook Hall in Chapel Brampton, Hellidon Lakes and Fawsley Hall
- Historic / heritage assets including the Northampton museum, religious buildings (such as the Holy Sepulchre in Northampton Town Centre), Delapre Abbey, Althorp Gardeners House and Stables, Holdenby House, Sulgrave Manor, Aynhoe Park, Stowe Gardens and Kelmarsh Hall
- Cultural and musical assets including the Royal and Derngate theatre, the Alive concerts in Delapre, the Northampton Balloon Festival, Picturedrome, Deco and Roadmender

11.5.2 These visitor attractions need to be supported as they continue to meet the ongoing demands of fans, new visitors and returning visitors. Although evidence (Retail & Town Centre Uses Study, LSH April 2022) shows that no new sites are required to be allocated for developments associated with leisure, it is important to ensure that existing facilities continue to be supported.

11.5.3 In 2023, North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Councils undertook a visitor economy survey. 499 people/organisations responded. A summary of the key findings is provided below. The ratings were between 1 and 5, with 5 being the highest, and the averages provide by the respondents are given below:

Importance of improving productivity in the visitor economy	3.83
Improve quality of service offered by visitor facing businesses	4.34
Improve quantity/ quality of research and strategic insight to support the visitor economy	4.10
Encouraging new visitor attractions, activity events or experiences	4.31

Encourage new focus of accommodation	3.97
Encourage the development of meeting, conferences and exhibition sector	4.17
Encourage Northamptonshire’s visitor economy to become more sustainable in environmental, social and community terms	4.52
Encourage Northamptonshire’s visitor economy to become more accessible to benefit all types of visitors	4.59
Improve the marketing and promotion of Northamptonshire	4.79
Improve collaboration across public and private sectors	4.55

Figure 27: Key Findings for Visitor Economy Survey

11.5.4 In terms of potential benefits to Northamptonshire visitors, the respondents rated the following as their top 3:

- Environmental (preserving natural resources, increasing biodiversity and protecting special places) – rated 4.54
- Cultural (conserving heritage, keeping tradition alive and collaborating this county’s distinctiveness) – rated 4.45
- Economic (helping to fund investment in the public realm and supporting assets that residents can also enjoy) – rated 4.23

**Policy EC6 - Visitor economy**

- A. Proposals for tourism and leisure development and/or expansion, including tourist accommodation will be supported where:
- i. They contribute to the achievement of regeneration aims and objectives, and strengthen the overall tourism offer;
  - ii. They benefit local communities and businesses;
  - iii. They deliver the requirements associated with the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment;
  - iv. They do not have an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the area or the character of the countryside;
  - v. Evidence shows that the schemes are required to meet increasing demand and
  - vi. they do not create adverse impacts on the surrounding areas including traffic and pollution; and
  - vii. The overall level of development in any one area does not detract from the amenity presently enjoyed by local residents.
- B. Proposals which involve the loss of tourist facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated they are no longer economically viable following a robust marketing exercise for a continuous period of at least 12 months.

- C. Proposals for caravan, holiday chalets and camping development (new and extensions to existing) will be required to comply with the following additional criteria:
- i. It is located in an area with local opportunities for informal countryside recreation; and
  - ii. It will be accessible to existing local services and public utilities; and
  - iii. Sites accommodating caravans should have good access to the road network and should not give rise to significant problems of traffic congestion or safety; and
  - iv. Static caravans and chalets should be sympathetic to the environment in terms of their number, siting and colour and, additionally for chalets, their design and materials.
- D. Where planning permission for caravans and chalet sites is granted, a condition restricting the type of occupation to holiday use will be used in order to retain the tourist accommodation and ensure it is not used for permanent residential use.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 14, 15, 17

## **11.6 Delivering retail and leisure**

- 11.6.1 The Retail and Town Centre Uses Study (Lambert Smith Hampton, April 2022) outlines the hierarchy of centres based on their roles and functions, as well as size. The hierarchy is listed and defined below:
- **Northampton Town Centre (regional town centre)** - stands apart from other centres in West Northamptonshire in terms of the scale, range and quality of its town centre offer. Notwithstanding, retail trends and the impact of the pandemic, it has the strongest comparison goods
  - **Daventry Town Centre (Sub Regional Town Centre)** – its classification reflects the town’s important role in West Northamptonshire’s network and hierarchy of centres: at a level below Northampton Town Centre, but above Towcester and Brackley. The town centre is relatively compact and provides a good choice of retail, leisure and service uses that meet the needs of its local catchment population.
  - **Towcester and Brackley Town Centres (Rural Service Centres)** - reflects the relative scale, range and quality of their retail, leisure and service offer benchmarked against Northampton and Daventry Town Centres. Both Towcester and Brackley perform an important role and function meeting the essential needs of their local resident catchment populations, and the surrounding villages in their hinterland.
- 11.6.2 Northampton town centre, along with its edge- and out-of-centre shops and leisure facilities, is the main shopping and leisure destination within West

Northamptonshire and its wider catchment, as well as the focus for major services and facilities. It remains the largest market town in the UK. The Grosvenor Centre is the main covered shopping centre with over 30,000 sqm gross of retail and leisure space. The smaller Market Walk (c.5,575 sqm gross) is closed and subject to proposals for redevelopment by the current owners. The town is set to benefit from significant new public/private sector investment, helped by the successful bids for the Future High Street and Towns Deal Funds. These are set out in the Making Great Places : Northampton Chapter.

- 11.6.3 Daventry is the second largest town in West Northamptonshire. The town is relatively compact and provides a range of retail, leisure and services to support its resident population and more rural catchment. Its retail offer is anchored by three foodstore operators (namely Tesco, Waitrose and Aldi), along with a mix of national multiples and independents. Vision 2035 identifies site-specific place-making and development opportunities for key areas in and surrounding the town to help support its transformation and growth. A new 4-screen cinema, restaurants and a public square opened in 2022 on the site of the former library (known as Mulberry Square).
- 11.6.4 Brackley meets the day-to-day needs of its local resident population and the surrounding villages. The town supports a range of independent businesses, and a small number of national multiples. It is also home to the largest antiques centre in the Midlands (Brackley Antiques Cellar). Its retail offer is anchored by Waitrose at Manor Road, with Market Place and the High Street offering a range of quality services and independent retailers, including a weekly market.
- 11.6.5 Towcester's Primary Retail Area (as defined within the adopted Local Plan) mainly runs along Watling Street and includes Sponne Shopping Centre. The town centres' retail offer is anchored by Waitrose, along with a mix of multiples and independent specialist shops, and a market. The main shopping destinations outside the town centre include Tesco and Aldi foodstores near the A5/A43 junction. The Moat Lane mixed-use regeneration scheme in the heart of the town has provided new homes, commercial, civic, community and employment space.
- 11.6.6 Further down the hierarchy are the Local Centres/Primary Villages / Secondary Villages/Local Shops –they have an important role and function in West Northamptonshire's network of centres; principally serving the more day-to-day essential ('top-up') food and convenience shopping needs of their local (walkable) catchment populations.
- 11.6.7 The study also concluded that:

- There is potential to provide a mix of new residential development in and on the edge of centres, which will help to maintain and strengthen their overall vitality and viability. Provision of the right types of homes, in the right locations that cater for the needs of different ages and socio-economic groups will help to generate new trips, footfall and spend for the benefit of existing shops and business, as well as supporting new provision.
- The trend to home-working that was a necessity during the pandemic, is predicted to continue. Businesses are adapting their office and workspace needs. This should benefit West Northamptonshire in a number of ways. First, more of the area's population working from home will meet their essential day-to-day needs close to where they live, which will help to strengthen the vitality and viability of local centres and businesses. Secondly, there will be an increase in demand for more flexible workspace in the main centres, particularly focussed on transport hubs. It could also benefit larger villages where local businesses will benefit from increased footfall during the week.
- The need to invest in the quality of town centre environments -including frontages, streetscapes, buildings and public realm -to create more attractive, accessible, safe and "greener" (carbon neutral) environments that appeal to all ages and groups.

11.6.8 The study concluded that there is no capacity for new convenience goods floorspace in West Northamptonshire up to 2035, and a nominal capacity for 244 sq.m by 2040. This small quantum of convenience floorspace capacity by the end of the plan period could easily be met through infill development, change of use applications and/or extensions to existing stores. There is no identified capacity for new comparison goods floorspace over the plan period to 2040.

#### **a. Primary Shopping Areas**

11.6.9 The study also recommended revisions to the Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) identified in existing part 2 local plans, in line with the definition contained in the NPPF, and outlines the area where retail development is concentrated. The recommendations for the PSA boundaries have been taken on board.

11.6.10 The PSAs for Northampton, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley are shown on the policies map.

#### **b. Locally set threshold**

11.6.11 For West Northamptonshire as a whole, the study recommended that a “blanket” impact threshold of 280 sqm gross is most appropriate and robust for assessing the impacts of any proposed retail/leisure developments outside of defined centres in accordance with paragraph 94 of the NPPF.

### **Policy EC7 - Retail Hierarchy, Retail Impact Assessments and Development Proposals for Retail and Leisure**

- A. The Council will continue to promote and support the roles and functions of the designated Retail and Commercial Centres to positively contribute towards their viability, vitality, character, structure and roles. Retail floorspace should be accommodated firstly within the appropriate town centres, and then other town centre locations. The hierarchy of centres (identified below) and the Primary Shopping Areas for Northampton, Daventry, Towcester and Brackley, are shown on the Policies Map. Retail, commercial and other main town centre uses will continue to be directed to these centres in line with the sequential approach provided in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Regional Town Centre: Northampton – this should be the first choice for retail, leisure, culture and other main town centre uses. Independent retailing will be particularly supported in the Primary Shopping Area
  - Sub-regional Town Centre: Daventry
  - Rural service Town Centre: Brackley
  - Rural service Town Centre: Towcester
  - District Centres: Weston Favell, Northampton and Kingsthorpe, Northampton - these will be the focus for more localised retail, flexible workplace, commerce, community services and facilities that supports sustainable patterns of movement
  - Local Centres, Primary Villages, Secondary Villages and Local Shops – small shops in nature, to support a small catchment and to provide for residents’ day to day needs, and reducing the need to travel
- B. Outside the town centres, any proposals for the change of use to retail and other main town centre uses which are 280 sq.m gross or more, will need to undertake a retail impact assessment.

**WNLP objectives:** 7, 10, 11, 14, 16

## **11.7 Relocation of Vehicle Recycling facility**

- 11.7.1 Section 6.3 of the 'Making Great Places: Daventry' section sets out a proposals for employment development to the south east of Daventry. In order to assist with improvements at this gateway location, the relocation of the vehicle recycling facility will be supported subject to meeting the criteria set out in Policy EC8.

### **Policy EC8 - Relocation of Vehicle Recycling Facility**

To assist with the regeneration of the South East Gateway proposals for the relocation of the vehicle recycling facility will be supported where it can be demonstrated that all of the following criteria are met at the proposed new site:

- i. No significant adverse impact on the local landscape and heritage assets;
- ii. Good access to the strategic highway network;
- iii. No significant adverse impact on amenity of existing residents; and
- iv. No harm to the form, character and setting of an existing settlement.

**WNLP Objectives:** 1, 7, 10

## **11.8 Site Specific Policies**

- 11.8.1 The following site-specific policies have been prepared to provide detailed guidelines on the types of developments that will be supported within the development areas, and the necessary work and considerations that need to be taken into account during the stages of preparing development proposals.

### **Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT)**

- 11.8.15 DIRFT is situated on the rail network, with rail connection from the Northampton loop of the West Coast Main Line. It is located at the junctions between the M1 motorway, the A5 and the A428, and about six miles (10km) north of Daventry. There are three phases to DIRFT, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase underway following the issuing of a Development Consent Order in 2014. It is anticipated that most schemes coming forward at DIRFT will be in accordance with the DCO and will not, therefore, require planning permission.
- 11.8.16 DIRFT aims to provide the "best in class" and retain its position as one of UK's leading rail served logistics and warehousing. The vision is that it will maintain its role as an internationally significant centre for rail connected strategic distribution. It will be exemplary in the field of sustainable logistics with links to the University of Northampton.

11.8.17 It is important that the strategic B8 warehousing and logistics uses are supported in DIRFT, alongside ancillary uses which support the role and function of the area (to include hotels, food and drink, convenience retail, nurseries and gyms).

### **Junction 15 Segro Logistics Park Northampton Gateway (NG)**

11.8.18 The SEGRO Logistics Park Northampton Gateway (NG) facility is a large-scale logistics park located adjacent to J15 of the M1 with a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) that has been designated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and has a Development Consent Order (DCO) permitting development of up to 464,515 sq.m (5 million sq ft) of distribution buildings. It consists of a 182 ha (450 acre) state-of-the-art multi-modal logistics development, which will accommodate around five million square feet of modern sustainable warehouse space and logistics facilities.

11.8.19 The project aims to create in excess of 7,450 jobs and includes:

- A 14 ha (35 acres) Strategic Rail Freight Interchange
- An intermodal freight terminal capable of handling trains up to 775m in length
- Up to 5 million sq ft of distribution buildings
- New road infrastructure and improvements on the A508, A45 and M1 J15
- A508 Bypass of Roade village
- Numerous junction improvements on the surrounding road network
- Extensive landscaping, including new footways and cycleways
- Planting of 60,000, trees and 30,000 shrubs
- Over 32 ha (80 acres) of parkland and amenity grassland

### **Policy EC9 - Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) and Northampton Gateway**

- A. The Council will support high quality sustainable development for strategic B8 and logistics at DIRFT and Northampton Gateway
- B. Alternative uses which are ancillary to the main employment use will be supported as long as it can be evidenced that these uses are required to support the role of DIRFT and its employees.
- C. Development proposals will be required to:
  - i. Maximise and capitalise on the use of renewable energy in design and construction;



- ii. Integrate green energy principles into their designs, materials and construction process;
- iii. Offer good quality training as part of the construction process and recruitment drive;
- iv. Ensure that transport connectivity and accessibility form a vital part of the development design process to include provision for public transport and cyclists. In the case of Northampton Gateway, particular attention needs to be given to improved and sustained connectivity with Northampton town and Roade village; and
- v. Include details on the maintenance and management of the natural environment (parkland, trees etc) to ensure that they continue to thrive.

**WNLP objectives:** 14, 15

## **Silverstone**

11.8.20 Silverstone is a sport, business, education, tourism and leisure destination, and accommodates:

- Silverstone Circuit, which is an internationally known landmark for motor racing and home to the British Grand Prix
- Silverstone Technology Park, which was developed to provide engineering, technology and research to support and maximise business productivity
- Silverstone University Technical College (UTC) was one of the first UTCs to open nationwide, as part of a government-funded programme to give those aged 14-19 pathways into university and industry careers. Students can now leave the traditional schooling environment to study GCSEs or A-Levels alongside industry-recognised qualifications focused on meeting the requirements of employers and universities. It is targeted at young people who wish to pursue the specialist fields of High Performance Engineering and Business with Events Management

11.8.21 Silverstone straddles the boundary between West Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire, and plays a pivotal role in both the sport and tourism industry. Hotel accommodation, conference facilities and spa, for example, Whittlebury Hall, capitalises on Silverstone not just during the racing season but throughout the year.

## **Policy EC10 - Silverstone**

- A. The Council will continue to support Silverstone in its role as an international venue for motorsport as well as providing education, business opportunities and research and development.
- B. Proposals will need to ensure that they comply with key placemaking, design and sustainable development policies contained in this Plan. In addition, all proposals will need to demonstrate that they will provide functional links to Towcester and Brackley, which offer sustainable transport links.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 14, 15, 17

## **Chapter 12: Built and Natural Environment**

### **12.1 West Northamptonshire's Historic Environment**

- 12.1.1 The NPPF provides a comprehensive definition of the historic environment and heritage assets. In respect of the latter, these can be designated or non-designated. Examples of types of designated heritage assets found in West Northamptonshire are scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and conservation areas. Non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) can also be buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes. They have a degree of heritage significance, but not usually a sufficient level to be designated. Footnote 72 of the NPPF clarifies that non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.
- 12.1.2 Proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings will be considered in accordance with the relevant statutory framework and the guidance set out in the NPPF. Not all assets have equal levels of significance and proposals have difference levels of impact. The NPPF provides a mechanism to apply appropriate weight in decision making according to their significance and level of harm, where harm arises.
- 12.1.3 West Northamptonshire's historic landscape is influenced by the unique combination of natural and man-made features found in the area, which includes the underlying geology, archaeology, biodiversity, agricultural landscapes, buildings, structures and transport connections. The individual and combined contribution of these elements are what make the area distinctive and give it a sense of place. There are multiple benefits to protecting and celebrating heritage: exploring culture, defining sense of place, enhancing local distinctiveness, mitigating climate change, boosting the economy and promoting health and wellbeing.
- 12.1.4 The Council takes a positive approach to the historic environment through its work to identify, understand and protect local heritage and incorporate it into development proposals. This includes a review of conservation areas, preparing guidance and advice notes and identifying non-designated heritage assets, which will enable us to provide enhanced guidance for applicants and decision makers. The Council maintains a West Northamptonshire Local Heritage List, which brings together work completed by the former Councils.

- 12.1.5 The Council encourages owners of heritage assets to engage in early dialogue with officers and relevant stakeholders to positively manage and sustain their significance. This is particularly important for assets on the national heritage at risk register. Seeking pre-application advice is welcomed for all proposals, including alterations to listed buildings, large and complex sites, multiple assets, major alterations or developments impacting on heritage assets and their settings. The sympathetic conservation of historic features and details will be supported where they contribute positively to the objectives of this Plan.
- 12.1.6 Proposals affecting the historic environment should be accompanied by an assessment proportionate to the significance of the asset and the nature and extent of the works proposed. This should set out the significance (heritage statement) and the impact of development on significance (heritage impact assessment). Reference should be made to the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) as a minimum, and other relevant up-to-date evidence including but not limited to, the National Heritage List for England, the West Northamptonshire Local Heritage List, heritage at risk registers, heritage impact assessments, conservation area appraisals, conservation plans and any archaeological fieldwork reports. Conservation area appraisals and management plans have been prepared for many of the conservation areas and will in all cases, be a material consideration.
- 12.1.7 Where loss or change to historic buildings, features or archaeological remains is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for on-site investigation, recording, interpretation and the production of a suitable archive and report in accordance with current national and local standards. The scope of the investigation should be proportionate to the asset's significance and the impact of development on the asset. The information and understanding gained should be made publicly available, as a minimum through the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record.
- 12.1.8 The Council will support proposals that are heritage led, foster an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the heritage and history of West Northamptonshire and contribute to the local economy and wellbeing in a way that is accessible to all. In doing so, proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they meet the requirements of all relevant heritage policies.

## **Policy BN1 - West Northamptonshire's Historic Environment**

- A. The Council supports proposals that will sustain West Northamptonshire's distinctive historic urban and rural landscapes, buildings, sites, archaeology and features by protecting, conserving and, where appropriate, enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.
- B. Proposals, including change of use, that affect designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting will be required to submit evidence in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, examining the significance of the asset through a heritage statement, including any contribution made by its setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's significance.
- C. Where proposals would lead to loss or change to designated and non-designated heritage assets that is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for proportionate on-site investigation, recording, interpretation and production of a suitable archive and report.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 4, 11, 13

### **Policy BN2 - Designated Heritage Assets**

- A. Proposals, including change of use, that affect a designated heritage asset or the setting of a designated heritage asset will be expected to:
  - i. Preserve, enhance or better reveal those elements which contribute to the significance of the asset or its setting; and
  - ii. Respect any features of architectural or historic interest, including where relevant, the historic curtilage or context, its group value or its setting; and
  - iii. Reinforce local significance in terms of siting, size, scale, height, alignment, proportions, design and form, colour palette, materials, methods of construction, detailing, boundary treatments and surfacing, in order to retain the special interest that justifies its designation; and
  - iv. Ensure significant views to, from, through and associated with the asset are preserved or enhanced; and
  - v. In the case of a conservation area, to have regard to elements identified in relevant evidence as contributing positively to spatial and architectural character, as well as design guidance and any opportunities for enhancement.
- B. Proposals that would lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is outweighed by substantial public benefits and where it can be demonstrated that:
  - i. The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

- ii. No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
  - iii. Conservation by grant funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
  - iv. The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
- C. Proposals that would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the public benefits will outweigh any harm identified.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 4, 11, 13

## **12.2 Non-designated Heritage Assets**

- 12.2.1 Non-designated heritage assets are assets which have been identified as having sufficient heritage significance to warrant further consideration through the planning system to sustain that significance. The Council has developed a set of criteria to identify suitable assets and adds assets that meet the criteria to the West Northamptonshire Local Heritage List (referred to here as the Local List) in recognition of their importance.
- 12.2.2 Assets are generally identified through a formal process such as a conservation area character appraisal, however, assets will continue to be identified, for instance through the planning process, public nomination and neighbourhood plans. Any potential non-designated heritage assets should be assessed against the Council's criteria and where they meet the criteria, they will have the equivalent weight as those on the Local List and proposals affecting them will be considered against policy BN3. Assets that do not meet the criteria will not be afforded the same weight, although they will be a material consideration.
- 12.2.3 The impact of planning proposals on non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account proportionately to their heritage significance, or their contribution to the wider historic environment.
- 12.2.4 The Council is committed to supporting communities which engage in community-led planning. All plans which make reference to heritage (whether designated or non-designated) must ensure any strategy or guidance is clear, positive and evidence based. This leads to more robust plans and decision making. The Council will advise on appropriate evidence, including existing conservation area appraisals and management plans, the National Heritage List for England, the Northamptonshire HER and the Local

List. It will also advise on the criteria for identifying non-designated heritage assets.

### **Policy BN3 - Non-designated Heritage Assets**

- A. Proposals for development, including change of use, that affect a non-designated heritage asset or the setting of a non-designated heritage asset will be expected to:
  - i. Have regard to the significance of the asset and its setting; and
  - ii. Retain and re-use the asset in a way that is sympathetic to the local vernacular.
- B. Proposals that would lead to harm or loss of significance of a non-designated asset will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
  - i. Through appropriate evidence the asset is not capable of viable repair; or
  - ii. Despite appropriate marketing the asset has no viable use; or
  - iii. A balanced judgment has been made on the scale of the harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 4, 11, 13

## **12.3 Archaeology and the Archaeological Record**

- 12.3.1 The terms 'heritage' and 'heritage asset' also includes archaeology. Due to the often unknown extent of below ground remains, the Council encourages pre-application consultation with the Council's Planning Archaeologist for larger proposals and in known sensitive areas, such as next to a scheduled monument, which will inform the need for, nature, scale and timing of an evaluation.
- 12.3.2 The significance of the remains will inform whether preservation in situ or removal is the most appropriate or practical course of action. When an evaluation identifies significant below ground remains, it may be possible to design the proposal so that the remains are protected as part of the site's open space with minimal ground disturbance, or the area excluded.
- 12.3.3 A plan should be put in place to record any remains the investigation yields, and to make the results publicly available, as a minimum on the Northamptonshire HER. Where investigations yield no evidence of archaeological deposits, this should be still recorded in line with best practice and published as "negative evidence" in the HER. This can be beneficial to future investigations to help determine the likelihood of

archaeological deposits on or near to the site and inform the level of investigation that might be required.

- 12.3.4 A Council priority is to increase and enhance biodiversity and natural and semi-natural habitats, however, some activities aimed at improving biodiversity can be damaging to archaeology and need to be carefully assessed, for example, creating scrapes and ponds, tree planting, allowing scrub vegetation to grow on archaeological earthworks and building up ground levels.

#### **Policy BN4 - Interpretation of Archaeology**

- A. Developers of major proposals and those in areas that are known to be sensitive should engage in pre-application discussion with the Planning Archaeologist to consider the need for, nature and timing of an evaluation.
- B. Where archaeological remains are known or found to exist within a development site, information about the significance and current state of preservation of the archaeological material should be sought and the impact on their significance assessed. This will enable informed decision taking about the retention of remains within/below developments and possible mitigation options. Preservation in situ is preferred for significant remains that are of demonstrably equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, where it is appropriate and practical, and will be subject to an agreed preservation strategy.
- C. Where visible or buried archaeological remains are preserved within a development, provision, where appropriate, should be made for their on-going management to ensure their long-term conservation, public enjoyment and contribution to a sense of place through on-site interpretation. Activities that would have a damaging impact on both visible and buried archaeological remains, for example tree planting or creation of new paths, should be avoided.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 4, 11, 13

### **12.4 Heritage Led Regeneration**

- 12.4.1 Historic buildings and spaces are found across the district in our towns and rural areas, each with their own inherent character, which comes from an interplay between buildings, streets, public spaces, views and green and blue infrastructure that have developed over time. Some, but not all of these assets will be designated, however, in combination they contribute to



a sense of place and identity which is unique to the location and which people value.

- 12.4.2 The historic environment is a positive asset that has the potential to act as a catalyst for successful regeneration projects, and proposals that are heritage led are usually better suited to the location. Regeneration in historic areas presents opportunities for conservation and development to work together to carefully integrate historic buildings and fabric into the heart of a project. Retaining and re-using traditional buildings is also a sustainable practice and reduces carbon emitted as compared with the alternative of demolition and new build. It is important that heritage-led proposals form part of a wider regeneration strategy to ensure that projects are sustainable in the long term.
- 12.4.3 As part of the preparation of this Plan, the Council has investigated opportunities for brownfield regeneration within the towns, many of which will involve areas of traditional buildings, streets and spaces. This work has taken into account the importance of heritage assets within and in close proximity to the regeneration sites. These are dealt with in more detail in the place based sections of this Plan.
- 12.4.4 The Council places particular emphasis on finding positive uses for assets that are vacant and under-used, including those that are at risk. Long term vacant buildings are more likely to suffer damage and decay, which may ultimately cost more to remediate. The best of way of protecting a building is for it to be occupied. Proposals for appropriate re-use and adaptation of historic buildings as part of a wider regeneration project will be supported.
- 12.4.5 Disrepair and damage may impact viability and can be a material consideration in decision making, however, where there is evidence of deliberate damage or neglect, the Council will disregard the condition of the asset.

### **Policy BN5 - Heritage Led Regeneration**

The Council supports regeneration proposals that conserve and re-use heritage assets to deliver environmental, economic and community benefits which should:

- i. Reinforce local distinctiveness by identifying and incorporating elements of the historic environment that make a positive contribution to sense of place and identity;
- ii. Repair and restore heritage assets in ways consistent with sustaining their significance and the protection of their setting;

- iii. Take the opportunity to better reveal the significance of any heritage assets, including their settings; and
- iv. Be informed by a clear business and investment strategy, heritage impact assessment, site specific masterplan and community engagement.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 4, 11, 13, 17

## **12.5 Climate change**

- 12.5.1 Buildings are one of the largest contributors of UK carbon emissions and emit carbon throughout their whole life cycle. The historic built environment can play an important role in mitigating the effects of climate change and can produce significant benefits for the environment in West Northamptonshire. Appropriate changes to historic buildings can greatly improve their energy efficiency as well as ensuring that the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions embodied within existing buildings are not lost through demolition. The benefit of maintaining, repairing, reusing and adapting heritage assets should be recognised and works should be undertaken in such a way that sustains their significance. When assessing the impact of development proposals which affect the historic environment, the whole life-cycle carbon of heritage assets and any new building should be taken into account, including the impact of demolition and rebuild where relevant. For major applications, these details should be set out in the Sustainability Statement accompanying the application (as per the requirements of Policy PL1 of this Plan).
- 12.5.2 Buildings are also at risk from the effects of climate change and may need to adapt to ensure their resilience to current and future impacts. Historic buildings are usually of traditional construction and are very different to modern buildings. Retrofit of historic buildings with energy saving low carbon technologies and works to mitigate against climate change is therefore likely to require a different approach. Works should be undertaken in a responsible way which sustains the significance of the heritage asset which may require the use of bespoke solutions compared with modern buildings, whilst achieving climate positive objectives. Proposals for low carbon and renewable energy will be considered against policy PL4.
- 12.5.3 Reference should be made to the latest Historic England advice on climate change and adaptation for historic buildings.

## **12.6 Landscape**

- 12.6.1 West Northamptonshire’s towns and villages are set within rural landscapes, which are a rich and varied mix of gently rounded hills and valleys with many long low ridgelines and a great variety of landform. These landscapes have evolved over time through a combination of physical and human influences. Registered parks and gardens are examples of designed landscapes, ridge and furrow are the result of medieval system of strip cultivation, however, most landscapes are “fortuitous”. The Council recognises the contribution that all landscapes make to the distinctiveness and character of West Northamptonshire and will ensure that development is landscape-led by responding to key landscape characteristics and features.
- 12.6.2 There is a wealth of guidance and evidence that can inform proposals including national guidance, the Northamptonshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment and the National Heritage List for England. The character of West Northamptonshire’s rural areas has been comprehensively assessed through landscape character assessments undertaken to support this Plan and the Part 2 Local Plans. West Northamptonshire contains 15 of the generic landscape character types, which are subdivided into unique landscape character areas, which further underlines the diversity of landscapes present. Conservation area appraisals and management plans identify important historic open areas that make a positive contribution to the character and setting of conservation areas.
- 12.6.3 Where there is potential for a development to impact on landscape and/or visual amenity, the Council encourages pre-application discussion on the level of detail required to inform an application. An informal landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) would assess the baseline landscape and its sensitivity to accommodate development in landscape and visual terms, by identifying key landscape and visual opportunities and constraints of a site. It is less detailed than a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) which would be required for any development that is likely to have a significant character or visual effect on an existing landscape or townscape setting. A LVIA is therefore more detailed and would identify the impacts of a proposal on landscape and visual receptors and how any adverse effect could be mitigated. It could form part of a comprehensive EIA or be a standalone report. It is important that a LVA or LVIA is undertaken in accordance with Guidance for Landscape and Visual Assessment GVLIA3 or successor guidance.

- A. The Council supports proposals that maintain the distinctive character and quality of West Northamptonshire’s landscapes. In doing so, it will take into consideration the cumulative impact of development proposals on the quality of the landscape. Where appropriate, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that their proposal:
- i. Contributes positively to an area’s character and identity by reinforcing local distinctiveness and historic character of the particular landscape character area in which it is located and in doing so, has regard to, and where possible, is consistent with existing evidence and management guidance; and
  - ii. Respects existing patterns of development and distinctive features that make a positive contribution to the character, history or setting of a settlement, or key buildings, village skylines and ridgelines; and
  - iii. Avoids creating hard developed edges to the open countryside; and
  - iv. Avoids physical and visual coalescence between settlements; and
  - v. Enhances and restores landscape features where the opportunity arises; and
  - vi. Incorporates mitigation measures to integrate development into its surroundings.
- B. Where appropriate to their nature, scale, use and location, development proposals should include and be informed by a proportionate landscape and visual appraisal of the key landscape and visual opportunities and constraints of the site.
- C. Applications for major developments and where the Council identifies that a proposal would have a significant impact on landscape character or visual effect, may require a proportionate full landscape and visual impact assessment which should be submitted as part of the planning application. This should be undertaken by an appropriately trained and experienced professional in accordance with the latest best practice guidelines.

**WNLP objectives:** 3, 4, 10, 13, 17

## **12.7 High Quality Landscapes**

12.7.1 The NPPF requires plans to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, which can include making local valued landscape designations where supported by proportionate evidence. Reviews of the existing Special Landscape Areas (SLA) for the Daventry and South Northants Part 2 Local Plans supported the view that parts of the rural area have special qualities that set them apart from other landscapes. The SLAs were confirmed through the Part 2 Local Plans with some boundary amendments and one addition in South Northants. All the SLA areas have been carried forward in this Local Plan:

- Welland Valley
- Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington

- Catesby and Fawsley
- Eydon and Culworth
- Yardley Chase and Castle Ashby
- Tove Valley
- Whittlewood Forest and Hazelborough Forest
- Catesby, Fawsley, Maidford and Litchborough
- Aynho, Cherwell Valley and Eydon
- Sulgrave and Great Central Railway

12.7.2 The Special Landscape Area studies for the Daventry and South Northamptonshire areas (2017) set out the special qualities that define the character of each SLA. These include landscape condition, rarity, distinctiveness, scenic quality, natural and cultural character and function. Their character is sensitive to change, and a variety of factors can contribute positively to or detract from their quality. Policy BN7 aims to conserve and enhance the quality of the SLAs by requiring development proposals to be sympathetic in terms of siting, form, scale, materials and design.

### **Policy BN7 - Special Landscape Areas**

- A. The Council will protect the special qualities of the Special Landscape Areas identified on the Policies and Inset Maps. The Council will consider the impact of proposals on the special qualities, including cumulative impacts, and will resist proposals that would have a harmful effect on their special qualities that cannot be successfully mitigated.
- B. In addition to the provisions of BN6(C), proposals for development within or affecting the special qualities of a Special Landscape Area should:
  - i. Pay particular attention to design, materials, siting of buildings and the use of land; and
  - ii. Be informed by the special qualities identified in the Special Landscape Area studies or any successor document; and
  - iii. Contribute, where appropriate, to the conservation, enhancement or restoration of the area's character and appearance.
- C. Where required in accordance with policy BN6(C) the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should inform the design of the proposal to minimise harm to the special qualities, including the incorporation of mitigation and compensatory measures. Applicants will be required to;

- i. Assess the likely impacts of the development on its special qualities, the level of detail of the assessments will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal; and
- ii. Demonstrate that the design of the proposal has been informed by the assessment to minimise negative landscape impacts; and
- iii. Demonstrate that the impact of any harm can be successfully mitigated through an appropriate landscape treatment in keeping with the Special Landscape Area and landscape character type.

**WNLP objectives:** 3, 4, 10, 13, 17

## **12.8 Fringes**

- 12.8.1 The focus of sustainable growth at West Northamptonshire's towns (Brackley, Daventry, Northampton and Towcester) leads to pressure on their rural fringes, which are predominantly agricultural and home to a number of smaller settlements. Each settlement has a character and identity which makes them distinct from other places and it is important to retain that sense of place. There are also potential development pressures at junctions 15 (Northampton Gateway), 15a, 16 and 18 of the M1.
- 12.8.2 The Local Plan designates areas of Green Wedge on the edges of the towns and other locations where there are settlements that could be affected by coalescence. These areas are shown on the policies maps.
- 12.8.3 It should be noted that Green Wedge is a policy as opposed to a landscape designation and is not dependent on a high quality landscape as is the case with the Special Landscape Area.

### **Policy BN8 - Green Wedge**

Proposals within the areas of Green Wedge defined on the policies map will be required to demonstrate how they will protect the identity, character and setting of fringe settlements by:

- i. Maintaining physical and visual separation between the towns, employment areas and fringe settlements; and
- ii. Preventing coalescence of the towns and employment areas with the settlements; and
- iii. Keeping the areas of Green Wedge open.

**WNLP objectives:** 10, 13

## **12.9 West Northamptonshire's Natural Environment**

12.9.1 West Northamptonshire has a rich natural environment which encompasses a range of sites that are recognised for their important contribution to the diversity of species and important habitats. These range from sites that have been designated for their local importance to those that are internationally recognised, such as the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (UNVGP SPA) (Policy BN15). There are presently 22 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) across the area and over 180 hectares of land designated as Local Nature Reserves and 729 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

12.9.2 Local Geological Sites (LGS) and Regional Important Geological Sites (RIGs) are also to be found and define areas considered worthy of protection for their Earth Science or landscape importance.

12.9.3 Designated sites form a significant and important part of West Northamptonshire's natural resource by contributing to the connectivity and resilience of ecological assets, biodiversity linkages and the landscape as a whole. In the future these sites will help habitats and species adapt to the effects of climate change.

12.9.4 Increasing pressure is being placed on natural habitats, both as a result of new development, the wider impacts of climate change and the introduction of non-native species. There is a pressing need to not only protect, enhance and manage the adaptation of existing sites, but also to restore and create habitats at a landscape scale, especially those that are also important to the wider green infrastructure network to enable wildlife to freely move. Functioning and resilient ecosystem networks provide significant beneficial effects, such as on local climate regulation and carbon storage, also known as Natural Capital.

## **12.10 National policy and legislation for Nature Recovery**

12.10.1 The UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan sets out what the UK will do to improve the environment, within a generation. By 2042, the ambition is to achieve high quality, accessible, natural spaces with increased biodiversity close to where people live and work, with a focus around the equal distribution of environmental benefits and resources to all.

12.10.2 The Environment Act 2021 introduced a number of new duties for local authorities, which are of relevance to nature recovery and biodiversity, including:

- All planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) will have to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain from February 2024 (S98-101)
- An enhanced duty for Local Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity (S102) and report on their actions (S103)
- The need for LPAs to comply with the above duty and have regard to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy in local planning policy and decisions (S102).
- Responsible authorities appointed by the Secretary of State (S105) to lead on the preparation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) (S106), working with a broad range of stakeholders.

## **12.11 The UK Nature Recovery Network and Local Nature Recovery Strategies**

12.11.1 The Nature Recovery Network (NRN) is a major commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. By bringing together partners, legislation and funding, DEFRA's ambition is to restore and enhance the natural environment all over England. The Nature Recovery Network will help West Northamptonshire to deal with three of the biggest challenges we face: biodiversity loss, climate change and wellbeing. By 2042 the aim is to:

- restore 75% of protected sites on land (including freshwaters) to favourable condition,
- create or restore 500,000ha of additional wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites,
- recover threatened and iconic animal and plant species by providing more, diverse and better-connected habitats,
- support work to increase woodland cover,
- achieve a range of environmental, economic and social benefits, such as carbon capture, flood management, clean water, pollination and recreation.

12.11.2 Part of this ambition is that local authorities will become responsible authorities and support the NRN by producing and delivering their own Local Nature Recovery strategies (LNRS), working together with local partners and developers to identify and map protected sites alongside areas of importance for biodiversity, including areas of notable potential for biodiversity enhancement and environmental benefits.



## Local Nature Recovery Strategy

- 12.11.3 West Northamptonshire Council is a responsible authority and a LNRS for West Northamptonshire is being produced which will identify areas for biodiversity enhancement and provide a spatial strategy for nature, establishing priorities and opportunities to recover and enhance the local natural environment and will assist the implementation of the wider Nature Recovery Network (NRN). Within this strategy and work, opportunities for the delivery of multiple benefits will to be identified and that should provide best value for time and money invested.
- 12.11.4 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires that a local plan must take account of any local nature recovery strategy that relates to all or part of the local planning authority's area, including in particular:
- A. the areas identified in the strategy as areas which –
    - i. are, or could become, of particular importance for biodiversity, or
    - ii. are areas where the recovery or enhancement of biodiversity could make a particular contribution to other environmental benefits,
  - B. the priorities set out in the strategy for recovering or enhancing biodiversity, and
  - C. the proposals set out in the strategy as to potential measures relating to those priorities.
- 12.11.5 All new development must take into account existing biodiversity and geodiversity resources on their individual sites and contribute to the links between them.

### Policy BN9 - Nature Conservation

- A. Development will be required to:
  - i. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity. All proposals likely to affect biodiversity will be expected to demonstrate through an ecological assessment an understanding of the significance of nature conservation assets on site and the potential for the proposal to impact on it and its setting and surroundings, including any relationships between the habitat asset and other habitats and/or step stone habitats; and minimise harm to habitats, particularly priority habitats, and other biodiversity assets and green infrastructure by following the mitigation hierarchy of:

- a. Avoiding harm to biodiversity, particularly where it is irreplaceable, and including consideration of alternative sites where appropriate, then
  - b. Mitigating (within the local area) any harm to biodiversity, then
  - c. Compensating for any remaining harm to biodiversity (within the local area or in other identified areas).
- i. Achieve a net gain in biodiversity in line with policy BN10; and
  - ii. Make appropriate provision for long-term management of habitats and geological features connected to or affected by the development.
- B. Proposals should have regard to principles set out in the Northamptonshire Biodiversity SPD or successor document and where necessary undertake up to date, comprehensive ecological surveys in accordance with industry guidelines and standards to inform development.
- C. The Council will seek the protection or enhancement of the ecological network in proportion to the site's designation status, the contribution it makes to the ecological network and take account of considerations set out below:
- i. Sites of national or international importance – Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are of international and / or national importance and development affecting them will be expected to avoid causing adverse effects.
  - ii. Sites of local importance – Development affecting West Northamptonshire Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, Local Geological Sites and Potential Wildlife Sites will be expected to avoid causing adverse effects on these assets unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits of development clearly outweigh the harm.
  - iii. Other biodiversity assets – Development affecting sites that are not formally designated, but which make a positive contribution to biodiversity, will be required to take into account their current or potential role in West Northamptonshire wider biodiversity network.
  - iv. Priority Species and Habitats. Development proposals should avoid negative impacts upon priority habitats instead promoting their conservation, restoration, and enhancement alongside the recovery of priority species.

**WNLPA objectives:** 1, 2, 4, 5

## **12.12 Biodiversity Net Gain**

- 12.12.1 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is an approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand, in line with the intentions of the Environment Act 2021.

- 12.12.2 The requirement for BNG does not change existing legal protections for important habitats and wildlife species. It maintains the mitigation hierarchy to avoid impacts first, then mitigate and only compensate as a last resort.
- 12.12.3 The NPPF promotes net gains for biodiversity and endorses net gains for biodiversity in new developments, especially on-site, stating at paragraph 180(d) that development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.'
- 12.12.4 Paragraph 174 continues: 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: [...] d. minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures,'
- 12.12.5 Whilst paragraph 179 outlines that 'Plans should: [...] b. promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity and development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.'
- 12.12.6 Demonstrating BNG requires an approach to measuring biodiversity. In order to achieve this applicants will be required to use of the latest Biodiversity Metric or its successor.
- 12.12.7 The Council strongly encourages developers to seek opportunities to exceed the minimum 10% requirement to help increase levels of biodiversity and reverse the trend of biodiversity loss across the UK.
- 12.12.8 When securing biodiversity net gain, be that through on or off-site habitat enhancements and associated management, the local authority must be satisfied that this is secured in perpetuity. Developers will be required to maintain and manage biodiversity enhancements for at least 30 years and are encouraged to aim beyond this timeframe. This may involve the use of conservation covenants, private voluntary legal agreements between a

landowner and a responsible body that will safeguard the land for conservation. Conservation covenants will continue to apply even if the land changes hand.

### **Policy BN10 - Biodiversity Net Gain**

- A. Proposals for development will be required to:
  - i. Demonstrate an understanding of biodiversity and habitats on the existing development site (as set out in Policy BN9); and
  - ii. Make provision for at least 10% biodiversity net gain on site, or where it can be demonstrated that for design reasons this is not practicable, off site through preferably a site close to the development site linked up with the site or elsewhere, if it can be demonstrated that it would be favourable in achieving a better outcome in improving biodiversity overall.
- B. Exempted development must achieve no net loss of biodiversity and should achieve appropriate net gains, aspiring to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain.
- C. Planning applications subject to mandatory biodiversity net gain must submit a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan at the application stage that includes:
  - i. How the mitigation hierarchy has been adhered to; and
  - ii. Justification for the baseline date and assessed value of the site prior to development, including a brief synopsis of the site's historic biodiversity value and appointing strategic significance in metric; and
  - iii. Pre and post-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats and created off site habitats; and
  - iv. How net gains are achieved through onsite, offsite or purchased credits, clarifying and explaining the predicted biodiversity outcomes both qualitatively and quantitatively; and
  - v. How a positive proportionate contribution has been made to the ecological networks and priorities as outlined within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and regional Nature Recovery Networks and for maintaining or creating local ecological networks through habitat creation, protection, enhancement, restoration and management.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 4, 7, 13

## **12.13 Trees and Woodlands and Hedgerows**

- 12.13.1 Trees, woodlands and hedgerows are extremely important components of our Green Infrastructure Network, fulfilling a very wide range of functions including sequestering and storing carbon, enhancing biodiversity, providing access to nature, managing water, air, soil and noise pollution, reducing flood risk, stabilising land, reducing soil erosion, strengthening landscape character, and providing shade and cooling to combat high temperatures.
- 12.13.2 Trees and woodlands also provide a superb recreational resource, encourage community engagement, greatly enhance amenity values of an area. They are often key features of areas with high recreational value, such as in parks, pocket parks and country parks (such as Daventry Country Park), Protected Woodlands (such as Salcey Forest, to the south of Northampton) or Canal and river valleys (Briar Hill Meadows, Midsummer Meadows in Northampton). Group of trees, alley trees or special solitary trees are often part of listed heritage sites, such as Historic Park and Gardens, conservation areas or in Public Open Spaces, such as on many 'Village Greens'.
- 12.13.3 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow have wider Natural Capital functions, i.e., in regulation of environments, landscaping or wood production. Trees in urban areas can soften otherwise harsh environments (soft landscaping), filter wind, dust, aerosols, pollutants or noise from close environments (especially if close to streets or other polluting uses), cool urban environments down (also by perspiration) creating pleasant public spaces at street level. Trees can also control storm water by absorbing and intercepting rainwater runoff and stabilising ground and vulnerable soil types.
- 12.13.4 Canopies of trees provide cool shelter to habitat surfaces, species living there and also to human beings. This might become over time more important, as this will help mitigating the effects of climate change by protecting from light, moisture loss and UV radiation, both in rural and more importantly in urban environments, that often suffer especially from the heat island effect.
- 12.13.5 The Council's GI and Natural Capital Evidence identified the following trees and woodland types within West Northamptonshire: Ancient Woodlands, broadleaved, mixed and coniferous woodlands. Ancient Woodlands are defined by Natural England as areas where there is believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD. These woodlands can be either ancient semi-natural or ancient replanted woodland. They are irreplaceable habitats which contribute towards local distinctiveness, amenity and biodiversity.

- 12.13.6 The NPPF provides protection to ancient woodland stating at paragraph 180 that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists.
- 12.13.7 The following ancient woodlands are well known within West Northamptonshire: Everdon Stubbs, Badby Woods, Salcey, Whittlewood and Yardley Chase. These woodlands provide the opportunity for woodland enhancement and creation, linking and extending the existing blocks of woodland and other habitats of high biodiversity value. The creation of new woodland should not be at the expense of existing areas of high biodiversity value and should not compromise the creation of geographically related habitats such as acid grassland and heath land.
- 12.13.8 All woodland types are Priority habitats. The conservation of these woodlands and continued efforts for habitat restoration will apply regardless of ownership and proposals for development that may prejudice the integrity and value of these sites, will be resisted.
- 12.13.9 West Northamptonshire has a relatively low level of tree cover. 1.97% of the WNC area is Ancient Woodlands and only 3.8% of the area is defined as woodland areas, compared to 12.8% tree and woodland cover across the UK. Creation of new woodlands, particularly with native species can stimulate the economy through tourism, business diversification and forestry employment. Woodlands also deliver benefits through the creation of diverse habitats and by providing recreation opportunities.
- 12.13.10 Woodlands and semi-natural environment bring the highest natural capital functions. This becomes more apparent, with maps (West Northamptonshire Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital Study) that show ecosystem delivery is greatest in south of the county, where the majority of woodlands are located along the Yardley Whittlewood Ridge. The demand maps of air quality, noise, local climate regulation, and accessible nature show clearly the importance of ecosystem service delivery to the urban centres in West Northamptonshire, with the highest demand in Northampton and Daventry. Urban areas adjacent to the road network are also hotspots for demand.
- 12.13.11 There is often a mismatch between demand and capacity to provide these services, so where woodland and other semi-natural habitats occur within or in close proximity to urban areas, these areas should be protected and expanded even if not important for biodiversity.

- 12.13.12 The emerging Tree Strategy for West Northamptonshire is expected to identify, where we are going to plant trees and woodlands. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will identify how this relates to existing Green Infrastructure and how this and other biodiversity improvements, such as the creation and improvement of semi-natural habitats, will be implemented.
- 12.13.13 In the delivery of woodland creation, the Government's England Tree Action Plan and other still to be identified 'Green initiatives' should be supporting the local authorities and partners to overcome financial barriers and procedural obstacles. This might also include initiatives under the label of Climate Change, as Climate change and Biodiversity decline are intrinsically linked and trees are contributing greatly to the sequestration of Carbon Dioxide, especially in their growth phases.
- 12.13.14 Following on from the 'England Tree Strategy'<sup>2</sup>, the UK Government published 'the Trees and Woodland Strategy (TAWS) Toolkit: A Guidance for local action'<sup>4</sup>, which is directed at Local Authorities' that aim to produce a Local Tree Strategy, or Trees and Woodland Strategy (TAWS).

### **Policy BN11 - Trees and Woodland**

- A. The Council will support proposals that deliver the aims and objectives of the draft UK Tree Strategy and the England Tree Action Plan, aiming to significantly increase tree cover, protect and enhance woodland, and connect people to the trees and woodland around them.
- B. The Council will support proposals that:
- i. Protect and expand the mosaic of woodland habitats, linking fragmented areas of woodland, in particular wooded river valleys and pockets of ancient and riverside (riparian) woodlands. The Trees strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for WNC will identify Biodiversity or similar Improvement areas and other areas, where this is most likely achievable;

<sup>2</sup> <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/forestry/england-tree-strategy/>

<sup>3</sup> That means, DEFRA, together with the Forestry Commission and the Tree Council published the TREES AND WOODLAND STRATEGY TOOLKIT

<sup>4</sup> <https://treecouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/science-and-research/tree-strategies/#:~:text=The%20Trees%20and%20Woodland%20Strategy,can%20bring%20to%20local%20communities.>

- ii. Encourage habitat diversity through conserving and managing existing woodland and trees that are of heritage, cultural and/or aesthetic value, including ancient woodland and veteran trees;
  - iii. Protect and manage trees of high quality, amenity value and in Public Open Spaces as set out in tree and woodland strategies or more detailed Park strategies for specific parks;
  - iv. Increase the provision of street trees within urban areas where appropriate;
  - v. Aim to have a tree planting initiative as part of Priority Habitat pilots;
  - vi. Target tree-planting at the areas of greatest need where the green infrastructure and natural capital benefits can be maximised, whilst avoiding the loss of, or harm to, other priority habitats, including encouraging woodland planting schemes on areas of low-grade agricultural land and land in need of remediation;
  - vii. Improve public access to woodlands and trees particularly by sustainable travel modes to capture the health and wellbeing benefits whilst managing the associated pressures;
  - iii. Encourage the positive management of woodland to bring it into a more productive / resilient state, improve habitat diversity, and more effectively contribute to important green infrastructure functions such as flood risk management, urban cooling and carbon storage/sequestration.
- C. Development that would lead to the further fragmentation or result in a loss of ancient woodland, aged and veteran trees will not be permitted unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 4, 6, 7, 13

## **12.14 Trees and Hedgerows in Development**

- 12.14.1 Individual trees, tree groups and woodland can be protected by Tree Preservation Orders. This provides statutory protection to the trees, requiring consent to be sought for works to them. When necessary, the Council will use Tree Preservation Orders as a means of to protect certain trees which have public amenity value including those that have an intrinsic beauty or make a special contribution to landscape or street scene. Protection is also given if a tree is located in a conservation area and under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 protection is afforded to substantial hedgerows which are considered to be 'irreplaceable' due to their age, and their archaeological, historical, landscape or wildlife significance.



- 12.14.2 Other trees, woodlands and hedgerows contribute to the character of the district and may be worthy of protection. These features can be used to positively enhance development schemes and trees and hedgerows should be retained and protected, wherever possible, but where their loss is unavoidable, they should be replaced with suitable new planting either within the site or in the locality if this is more appropriate.
- 12.14.3 Development can make a positive contribution to the local tree and hedgerow resource through new planting or the restoration and improved management of existing features. Planting schemes which use species and varieties native to the area, are locally sourced, and maximise the benefits to the local landscape and wildlife, will be preferred.
- 12.14.4 In order to properly assess impacts, where there are trees that could affect, or be affected by a planning application, the Council will require a tree survey and assessment to be carried out to recognised standards and submitted in support of the application. Such assessment which should be carried out early in the design process should make clear which trees are to be retained and how these will be protected during the construction phase. Conditions will be imposed to secure the implementation of any necessary protective measures to secure their retention.

### **Policy BN12 - Trees and Hedgerow in Developments**

- A. Proposals for development should seek to integrate existing trees, woodland and hedgerows.
- B. Proposals for felling and pruning will not be permitted to a tree in a conservation area or a tree subject to a tree preservation order except in the interests of good arboriculture practice or other clear environmental benefits
- C. Where the loss of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows is unavoidable suitable replacement planting will be required in agreement with the Council. This should be on the basis of three new trees for tree lost.
- D. Where a proposed development retains existing trees and hedgerows on-site, or where development occurs within a tree root protection area, provision must be made for their care and protection throughout the duration of the development with mitigation measures being agreed and put in place to ensure that development works do not have a harmful impact on existing trees.

- E. Planting schemes should use native or similar species of local provenance and maximise the benefits to the local landscape and wildlife.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 3, 7, 13

## **12.15 Green and Blue Infrastructure**

- 12.15.1 The NPPF defines Green Infrastructure (GI), as a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity. Green infrastructure includes assets such as parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, churchyards, field boundaries, archaeological sites, street trees, allotments and private gardens. Blue infrastructure provides the same benefits as GI and includes streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies and associated habitats. The Green and Blue Infrastructure framework, provides a range of ecosystem services which work at different geographic levels, including sub-regional, local and site-specific and provide benefits for West Northamptonshire.
- 12.15.2 Across West Northamptonshire the environmental and historic features have provided a rich green and blue infrastructure legacy of open countryside, historic parks, amenity green spaces set in the framework of places where people live and work, natural and semi natural landscapes and green / blue corridors like the River Nene, Grand Union Canal and Brampton Valley Way. Other places of note include allotments, play areas and teen facilities and places for quiet reflection like the grounds of churches.
- 12.15.3 Green Infrastructure provides a range of benefits including opportunities for sustainable movement by cycle or on foot, positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors, quality environments that attract investment in terms of housing and jobs, as well as performing important functions relating to the natural environment, climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
- 12.15.4 West Northamptonshire's Green Infrastructure provides a range of benefits and contributes to:
- Reinforcing and enhancing landscape and townscape, ensuring that proposed green infrastructure is appropriate to its local context.

- Supporting delivery of biodiversity net gain and Nature Recovery Strategies, including by providing links between habitats especially in identified Local and Regional Green Corridors
- Connecting where appropriate to the wider ecological network whilst carefully balancing the needs of wildlife and people.
- Promoting healthy living for all members of the community by providing spaces designed to be physically accessible and socially inclusive,
- Protecting and enhancing the water environment [Run-off/Space for SUDS] and soil environments.
- Better community and public health by improving air quality and open-air surroundings to encourage outdoor activity which lowers stress levels and improves mental and physical health and well-being
- Improving connectivity and access by linking natural assets and encouraging modal shift to walking and cycling

12.15.5 The NPPF sets out that Local Plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats for wildlife and green infrastructure for people, recognising the wide range of benefits that such green spaces can provide. Policy BN13 will require developments to include green infrastructure to provide a range of benefits appropriate to its type, scale and location. Strategic development sites should be master-planned in their entirety to show the location of new on-site strategic green infrastructure and how it relates to the wider network. Proposals should not lead to fragmentation of green infrastructure.

12.15.6 The West Northamptonshire [Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital Study](#) identifies existing and potential Strategic GI projects for West Northamptonshire which will deliver multi-functional benefits to people and wildlife.

12.15.7 Projects include:

1. Improving Local Parks such as Abington Park, Eastfield Park and Racecourse Park
2. Improvements to Special Landscape areas, woodlands and wildlife sites such as Salcey/ Yardley Ridge woodlands, Northampton Battlefield, Kingsthorpe Wildlife Trust Reserve linkage
3. Improving Local County Parks, such as Daventry Country Park, Hunsbury Hill Country Park and Upton Country Park
4. Improvements to the River Nene and Grand Union Canal Corridor and water environments such as Northampton Town Centre Waterside, Northampton Washland and Wootton Brook.

## **Policy BN13 - Green and Blue Infrastructure and Development**

- A. The Council will support proposals that sustain and enhance existing, and create additional, green and blue infrastructure.
- B. New developments must ensure that existing green and blue infrastructure assets will be protected, managed and maintained, as well as connected to enhance their multi-functionality.
- C. All major housing and commercial developments will be expected to deliver and / or contribute to the green and blue infrastructure projects. Applications must be accompanied by a site-specific green and blue infrastructure strategy and /or plan to illustrate how green and blue infrastructure is integrated within the development proposal and how it seeks to improve connectivity to the Local Level Green Infrastructure network beyond the site boundary.
- D. In accordance with Best Practice Principles, Aims and Objectives set out in the National Green Infrastructure Framework (Natural England, Jan 2023) (or subsequent updated documents), development proposals will need to demonstrate how they make a positive contribution to projects in existing Green Infrastructure Plans, or contained in a forthcoming local Green Infrastructure Plan or subsequent policy documents, or other projects that correspond to Components/Principles identified within the National Green Infrastructure Framework.

**WNLP objectives:** 2, 4, 5, 7, 13

### **12.16 Green Infrastructure Connections**

- 12.16.1 The Sub-Regional GI corridors within West Northamptonshire, identified through the West Northamptonshire Green Infrastructure and Natural Capital Study, broadly follow the strategic waterways, valleys and ridges, and are known as follows:
- 1. The Nene Valley (Newnham–Wellingborough)
  - 2. Brackley–Towcester–Wellingborough Wooded Ridge
  - 3. Cherwell Valley/Oxford Canal (Oxford–Banbury– Rugby–Coventry)
  - 4. Grand Union Canal (Milton Keynes – Northampton – Daventry – Leicester)
  - 5. Northampton to Milton Keynes Link
  - 6. Brampton Valley (Northampton – Market Harborough)

12.16.2 The Local GI corridors within West Northamptonshire are identified as follows:

1. Weedon Bec–Banbury
2. Newnham–Napton on the Hill
3. Middleton Cheney–Brackley–Buckingham
4. Newnham–Woodford Halse–Brackley
5. Great Oxendon–Rugby
6. Northampton–Daventry
7. Farthingstone–Towcester–Milton Keynes
8. Pitsford Water–Winwick
9. Daventry–Newnham
10. Silverstone–Buckingham
11. Buckingham–Milton Keynes
12. Wellingborough–Northampton
13. Sywell Reservoir–Broughton
14. Oxford Canal–Towcester
15. Banbury–Grand Union Canal
16. Banbury–Moreton Pinkney
17. Northampton–Olney
18. Welford Reservoir–Ravensthorpe Reservoir

12.16.3 Access to Green Infrastructure needs to be seen in urban context, and in the open countryside, where it is strategically mainly achieved by a Green Ways and Blue Ways network. Accessible Greenspace Standards – promote access to good quality green and blue space within 15 minutes’ walk from home. The People and Nature Survey published by Natural England found that 82% of adults agree that being in nature makes them very happy over but one third of people in England do not have access to green space within this distance.

12.16.4 Natural England launched early 2023 a major new tool to help towns and cities turn greener, the Green Infrastructure Framework. The aim is to increase the amount of green cover to 40% in urban residential areas, and a commitment that the public in towns and cities should be able to access green space, such as woodlands, wetlands, parks and rivers, within a 15-minute walk from their home.

12.16.5 Green Ways are strategic access links between major settlements through open countryside, formed by the public rights of way network and cycle routes.

- 12.16.6 Blue Ways are strategic access links between major settlements through open countryside along rivers, canals or navigations. These are formed by the public rights of way network, canal towpaths, canals and navigations.

### **Policy BN14 - Green and Blue Infrastructure Corridors**

- A. Green and blue corridors will be recognised for their important contribution to sense of place and they will be managed and enhanced by:
  - i. Incorporating existing and identified future networks into new development proposals; and
  - ii. Securing contributions from development or identifying other sources for the creation of and future management of the green infrastructure networks; and
  - iii. Delivering long term management strategies for the subregional and local network.
  
- B. Measures to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure provision will:
  - i. Be designed and delivered sustainably with prudent use of natural resources; and
  - ii. Mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change including through improved flood risk management and as a carbon store; and
  - iii. Be designed to the highest quality in terms of appearance, access provision and biodiversity enhancement and protection; and
  - iv. Reflect local character through the planting of native and other climate appropriate species and consideration of natural and cultural heritage features; and
  - v. Be supported by long-term management strategies, such as a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and other strategies across the Council.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### **12.17 Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area**

- 12.17.1 The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits were designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) in 2011 for their international importance as a wetland habitat for nonbreeding waterbirds. Unit 1 of the SPA is located to the south-east of Northampton and is known as the 'Clifford Hill Gravel Pits' or 'Northampton Washlands'. It has also been included on the list of wetland sites of international importance (Ramsar sites) and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

- 12.17.2 The Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by West Northamptonshire Council in November 2021 and supplements the policies contained in the WNJCS. It highlights the requirement to consult Natural England on proposals that could affect the SPA and details consultation zones for different types of development. It should be referred to when preparing development proposals. A mitigation strategy has also been adopted (March 2022) for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA which is appended to the above SPD.
- 12.17.3 Since the adoption of the WNJCS, Natural England has continued to monitor visitor pressure on the SPA. A bird disturbance Survey and Visitor Access Study was commissioned jointly with North Northamptonshire Council in 2021. The surveys were undertaken and completed in Spring 2023 and provides an up-to-date evidence base. West Northamptonshire Council is working with North Northamptonshire Council to prepare and new mitigation strategy for the SPA based on this new evidence.
- 12.17.4 This evidence shows that new housing within 5.9 km of the SPA has increased recreational pressure, contributing to disturbance of and decline in bird species which form the SPA qualifying features. To protect the SPA from recreational pressure as a result of residential development the mitigation strategy identifies a number of measures including provision of information panels and wardening of the SPA to educate visitors. Residential development is required to pay a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM)<sup>5</sup> contribution and / or provide bespoke mitigation to protect the SPA.
- 12.17.5 Mitigation may involve:
- i. Development of and implementation of habitat and access management plans within the SPA
  - ii. Improvement of existing greenspace and recreational routes
  - iii. Provision of suitable alternative natural greenspace and recreational route the community to promote awareness and understanding of the important of the SPA.

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<sup>5</sup> For residential developments which result in a net increase in the number of dwellings within 5.9km of Unit 1 of the SPA it is proposed to avoid and mitigate likely adverse recreational pressure effects on the SPA by making a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and/or other suitable mitigation. <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents-spds-other-guides-and-village-design-statements/west>



- 12.17.6 Other significant adverse effects such as loss or fragmentation of habitats and change to water quality can also arise from development. In addition, there could be impacts on areas of functionally linked land which support the bird species (golden plover and lapwing) for which the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA has been designated. As such developers should engage early with Natural England regarding their proposals. For example, for sites in close proximity to the SPA, consideration should be given to phasing the construction period, whereby the most intensive/ noisy part of development avoids the sensitive winter season (1st October – 31st March inclusive).
- 12.17.7 Proposals directly impacting on green infrastructure connected to the Upper Nene Valley Special Protection Area are required to engage with the community to promote awareness and understanding of the importance of the SPA.

#### **Policy BN15 - Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area:**

- A. Developments that are likely to have significant effects alone or in combination on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoid or mitigate where impacts are identified.
- B. Where development is likely to have significant effects on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, a Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required, which if the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site's conservation objectives, will include the need for an Appropriate Assessment. For developers, early consultation with Natural England is needed regarding proposals that could affect the SPA. Applicants should also have regard to the SPA Supplementary Planning Document.
- C. Applications comprising a net gain in residential units within 5.9 km of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site will, in combination, have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA if not mitigated.
- D. The Local Planning Authority of WNC has adopted a mitigation strategy for Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA which must be referred to when preparing an application that is located within 5.9 km of Unit 1 of the SPA. Residential development will be required to pay a Suitable Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) contribution and / or provide bespoke mitigation such as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) in order to mitigate recreational impact (direct or indirect).
- E. Other adverse effects could include the loss or fragmentation of functionally linked land, non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration or light), and impacts due to water runoff. Sites that could potentially be functionally linked land associated with the SPA will need to undertake overwintering bird surveys early in the planning process ahead of submitting an application.



## **12.18 Nature Improvement Areas**

- 12.18.1 Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) are defined as 'Inter-connected networks of wildlife habitats intended to re-establish thriving wildlife populations and help species respond to the challenges of climate change'.
- 12.18.2 Guidance provides that to minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should consider specifying the types of development that may be appropriate in NIAs; and that local plans should contain a clear strategy for supporting NIAs where they have been identified. NIAs were established to create joined up and resilient ecological networks at a landscape scale. They are run by partnerships of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and conservation organisations with funding provided by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and Natural England.
- 12.18.3 Established in 2012 the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area is one of 12 NIAs that were selected through a national competition. It covers an area of 41,000 hectares running through the heart of Northamptonshire including the northern part of the South Northamptonshire District. It covers a landscape that has been altered by man, with fragments of wildlife habitats like wildflower meadows, woodlands and wetlands that need to be protected, managed better, enlarged, and connected up. All of this needs to

be surrounded by a sustainably managed landscape of farmland, towns and villages.

- 12.18.4 The strategic nature and benefits of the Nature Improvement Area are acknowledged and Policy BN16 gives detailed consideration to the operation and functioning of the NIA in West Northamptonshire. There is a specific page set up by the Wildlife Trust, which provides more local information on the Nene Valley NIA <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/nene-valley-nia>

### **Policy BN16 - Development in the Nature Improvement Area**

Development within the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area will be permitted where it:

- i. Enables the functioning of the Nature Improvement Area; and
- ii. Where appropriate, contributes to the opportunities for habitat creation and/or habitat management within the Nature Improvement Area; and
- iii. Is consistent with other policies of the Development Plan.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### **12.19 River Nene Strategic River Corridor**

- 12.19.1 All river environments are an important resource for wildlife, the biodiversity network, leisure and recreation and are also an important link to the area's past and cultural heritage. The river Nene is a strategic river that together with the Grand Union Canal provides an important navigable function for West Northamptonshire, connecting the area to the rest of the waterway network. The River Nene contributes heavily to the area's sense of place and the banks of the Nene are rich in heritage assets. The Nene offers opportunities to restore enhance and create wetland landscapes and other natural habitats. It also provides a focus for regeneration and the provision of accessible open space and green infrastructure as it passes through Northampton.
- 12.19.2 Across the plan area, there is significant potential to enhance the setting of the River Nene, both within the urban and rural context. Within the town of Northampton itself, the river provides opportunities for sport, leisure and recreation such as canoeing and rafting, the Northampton Marina facilities at the River Nene's junction with the Grand Union Canal, and access to walks and cycle routes.
- 12.19.3 As the river opens up into the broad floodplains to the east of Northampton, and particularly in the areas that have previously been exploited for gravel

extraction, there are increased opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement, especially those linked to the internationally designated Special Protection Area and priority habitats, such as wet grasslands. These areas also help to meet some of the flood risk management requirements, as set out above, by making space for water and providing an important resource for helping to provide the area with ways to adapt to climate change.

- 12.19.4 In recognition of the importance of the River Nene the Environment Agency with its partners is producing the 'Nene Water Management Strategy'. The Council is committed in the support of that project.

### **Policy BN17 - The River Nene Strategic River Corridor**

- A. The natural and cultural environment of the Nene corridor through the plan area, including its tributaries, will be enhanced and protected in recognition of its important contribution to the area's green infrastructure network, landscape, townscapes, regeneration, recreation and historic environment.
- B. Proposals for new development and habitat enhancement should demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the River Nene for biodiversity and natural capital within the beyond the plan area.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

## **12.20 Ground Instability**

- 12.20.1 There are areas across the Plan area that are prone to ground instability issues due to their underlying geological and geomorphological make up. Northampton Sand occasionally overlays Upper Lias Clay and this combination can cause the formation of landslides particularly where slopes have angles greater than seven degrees. A number of the ground stability issues encountered in this geological setting formed during the end of the last ice age and are considered to be in a state or near to a state of equilibrium. If, however these slopes are disturbed, by human activities or the ingress of water, these features could be reactivated.
- 12.20.2 The risk of landslide is increased by the following:
- Local geology;
  - Natural springs in the area;

- Slopes of over seven degrees; and
- Human activity (e.g. building or diversion of water into slope)

12.20.3 Unfavourable slope conditions can practically be accommodated through engineering design.

12.20.4 The areas in West Northamptonshire where instability is suspected have been identified using data available from the British Geological Survey (BGS). This data identifies land on gradients that are greater than seven degrees.

12.20.5 When preparing planning applications the developer will be required to establish if their proposal is in an area of known or potential ground instability using the data available from the BGS. If the proposal is in an area of known or potential ground instability the developer will be required to submit a ground stability report describing and analysing the issues relevant to ground instability and indicating how any issues will be mitigated against including remedial works. The ground stability report will be required to accompany the submission of the planning application.

## **Policy BN18 - Ground Instability**

- A. Development will be permitted on sites of unstable or potentially unstable land provided that:
  - i. The nature of the ground stability of the site has been assessed to the satisfaction of the planning authority and a ground stability report has been provided and agreed before the application is determined;
  - ii. The development does not add to the instability of the site or the surrounding land;
  - ii. Any required remedial works are implemented prior to the occupation of development; and
  - v. The development of any required stabilisation measures are environmentally acceptable to the satisfaction of the determining authority.
  
- A. The Ground instability report will be required to demonstrate that:
  - i. The degree of instability has been assessed;
  - ii. Measures to mitigate against the risk have been identified;
  - ii. A schedule of mitigation measures is in place; and
  - v. Any need for formal environmental assessment arising from any stabilisation work has been identified.

**WNLP objectives:** 1, 7, 13

## **Chapter 13: Transport**

### **13.1 Introduction**

- 13.1.1 To support the level of growth set out in this Plan, a range of transport schemes have already been identified by the Council and its partners. Specific details on the schemes are contained within the West Northamptonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).
- 13.1.2 An initial 'Phase 1' review of the IDP was undertaken in May 2023. This updated the current IDP and associated infrastructure schedules needed to support extant growth in the WNJCS and the Part 2 Local Plans. A 'Phase 2' review of the IDP will be undertaken once comments have been received from stakeholders and partners through the consultation on this version of the Plan. This will take into account any additional transport (and other) infrastructure required to support the combined WNJCS, WNLP and part 2 plans' growth. The IDP and the Infrastructure Chapter of this Plan set out how applications should deliver and/or contribute to infrastructure schemes either through financial and/or land contributions.

### **13.2 National and local policy context**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023 and Planning Practice Guidance**

- 13.2.1 The NPPF sets out that 'transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making'. This is to ensure that potential impacts on transport networks can be addressed, opportunities can be realised, sustainable modes are identified and pursued, environmental impacts are taken into account, and transport considerations are integral to scheme design and placemaking.
- 13.2.2 It states that 'significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes'. Therefore, strategies which would be to concentrate development in locations which have established or easily enhanced public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling routes would fit with this approach.

- 13.2.3 The policies within this Plan have been prepared in liaison with the Council's transport service and other partners such as National Highways and England's Economic Heartland as required by the NPPF. Where appropriate, these policies include recognition of schemes/routes that may come forward in the future which could unlock further growth.
- 13.2.4 When considering transport, the NPPF also requires policies to provide for large scale transport facilities (such as interchanges for rail freight and roadside services). Plans should also recognise the importance of providing adequate overnight lorry parking facilities and lorry parking.

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 13.2.5 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) contains further detail on the consideration transport should be given in the plan making process. It discusses the evidence base needed to support local plans and what assessments should establish.
- 13.2.6 A key piece of evidence required for local plans is an assessment of the impact of growth on the road network and on other transport modes. This is being undertaken for this Plan and full conclusions have not yet been made. However, detailed assessment of the growth within the WNJCS and the Part 2 Local Plans has been undertaken and the related schemes are contained within the Phase 1 IDP.

### **West Northamptonshire Council Corporate Plan**

- 13.2.7 The Corporate Plan for West Northamptonshire identifies six priority areas:
- a. Green and clean
  - b. Improved life chances
  - c. Connected communities
  - d. Thriving villages and towns
  - e. Economic development
  - f. Robust resource management
- 13.2.8 Of these, 'Connected communities' deals specifically with transport and connectivity. Objectives include:

- Improved road, rail and bus networks
- Completion of major road projects
- Improved road quality
- Increased use of electric vehicles and charging points

### **13.3 Evidence base and partnership working**

- 13.3.1 The submission version (Regulation 19) of this Plan will be informed by the emerging West Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP will set out the transport plan and policies for West Northamptonshire and how they are intended to be implemented. In some cases, this Plan will help to implement the objectives of the LTP, such as those relating to highway safety and supporting a switch to more sustainable modes.
- 13.3.2 Work began on a new Strategic Transport Model (STM) for Northamptonshire in the summer of 2023. The strategy contained within this Plan has been tested through the existing Northamptonshire STM and, where necessary, schemes have been identified to support growth in the IDP. As soon as this model is available, it will be used to test the proposals in this plan.
- 13.3.3 Alongside the LTP and STM, the Council has worked closely with National Highways, Network Rail and England’s Economic Heartland to identify the key schemes and funding needed to support growth and/or acknowledge potential schemes that may be required in the future.

### **13.4 Sustainable transport**

- 13.4.1 To achieve wider sustainability goals and meet the future travel needs of residents and visitors, this Plan recognises that a change in travel behaviour (or modal shift) will be required. This approach will not mean that people will be prevented from using their cars altogether but will encourage alternatives to the single use car journey, particularly for short everyday journeys. The Plan also creates the right policy environment for non-carbon technologies to be taken forward for both buildings and travel when they emerge.
- 13.4.2 It is acknowledged that use of other types of transport, beyond personal car use and particularly in rural areas, is either difficult or not an option. For example, walking or cycling long distances is not practical or public transport is infrequent or unreliable. To try to overcome these barriers, this Plan will be produced alongside the LTP and area Local Cycling and Walking



Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). The LTP will consider all transport modes across West Northamptonshire and identify schemes that can be delivered alongside development. The LCWIPs will assess existing walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure to identify where upgrades are needed or need to be put in place. Together, the WNLP, the LTP and the LWCIPs will seek to achieve these changes in modal shift.

- 13.4.3 The Regulation 19 version of this Plan will contain specific modal shift targets and provide a framework for.
- 13.4.4 England's Economic Heartland's 'Active Travel Strategy – The Opportunity' (July 2023) uses the Propensity to Cycle tool which looks at people's propensity to cycle to that seen in the Netherlands. Northampton (along with Peterborough and Luton) shows the largest potential increase in demand for cycling using this tool.
- 13.4.5 As such, all travel interventions should be designed to achieve the highest modal shift possible, with some new developments (SUEs) aspiring to achieve a modal split of no more than 40% of trips being made by car.
- 13.4.6 In addition to improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure, provision of measures such as through ticketing, real time information and promotion of public transport will play an essential part of the strategy. The Council will work with partners to help achieve these step changes.
- 13.4.7 Policies within this section should be read in conjunction within the entire plan and especially alongside policies within the Placemaking chapter. The Placemaking chapter sets out how applicants should approach the design of their developments in the round; including consideration of the transport hierarchy and how movement within and around the development can help achieve other objectives such as better health and design.

## **TR1 – Sustainable transport**

- A. Development proposals should demonstrate and achieve the following sustainable travel principles:

- i. Prioritise pedestrian, wheeler, cyclist and public transport users ahead of car users;
  - ii. Ensure new development is located close to or along existing strategic transport public transport corridors that can be promoted a strengthened;
  - iii. Ensure new development is designed to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling to everyday services and facilities such as schools, community facilities, open spaces and shops; and
  - iv. Promote and support improvements to the transport network which increases safety, improves air quality and encourages sustainable modes of transport.
- B. Applications for developments will need to be accompanied by either a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement which assesses the impact of development on the transport network.
- C. Applications for major development will need to be accompanied by a Travel Plan that sets out how the proposal meets sustainable travel principles both on-site and how it links to external sustainable travel routes such as cycleways, Public Rights of Ways and bridleways.

**WNLP objectives:** 1,7,8,9,10

## **13.5 Strategic connections**

- 13.5.1 West Northamptonshire's strategic rail and road connections make the area economically attractive for distribution, logistics and other industries which rely on national and international connections. However, these connections (M1, A45 and A43) are also attractive for local trips which increases congestion around junctions and on the strategic road network, with freight and passengers causing congestion on the rail network (West Coast Main Line). England Economic Heartland's 'Rail Strategic Objectives' (October 2023) sets out the priorities for railway transport for West Northamptonshire.
- 13.5.2 To ensure that the road network remains efficient and can serve the strategic demand, it will be important to make improvements to carefully manage more local movements to enhance capacity. At the strategic level 'Smart Motorways' which include use of former hard shoulders have been introduced on some sections of the national motorway network. Locally, this includes the M1 between J13 and J19. England Economic Heartland's Peterborough – Northampton – Oxford Connectivity Study (December 2022) and the Oxford – Milton Keynes Connectivity Study (December 2022) set out the priorities for road transport for West Northamptonshire.

- 13.5.3 In the case of the A45 and A43 trunk roads in the area, National Highways have implemented or are proposing to implement traffic management measures and related junction modifications in conjunction with development coming forward in these corridors.
- 13.5.4 On the A43, junction improvements are required to enable housing and employment growth at Towcester, Silverstone and Brackley. The Northampton Growth Management Scheme (NGMS) for the M1/A45 sets out necessary mitigation measures on the A45 between the M1 Junction 15 and Great Billing Junction required to support growth in Northampton. The partner councils have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Highways England on the delivery of NGMS with the agreement outlining a mechanism for using S106 planning obligations and CIL to deliver the schemes. The NGMS also considers the staging of developer contributions to support the viability of developments. The specific developer funded measures on the A45 and A43 are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 13.5.5 The West Coast Mainline provides the key north-south rail link for England and into Scotland but is particularly congested around Northampton and Long Buckby where freight and passenger services share the same lines. As demand from passengers and freight on the line increases, there may be a conflict between users. Whilst the area benefits from this strategic rail link (West Coast Mainline via the Northampton loop), the range of destinations available, the frequency and speed of connections is weaker than nearby towns such as Coventry, Rugby and Milton Keynes.
- 13.5.6 West Northamptonshire is also serviced by the Chiltern Line with a station at Kings Sutton. This is a smaller station which serves the more rural areas in the west of the Plan area, however services from here into London are less frequent than on the West Coast Main Line.

## **TR2 – Strategic connections**

The priorities to retain and enhance West Northamptonshire’s strategic connections for economic advantage are to work in partnership with, and support the relevant transport providers in order to secure the following initiatives:

### **A. Rail**

The necessary rail transport improvements to support strategic connectivity are the implementation of:

- i. An enhanced service in terms of journey time and frequency of passenger rail services between London, Birmingham and the regions airports (via Northampton station); and
- ii. The introduction of additional rail services for passengers to improve capacity;
- iii. An aligned strategic multi-transport interchange in the Milton Keynes and Northampton areas, enabling enhanced connectivity across the area;
- iv. Improved connectivity across Northamptonshire and the wider area (Aylesbury, Bletchley, Milton Keynes and Northampton); and
- v. Increased intermodal freight flows from London to Northampton, the Midlands and the North, enabling improved efficiency in the movement of goods and reducing HGV volumes across the strategic road network.

#### B. Road

The necessary road transport improvements to support strategic connectivity are the implementation of:

- i. Traffic management measures and related junction modifications on the A45 in conjunction in connection with development coming forward;
- ii. A43 Kettering to Northampton improvements;
- iii. A step-change in bus service provision within and between major settlements and to key innovation sites such as Silverstone including provision of the appropriate bus service infrastructure; and
- iv. Improved bus integration with Northampton station.

#### C. Waterways

Support will be given to proposals to use the canal network for freight movements.

**WNLP objectives:** 8,9

### 13.6 Future transport schemes

13.6.1 Allocations in the WNJCS and the Part 2 Plans have already been assessed in terms of the transport infrastructure required to mitigate them. These schemes are contained in the Phase 1 IDP. As part of the ongoing preparation of this local plan, additional transport schemes may be added if required by any new allocations.

13.6.2 As discussed above, West Northamptonshire's strategic rail and road connections have made the area economically attractive. However, to ensure the network remains efficient and capable of serving future demand, improvements and mitigation measures are needed.

13.6.3 There are a range of current and potential future transport schemes that are currently underway, or may take place during or beyond the Local Plan period including:

1. Northampton to Market Harborough railway line (reinstatement)
2. Brackmills and Northampton Station corridor improvements
3. North-West Relief Road (Northampton)
4. Northampton Growth Management Scheme (A43 and A45)
5. A5 at Towcester
6. Northern Orbital Route (Northampton)

13.6.4 In addition, a number of strategic opportunities have been identified that have the potential to improve the range of destinations served by direct trains from Northampton and to improve access between cities to the north of Northampton and between Northampton and the wider Oxford-Cambridge Corridor.

13.6.5 The Northampton North-West Relief Road is currently under construction and, when complete, will enable growth to the west of Northampton where there are several SUEs allocated in the WNJCS.

13.6.6 The former Northampton to Market Harborough railway line now plays a significant role in the biodiversity network of Northampton and beyond, with a series of identified Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) located within/alongside it due to the species rich neutral grasslands (a Priority Habitat under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006) found within them, as well as itself, being a wildlife corridor. Any reopening of the former Northampton to Market Harborough railway line will be led by Network Rail and will need to be subject to relevant studies that consider alternative options and provide justification for the most sustainable option, bearing in mind its high biodiversity status. Any proposal to re-open the line would need to address how it is going to compensate for any loss of habitat having regard to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

13.6.7 The route is also part of the National Cycle Network (route no.6), providing a continuous traffic free route between the two towns. Any proposals to re-open the line would need to provide a parallel (but not along the same trackbed) walking, wheeling, and cycling route between the towns.

- 13.6.8 If further evidence emerges that the future use of this link for transport is viable, the use of this route will need to be investigated in a future local plan review. If the line is to be brought back into use for rail, there will be a need to realign part of the North West Relief Road to facilitate a bridge over the line. This will require land outside of the current railway line corridor.
- 13.6.9 A safeguarded corridor between Brackmills and Northampton Station is identified for use as a continuous public transport, cycling, wheeling and/or walking Active Travel route. The Council needs to safeguard the land required for transport related developments to be progressed. Any proposals affecting this corridor should mitigate against the potential adverse impacts on biodiversity, and seek to secure net gain, in compliance with the relevant policies in this local plan. If further evidence emerges that the future use of this link for transport is viable, the use of this route will need to be investigated in a future local plan review.
- 13.6.10 Through the Road Investment Strategy, the UK government has allocated a ring-fenced £100 million for an Air Quality Fund available through to 2021 for Highways England to help improve quality on its network and improve air quality. The Council has designated an AQMA along the M1 corridor and will be working in partnership with Highways England to implement measures to reduce the impact of emissions from the motorway traffic on the affected communities.
- 13.6.11 The Towcester Relief Road has been identified as being essential for both the growth of the town, a core component of the Towcester South development and also a means to reduce the volume of vehicles moving through the town. The relief road, currently under construction, will also connect the A5 and A43 which are a part of the strategic road network.
- 13.6.12 Policy TR3 will ensure that sufficient land is safeguarded to enable future options for Towcester's infrastructure to be properly considered, including increasing capacity. Safeguarding protects the land and ensures all options can be properly considered in the future. The policy will also ensure that unplanned speculative proposals promoting development on the southern side of the road are appropriately considered and do not sterilise future options in the short-medium term and is therefore considered a sound and positive response to the accommodation of future need.
- 13.6.13 Safeguarding will help to protect land set aside for infrastructure projects such as this from being used for other purposes. The proposed safeguarded

corridor will generally reflect a minimum 60m width, which is wide enough to ensure a bypass, or other alternative transport infrastructure can be built, connect to the local road network, and provide land for environmental mitigation.

- 13.6.14 The Council is exploring options for the provision of highway improvements to the north of Northampton to relieve existing settlements of the impacts of traffic and to facilitate more reliable journey times in this part of the town. Consultation on a number of options for part of this route was undertaken in 2017, further work is now underway to provide an updated understanding on the need, benefit, costings and potential funding sources. Options being considered are: the completion of the route between the northwest relief road (which is currently under construction) and the A43 to the north of Moulton; a longer route between junction 16 of the M1 and the A43 north of Moulton in the longer-term; and more localised, targeted, interventions to reduce congestion.
- 13.6.15 The Council will also safeguard areas of land for transport schemes which have been identified during the plan period, once their precise alignment has been defined.
- 13.6.16 The schemes identified in Policy TR3 either require land to be safeguarded to enable their delivery or are identified within this Plan for potential future transport schemes. The next version of this Plan will update on progress made on the evaluation of these schemes.

### **TR3 – Future Transport Schemes**

- A. Land is safeguarded, as shown on the policies map, to support the delivery of the following transport scheme:
  - i. South of the Towcester (A5) Southern Relief Road

- B. The following routes, as shown on the policies map, may be investigated for future transport use:
  - i. Former Northampton to Market Harborough railway line (which would necessitate a re-alignment of part of the North West Relief Road and a bridge over the line);
  - ii. Former Northampton to Brackmills railway line.
- C. Schemes would need to make compensatory provision for any loss of habitat, and in the case of Northampton to Market Harborough, a parallel opportunity for cycling and walking will need to be provided.
- D. Consideration will also be given to the provision of a Northampton Northern Orbital Road

**WNLP objectives:** 8,9

## **13.7 Canal network**

- 13.7.1 Both the Grand Union Canal and a short stretch of the Oxford Canal pass through West Northamptonshire. With the exception of a short stretch in the former Northampton Borough, both canals are designated as conservation areas: the Oxford Canal in 2012 and the Grand Union Canal (part in 1995 and part in 2014). The Canal network has an important multifunctional role within the district and beyond. As well as its historical, architectural and educational value, the canal is an important landscape feature, with considerable biodiversity and ecological interest. The canal is an important part of the district's green infrastructure network providing a green corridor for wildlife, as well as playing a crucial role in conveying flood waters.
- 13.7.2 The canals also contribute towards economic and regeneration objectives by providing attractive locations for canal-side development including recreation, tourism and leisure activities as well as protecting the economic viability of marinas and boatyards. The provision of a network of moorings along the canal network is essential to this. Where possible and in appropriate locations the Council will protect existing moorings and encourage the provision of new moorings across the network. New moorings will only be permitted where they would not have a negative impact on navigation.
- 13.7.3 The canal network provides important resources for nature conservation. This must, however, be carefully balanced with the needs of recreation. Proposals for development within the canal corridors should relate to the character of the area; and respect the leisure, heritage and ecological value of the



waterways. The Council will support appropriate measures to improve both the towpath and pedestrian and cycle linkages to it.

- 13.7.4 Policy TR5 will, in the submission version of this Plan, identify which villages in the Settlement Hierarchy it applies to. The Settlement Hierarchy is still being developed (see Making Great Places: Rural Chapter).

#### **TR4 – Leisure Canal Moorings**

The provision of a range of additional short-term visitor moorings will be supported to ensure that visitor moorings are available in appropriate locations, and where they contribute to the management of a safe and attractive waterway. Existing visitor moorings will be protected.

**WNLP objectives:** 8,9

#### **TR5 - PSID – Canalside Development**

- A. Proposals for new development alongside canals at xxx villages within the settlement hierarchy (to be determined in the Regulation 19 version of this Plan) will be supported where they provide active canal frontages with recreational or economic uses and have regard to the canal's use and accessibility, including safety measures.
- B. Away from these settlements, proposals for canal related development with limited service facilities will be accepted provided:
  - i. They constitute uses that are essential to be located in proximity to the canal; and
  - ii. The countryside is protected, in terms of its openness, rural character and attractiveness; and
  - iii. They would not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the amenities of neighbouring occupiers; and
  - iv. The development does not adversely affect public access to the canal; and
  - v. The traffic generated by the proposal does not adversely affect the safety of the existing road network and adequate car parking facilities can be provided within the site for the likely needs arising from the proposal.

**WNLP objectives:** 8, 9

## **13.8 Lorry parks**

- 13.8.1 There is a high level of lorry traffic in West Northamptonshire due to being the location of a large number of companies that rely on lorry movements including logistics and warehousing.
- 13.8.2 Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) is located at junction 18 of the M1 where it meets with the A5. Other major employment sites are also set alongside junctions 15, 15A and 16 of the M1 motorway.
- 13.8.3 New lorry parks would be supported at appropriate locations and with evidence that there is a need for further lorry parking facilities.

### **TR6 – Lorry parks**

Proposals for the provision of lorry parks will be supported where they are in a location that meets an identified need. Such proposals should:

- i. Be located adjacent to the strategic road network or other major roads in particular the M1, A5, A14, A43 and A45; and
- ii. Include facilities for drivers of vehicles; and
- iii. Have access arrangements that are designed to minimise queuing of vehicles on the highway; and
- iv. Be located such that they are accessible and do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of nearby settlements; and
- v. Not be located adjacent to or accessed through a residential area; and
- vi. Promote a safe and secure environment; and
- vii. Have no significant adverse impact on residential amenity or the local environment; and
- viii. Be screened and carefully designed and landscaped to minimise its visual impact; and
- ix. Be supported by a detailed transport impact assessment and travel plan.

**WNLP objectives:** 8, 14

## **Chapter 14: Infrastructure**

### **14.1 Introduction**

- 14.1.1 To support the level of economic growth and growth in population as a result of new housing in this Plan, infrastructure will need to be delivered alongside homes and jobs in a timely manner. As such this Council will work in partnership with developers, neighbouring authorities, central government, England's Economic Heartlands and other stakeholders to deliver this infrastructure.
- 14.1.2 The Phase 1 West Northamptonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been produced to ensure growth contained in the WNJCS is supported. The additional growth outlined in this Local Plan will require an update to the IDP once growth options have been assessed by infrastructure providers. This will then inform a Phase 2 West Northamptonshire IDP which will sit alongside the submission version (Regulation 19) of this Plan.
- 14.1.3 The Phase 2 IDP will contain details on the infrastructure projects required to mitigate the impacts of development and the allocations expected to contribute to, or directly provide those schemes.

### **14.2 National and local policy context**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023**

- 14.2.1 At the heart of the NPPF is the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives for the planning system. Part of the economic objective is to identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure (Paragraph 8).
- 14.2.2 The NPPF (paragraph 20) goes on to state that policies should make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); and community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure).

#### **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 14.2.3 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) contains details on planning obligations and states that they should assist in the mitigation of impact of unacceptable

development to make it acceptable in planning terms. It makes provision for policies to be set out in plans and examined in public to ensure clarity from the outset.

- 14.2.4 The policies relating to planning obligations and infrastructure will be informed by viability assessments that consider affordable housing and other policy requirements.

### **West Northamptonshire Council Corporate Plan**

- 14.2.5 The Corporate Plan for West Northamptonshire identifies six priority areas:

- a. Green and clean
- b. Improved life chances
- c. Connected communities
- d. Thriving villages and towns
- e. Economic development
- f. Robust resource management

- 14.2.6 The provision of suitable and timely infrastructure to support the existing and proposed population of West Northamptonshire will contribute to achieving these priorities.

- 14.2.7 To achieve the above priorities this Plan supports the provision of infrastructure that will help achieve Net Zero by 2030. The Plan contains policies relating to electric vehicle charging infrastructure and requires development to be linked sustainably to existing and planned for facilities and amenities. New developments will be connected and will need to prioritise foot, cycle and public transport modes before the individual car where possible; developments will need to demonstrate how people will travel sustainably through a detailed Travel Plan for the development.

- 14.2.8 To improve the life chances and reduce inequalities of people living and working with West Northamptonshire, quality educational infrastructure will be required to support growth.

- 14.2.9 West Northamptonshire Council is the Local Education Authority and has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for children within its boundary. Housing development will generate the need for new places either through new schools or extensions to existing and will consist of provision for early years, primary, secondary and SEND school places. The School Organisation Plan (SOP) for West Northamptonshire sets out the number of

new places needed on a 5-year basis. The current version SOP has informed the IDP for this Plan.

- 14.2.10 Green infrastructure and open space will need to be provided alongside development. As set out in the Built and Natural Environment chapter, this will either be provided on-site or through improved provision off-site. Where it is located off-site, sustainable links from development to the infrastructure will be required to ensure people have access to environments that enable healthier lifestyles. In some cases, some open space may also contribute to biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks. Whilst this is not infrastructure required to support development, it is a statutory requirement for developers to ensure that a net gain in biodiversity is achieved to support the overall ambitions for environmental protection within the UK.
- 14.2.11 Infrastructure to allow high speed electronic and digital communications will be a core infrastructure component for new development, allowing people and businesses to be connected and to continue to build a strong economy.
- 14.2.12 This Plan and its IDP have been informed by current information from utility providers who have identified where existing capacity or new infrastructure is needed to support growth. Connections to electric, gas and any other emerging energy grids is a requirement of development; developers are expected to have started conversations with providers early on in the planning process.
- 14.2.13 To ensure the residents of West Northamptonshire are able to lead healthy lives with fewer health inequalities, healthcare infrastructure will need to be delivered alongside new residential development. This can be achieved through increasing existing providers' capacity, such as GPs and surgeries but can also include other measures such as embedding sustainable transport choices that enable residents and visitors to make healthy choices when travelling and spending their leisure time.

### **14.3 Evidence Base summary**

- 14.3.1 This Plan has been informed by an up-to-date HENA. The HENA uses current census population data and forecasting to reach housing and employment figures and has been appraised for viability against policy requirements of the Plan.
- 14.3.2 To support growth, the Council has worked with partners to identify the infrastructure needed to mitigate the impacts of development. An initial 'Phase 1' update of the West Northamptonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan

(IDP) looked at the remaining growth within the WNJCS and Part 2 plans. A 'Phase 2' exercise will identify infrastructure needed to support the additional growth set out in this Plan. Wherever possible, known costs and phasing of schemes have been identified which is set out in the West Northamptonshire IDP.

14.3.3 The IDP has been produced to sit alongside this Plan and inform policies within it. It will be updated regularly to take account of delivered and /or new schemes and any new information coming forward in terms of funding opportunities and partnerships.

14.3.4 The IDP infrastructure schedule tables identify schemes within the following categories:

- Transport
- Healthcare
- Education
- Community and Leisure – including libraries, social care, burial grounds
- Open Space, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Net Gain
- Utilities including water management
- Fire and Police
- Waste management
- Digital and telecoms

14.3.5 The Council has worked extensively with the following partners (not exhaustive) to help inform the IDP and moving forward, to help deliver West Northamptonshire's infrastructure:

- Northamptonshire Police
- Northants Fire and Rescue
- National Highways
- Anglian Water
- Thames Water
- Severn Trent Water
- The Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Historic England
- National Grid
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP)
- England's Economic Heartland

- 14.3.6 The policies within this section of the Plan set out how the delivery of that infrastructure will come forward and detailed infrastructure requirements are set out in the IDP for West Northamptonshire.
- 14.3.7 Details on and policies relating to open space, community needs and green infrastructure can be found in relevant sections of this Plan and applicants should read the Plan as a whole to understand the infrastructure requirements of their proposals.

#### **14.4 Funding mechanisms**

- 14.4.1 Infrastructure that is required to serve the current and future needs of West Northamptonshire is expected to be delivered through a variety of mechanisms including Sections 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) 111(Local Government Act 1972) and 278 (Highways Act 1980), Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Infrastructure Levy (IL), and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) fees.
- 14.4.2 West Northamptonshire has three CIL charging schedules for the former Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire areas. The CIL is a viability tested charge on most forms of new development. Unlike S106 obligations CIL monies can be used to help fund a wide range of infrastructure projects including strategic infrastructure not necessarily directly related to the development the CIL monies are accrued from.
- 14.4.3 The SAMM payments are required for new housing within 3km of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA). Details on developer requirements can be found in the West Northamptonshire Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA Supplementary Planning Document and Mitigation Strategy. Any other funding mechanisms that emerge during the lifetime of the plan will also be utilised where appropriate.
- 14.4.4 It is expected that most infrastructure will be delivered by either the Council or developers at the beginning or during the build out of development. However, the Council will work with external partners where necessary to bring forward infrastructure schemes.

#### **Developer contributions**

- 14.4.5 Developer contributions play an important part in helping to fund infrastructure at both the local and strategic level. The established method of collecting developer contributions is by way of S106 planning obligations. The

former areas of Daventry, Northampton, South Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire County have adopted planning obligations Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) or strategies in place. Section 106 planning obligations are subject to the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 57) and in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 which require that obligations are only sought where:

- They are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

14.4.6 By the time this Local Plan is adopted, it is intended that there will be a single strategy for planning obligations within West Northamptonshire.

## **14.5 Infrastructure types**

14.5.1 Below are summaries of the types of infrastructure that development is expected to contribute to. Details on specific schemes to support growth in West Northamptonshire are contained in the IDP.

### **Transport infrastructure**

14.5.2 Transport infrastructure enables people and goods to move around with modes including the private car, lorries, walking, wheeling, cycling, taxis and public transport. Recent years have also seen the emergence of automated shopping robots as well as electric scooters and e-bikes that can be owned by the individual or rented.

14.5.3 Off-site schemes will be delivered by a combination of partners including West Northamptonshire Council, developers, National Highways, Network Rail or other relevant bodies. The Council also works with sub-national transport body, England's Economic Heartland on transport strategies across the region that impact on the authority. Funding will be secured directly from development either through Planning Obligations (Section 106), the (Community) Infrastructure Levy, or other funding sources. On-site schemes will either be delivered directly by the developer or through S278 agreements.



- 14.5.4 The placemaking section of this Plan discusses the movement hierarchy in West Northamptonshire and sets out how developments should prioritise sustainable and healthy modes such as walking, wheeling and cycling. Policies within this section should be read in conjunction with other policies in the Plan and the IDP which sets out the full schedule of transport infrastructure schemes required to support the proposed growth within this Plan.
- 14.5.5 This policies within this Plan should also be read in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan for West Northamptonshire and any Local Cycle Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) which are in place. These identify routes which are a priority for upgrading and/or new routes that development is expected to help deliver.

### **Social infrastructure**

- 14.5.6 Social infrastructure includes education, healthcare, community, recreation and sports facilities, and emergency response services. It plays an important role in maintaining existing and developing new communities and encourages social and physical links between them.
- 14.5.7 Development or regeneration proposals can provide opportunities to consider how facilities are constructed and services are delivered. Colocation of services should be considered where appropriate to maximise the use of the land and buildings. Applicants should consult with the Council prior to submitting applications to discuss master planning and infrastructure requirements relating to major and strategic sites.

### **Education**

- 14.5.8 Educational infrastructure includes early years, primary, secondary and special education and disability schools (SEND) as well as higher education facilities such as colleges and universities.
- 14.5.9 A wide variety of providers will deliver this provision across West Northamptonshire during the plan period. The Council is the Local Education Authority and is required to provide a sufficiency of school places to meet the needs of all children of school age. The Council produces a School Organisation Plan which covers a 5-year period: the current document covers 2018-2023.
- 14.5.10 All residential proposals will be required to fully mitigate their impact on educational infrastructure. Schemes are required to directly deliver or

contribute to school places, classrooms, and schools and/or contribute to the delivery of other education infrastructure projects identified in the IDP. These schemes may be on or off-site and where necessary, developers will be expected to provide the land to accommodate educational infrastructure.

- 14.5.11 Some adult learning is also provided by West Northamptonshire Council. Where appropriate, contributions will be sought towards the provision of this service.

### **Local Labour Strategies**

- 14.5.12 Some commercial development will be required to either contribute to or prepare their own Local Labour Strategy. The Council will work with developers to create a strategy which will benefit the local labour market and maximise opportunities for economic and social benefits. Further details can be found in the economy section of this Plan.

### **Healthcare**

- 14.5.13 The healthcare system in West Northamptonshire is made up of a range of organisations with different functions including the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England (Midlands region), Northamptonshire Integrated Care System (ICS) and the NHS trust.
- 14.5.14 Northampton General Hospital is the major acute healthcare hospital for West Northamptonshire as well as being the provider of specialist services (cancer, stroke and vascular care) for the county.
- 14.5.15 The current NGH site in Northampton town centre is the main focus for the hospital's services and there is a masterplan to guide future development. This includes construction of new ward blocks, operating theatres, car parking and administrative accommodation.

### **Community, recreation and sports**

- 14.5.16 Community and leisure infrastructure includes community halls/centres, emergency services, cultural development such as libraries, museums and galleries, indoor and outdoor sports provision, open space, burial spaces as well as public realm.
- 14.5.17 In large developments it is expected that facilities will be provided directly by the developer. However, most proposals will need to contribute to schemes and, in some cases, meet criteria set out in other policies within this Plan such those relating to sport and open space.

## **Emergency services infrastructure**

- 14.5.18 The spatial vision of this Plan seeks a thriving economy and vibrant, sustainable communities and as part of this, communities will require access to police and fire services. As such, developments will be expected to contribute to this type of infrastructure.
- 14.5.19 An increase in population and employment allocations within West Northamptonshire not only require access to emergency services, but in some cases specialist equipment such as hydraulic lifts and community/on-site policing. Additionally, site masterplans should be designed in conjunction with the emergency services to ensure that road layouts and parking are accessible for fire appliances.

## **Waste services infrastructure**

- 14.5.20 Population growth has an impact on waste management and recycling. More people and jobs place additional pressure on these services which are provided either by the Council or its partners. Contributions are therefore required to enhance existing or provide new facilities to ensure there is capacity for West Northamptonshire's residents in the future.

## **Utilities infrastructure**

- 14.5.21 Utility infrastructure provides buildings with energy (usually electric and gas), potable water and water recycling and telecommunications (phone lines and internet connections).
- 14.5.22 National Grid Electricity Transmission owns and maintains the electricity transmission system in England and Wales. National Gas Transmission owns and operates the high-pressure gas transmission system across the UK. National Grid distribute electricity within West Northamptonshire and Cadent distribute gas within the area. Applicants should liaise directly with these organisations at the outset of proposals.
- 14.5.23 Anglian Water, Severn Trent and Thames Water provide water services in West Northamptonshire. Again, direct liaison between applicants and water and sewerage companies is expected from the inception of proposals to ensure necessary capacity is available and connections are made.
- 14.5.24 Proposals for all new development should ensure appropriate infrastructure is provided during construction that is sufficient to enable all development to be connected to full fibre broadband without any post development works.

## **IN1 - Infrastructure Delivery and Funding**

- A. New development is required to fully fund and/or contribute towards the delivery of new infrastructure, and where necessary, provide land to accommodate that infrastructure.
- B. New development will only be permitted if the necessary on and off-site infrastructure that is required to support it and mitigate its impacts is either in place or there is a reliable mechanism to ensure it will be delivered at the appropriate time. This includes enhancement of existing and/or provision of new infrastructure.
- C. The Council supports schemes that have identified opportunities to collocate services, where appropriate.
- D. Developers should have regard to the West Northamptonshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan to identify the schemes they may need to contribute to as well as the most up to date Planning Obligations strategies.

### **WNLP objectives:**

8: Infrastructure and Development

## **14.6 Viability**

- 14.6.1 The submission version of this Plan will be informed by a viability assessment (VA). This will consider elements such as the requirements for affordable housing, CIL, S106 and SAMM payments as well as other policy requirements such as water usage.
- 14.6.2 It is recognised that in exceptional cases developments cannot meet all policy and infrastructure requirements. Where an applicant considers this to be an issue, they will need to take the steps outlined in Policy IN2.

## **IN2 - Viability**

- A. If, through meeting the other policies within this Plan, proposals are deemed financially unviable by the developer the Council requires evidence to support this conclusion at application stage.

- B. Proposals should be supported by an independent viability assessment undertaken on terms agreed by the Council and funded by the developer. This will involve an open book approach.
- C. Where viability constraints are demonstrated by evidence, the Council may:
  - i. Prioritise developer contributions for essential infrastructure, affordable housing and then other infrastructure; or
  - ii. Use an appropriate mechanism to defer part of the developer contributions requirement to a later date; or
  - iii. Refuse planning permission if the development would be unsustainable without the inclusion of the unfunded infrastructure requirements or affordable housing taking into account reasonable contributions from elsewhere including CIL or other mechanisms.

**WNLP objectives:**

8: Infrastructure and Development

## **Chapter 15: Implementation and Monitoring Framework**

### **15.1 Introduction**

15.1.1 Reviewing and monitoring are important and necessary parts of the plan led system. The Council is required to report on the progress of Local Plan preparation and to what extent Local Plan policies are being achieved as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. As such there is a duty to publish:

- Detail relating to the Local Plan(s) and supplementary planning documents outlined in the Local Development Scheme including: the title; timetable for production; progress towards meeting the identified milestones; details of adoption; and, if necessary, reasons for any delay;
- Identification of Local Plan policies that are not being implemented, the reasons behind this and the steps the authority intends to take to rectify this situation;
- Where a policy in a local plan specifies an annual number, or a number relating to any other period of net dwellings or net additional affordable dwellings, completed during the monitoring period and since the start of the plan period;
- Details of any neighbourhood development order or neighbourhood development plans;
- Summary details of CIL expenditure during the reported year; and
- Details of any action taken under the duty to cooperate during the monitoring period.

### **15.2 Monitoring framework**

15.2.1 In order to determine the effectiveness of the overall plan and to take into account the changing circumstances nationally and locally, a monitoring framework is required to measure how the West Northamptonshire Local Plan is delivering its objectives. If necessary, actions or interventions can be put in place to mitigate against any potential adverse impacts.

### **15.3 How will the Local Plan be monitored?**

15.3.1 The Council has and will continue to monitor the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the policies set

out in the Local Plan are being achieved.

- 15.3.2 Using data from internal and external sources the Council will produce an Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR). This will assess how the aims of the policies in the Local Plan are being achieved and whether objectives are being met.

#### **15.4 Stage reached in producing a monitoring framework.**

- 15.4.1 As this is a Regulation 18 plan it is too early to produce a detailed monitoring framework because:

- some policies are not yet fully formed

- 14.4.2 All policies are subject to change through the plan preparation process

- 14.4.3 This Chapter of the plan seeks to set out, in broad terms, the intentions regarding a monitoring framework. A full framework will be included in the Submission version (Regulation 19).

#### **15.5 Implementation**

- 15.5.1 Development within West Northamptonshire must conform with the policies within this Plan which have been formulated to enable delivery its spatial vision, strategic objectives and the corporate objectives of West Northamptonshire.

- 15.5.2 However, it is important to note that along with this Plan, other plans and strategies will contribute to the achievement of its vision and objectives. This will include plans and strategies produced at the national and local levels, investment by the public, private and voluntary sectors as well as actions of individual businesses, other statutory bodies and organisations.

- 15.5.3 As such, to deliver the proposed growth in West Northamptonshire in a sustainable manner, it will be necessary to form effective and working partnerships with stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. The Local Plan will play an important role in influencing and providing a positive framework for investment decisions.

#### **15.6 The monitoring indicators**

- 15.6.1 Indicators are essential instruments for monitoring and evaluation. They measure how far policies have gone towards meeting

objectives, targets and delivering sustainable development, and provide the evidence required to know if policies have unintended consequences.

15.6.2 The Monitoring Framework for this Plan will use both quantitative and qualitative indicators to assess policy implementation. Quantitative, or statistical in nature, data will be used where policies promote or aim to manage additional development. For other policies contextual updates will be used to measure the impact of the policy.

15.6.3 Most of the indicators that are expected to be contained in the monitoring framework will be easily accessible from sources of national statistics, regional or sub regional data sources, or from information held or collected within the Council and its partner organisations.

15.6.4 To be robust over the plan period and resilient to change, it will be necessary to periodically review these to respond to changes in the availability of information, and the effectiveness of specific indicators.

15.6.5 It is intended that the monitoring framework will be organised by objective, with each objective identifying the primary and secondary policies for its delivery. It is only the primary policy delivering the objective that will be monitored, and it is anticipated that only policies that require numerical monitoring will be recorded.

15.6.6 Where policies are required to meet standards e.g. flood risk or open space, it may be appropriate for only elements of a policy to be monitored.

## **15.7 Five Year Housing Land Supply**

15.7.1 The Five Year Housing Land supply is currently calculated for three policy areas as set out in the WNJCS. Once this Plan is adopted the Five Year Housing Land Supply will be calculated for the whole of West Northamptonshire.



## Example of how plan could be monitored:

### Implementation and monitoring framework

#### Objective 1: Climate change

To support the transition of West Northamptonshire to a new zero carbon area

Indicator within the policy	Target	Main policy delivered	Additional policies delivered	SA objective delivered	Main agency for delivery	Source for monitoring data	Trigger to commence action	Contingency

## Appendix A Glossary of Terms

Active Travel	Making journeys in physically active ways like walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid), cycling, or scootering.
Affordable Housing	As definition in Annex:2 of the NPPF
Air Quality management Area (AQMA)	Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.
Article 4 Direction	A direction used to withdraw the permitted development rights granted by the General Permitted Development Order that allow certain type of development to be undertaken without the need to apply for planning permission.
Amenity Green Space	Informal recreation and green spaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancing the the appearance of residential and other areas
Ancient woodland	Ancient woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).
Biodiversity	The variety of plants, animals and other living things in a particular are or region. It encompasses habitat diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity.
Birds and Habitats Directives	European Directives provide a strong legislative framework to conserve natural habitats and wild fauna and flora.
Brownfield Land Register	Registers of previously developed land that local planning authorities consider to be suitable for residential development, having regard to criteria in the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Registers) Regulation 2017. Local planning authorities will be able to trigger a grant of permission in principle for residential development on suitable sites in their registers where they follow the required procedures.
Build to Rent	Purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control. Annex 2 of the NPPF
Call for Sites	An opportunity for individuals, landowners and developers to suggest sites that might be available for development in the future.
Community Facilities	For the purposes of the policy the term “community facilities” includes: schools and colleges; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hospitals, doctors’ surgeries and dentists’ surgeries;</li> <li>• other emergency services’ accommodation;</li> <li>• children’s nurseries and day care;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community, youth and children’s centres;</li> <li>• extended residential care and supported accommodation;</li> <li>• public libraries, museums, community arts venues and theatres;</li> <li>• places of worship and cemeteries;</li> <li>• allotments and other urban open land including woodland, green infrastructure and town or village greens;</li> <li>• parks and sports clubs and pitches;</li> <li>• public leisure centres; and</li> <li>• public houses</li> </ul>
Community Infrastructure Levy	A statutory way of collecting developer contributions to help fund infrastructure projects such as transport schemes and community facilities, to support new development in the area.
Deliverable	As NPPF definition, Annex 2
Design Code	A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area. Annex 2 of the NPPF
Designated heritage assets	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation. Annex 2 of the NPPF
Developable	To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged. Annex 2 of the NPPF
Development	Development is defined in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation's in, on, over or under land; or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	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. Annex 2 of the NPPF
Exception site	Rural exception sites are located outside the confines of rural settlements. They are usually small scale, not allocated in the local plan and would not normally be considered suitable for residential development but are considered suitable to deliver affordable housing.
Exception test (flood risk)	Where no suitable sites are available in zones with a lower probability of flooding, the exception test will be required to show that the proposed development will provide wider sustainability benefits that outweigh flood risk and that it will be safe for its lifetime, without increasing the risk of flood elsewhere and where possible, reduce flood risk.
First Homes	A Government scheme to promote affordable home ownership for first time buyers. Units are sold at a minimum of 30% against

	market value and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered through planning obligations.
Functionally Linked Land	An area of land or sea occurring outside a designated site which is considered to be critical to, or necessary for, the ecological or behavioural functions in a relevant season of a qualifying feature for which the Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) / Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar site has been designated.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, natural processes, landforms and soils that underlie and determine the character of our landscape and environment.
Green and Blue Infrastructure Network	Network of natural and semi-natural features, including the water environment, within and between urban and rural areas. It includes conventional open spaces, such as parks, woodlands and playing fields, allotments, street trees, private gardens, green roofs and sustainable drainage systems.
Green Wedge	A policy designation intended to keep areas of land open between towns, strategic employment areas and smaller settlements. By maintaining physical and visual separation and preventing coalescence, the open areas will protect the identity, character and setting of the settlements.
Gypsies and Travellers	As defined by DCLG Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015)
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Under the Habitat Regulations 2010, where a plan or project (alone or in combination with other projects or plans) is likely to affect a European site or European Marine Site, a HRA is used to consider the impact on the integrity of the site and to identify measures that would avoid or reduce the impacts to an acceptable level.
Heritage asset	As NPPF Annex 2
Heritage Impact Assessment	A structured process to make sure that the significance of historic assets are considered when developing and designing proposals for change.
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)	An entire residential house or flat which is let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet. For planning purposes, a use class differentiation is identified between a small HMO (between three and six individuals) and a large HMO (more than six individuals). The full definition of an HMO and a household can be found in the Housing Act 2004.
Housing needs assessment	An assessment undertaken by an applicant at a local level to establish housing need which will include primary sources of information consistent with a housing needs survey. Ideally the methodology should be agreed in advance with the Council.
Housing needs survey	A survey that helps to identify current and future housing need at a local level. They are used to understand and work towards improving the housing supply to meet these needs and looks at whether the area needs market housing, affordable housing or both. The Council undertakes housing needs surveys at parish level and combines information from questionnaires and the general housing register.
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	Ten-year plans for investing in walking and cycling within a defined area (such as a town, district or borough).

Local Enterprise Partnership	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.
Local Development Scheme	Required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the LDS is a project plan that identifies (among other matters) the development plan documents which when adopted, will make up the local plan for the area. It must be publicly available and kept up to date.
Local Green Space	A designation that provides special protection against development for green spaces of particular importance to local communities. NPPF Annex 2
Local housing need	The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in National Planning Guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in the NPPF).
Local Nature Reserve	Statutory designated and protected sites with wildlife or geological features that are of special local interest. They are for people and wildlife.
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	A planning document that local transport authorities produce which set out strategies for improving transport networks, propose projects for investment and plan how key objectives will be achieved.
Local Wildlife Site	Non-statutory designation comprising sites of substantial local importance for wildlife conservation which are identified by a partnership between the Wildlife Trust, local authorities, statutory nature conservation agencies, local naturalists, landowners and wildlife charities using national criteria which have been adapted for local use. Most are privately owned.
Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)	Groups of four or five output areas, comprising between 400 and 1200 households and a resident population of between 1000 and 3000 people.
Masterplan	An overarching planning document that is used to structure land use and development that is used as a framework for planning applications.
National Highways	The government company charged with operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	This document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)	Guidance that adds further context to the NPPF, it explains statutory provisions, key planning issues and the planning system.
Non-designated heritage assets	Locally identified buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated

	heritage assets. Some non-designated heritage assets are equivalent to designated heritage assets in terms of significance.
Pitch (Gypsies and Travellers)	Area on a site developed for a family unit to live. On socially rented sites, the area let to a tenant for stationing caravans and other vehicles.
Playing pitches	For the purposes of Policy PL12 the term "playing pitches" covers football, cricket, rugby union and league, hockey, baseball and Gaelic football (as defined in Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance and Town & CP (DM Procedure) (England) Order) Formal pitches are distinct from areas of other open spaces that are used for informal sport such as playing fields.
Plot (Travelling Showpeople)	Area on a yard for Travelling Showpeople to live. As well as dwelling units, Travelling Showpeople often keep their commercial equipment on a plot.
Potential Wildlife site	A site that has the potential to become a Local Wildlife Site but has not been formally designated.
Primary Shopping Area	Defined area where retail development is concentrated. NPPF Annex 2
Private Rented Sector	A classification of housing tenure used by the UK Government whereby a property is owned by a landlord (private individual, property company or institutional investor) and leased to a tenant.
Registered Park and Garden	A designed landscape which is designated and included on a register maintained by Historic England in recognition of its special historic significance.
Registered provider	A provider of social housing listed on the Register of Providers of social housing. They can be local authorities or private registered providers. The latter are registered with Homes England and include housing associations, for-profit providers and charities.
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 the conventional use of fossil fuels).
Sequential Test (Flooding)	Sequential approach to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding, having regard to the availability of sites in flood zones 1 and 2 before considering flood zone 3.
Setting of a heritage asset	NPPF Annex 2
Settlement Hierarchy	A settlement hierarchy is a way of categorising settlements based on factors such as the range of services and facilities they provide.
Significance (heritage)	NPPF Annex 2
Special Landscape Area	A local valued landscape designation which recognises that parts of the rural area have special qualities that set them aside from other landscapes.
Special Protection Area	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.
Sports facilities	Includes sports hall (courts), swimming pools, health and fitness suites, athletics, squash, gymnastics, indoor and outdoor bowls, indoor and outdoor tennis, golf, village and community halls, cycling, netball, judo, countryside and water sports, rowing, canoeing and orienteering.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	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.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	A document that may include a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further details of policies and proposals in a development plan document or local plan. They are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	This examines the impacts of the policies against a large number of economic, social and environmental sustainability objectives. It also provides an indication of what measures may need to be taken to minimise/ eliminate any adverse impacts and promote sustainable development. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires an SA to be undertaken for all Local Plans throughout the plan making process.
Transport Assessment	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out various transport issues relating to a proposed development and identifies what measures will be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the scheme in relation to all forms of travel.
Travel Plan	Long-term management strategies for integrating proposals for sustainable travel into the planning process, based on evidence of the anticipated transport impacts of development and set measures to promote and encourage sustainable travel.
Travelling Showpeople	People who organise circuses and fairgrounds and who live on yards when not travelling between locations. Most Travelling Showpeople are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain.

## **Appendix B Local Green Space**

The list below identifies where the Local Green Space (LGS) as defined by the NPPF Paragraph 106 was designated by reference to Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) or the Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan or the South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 after the village name.

### **ARTHINGWORTH (NDP)**

- St Andrew's Churchyard and its setting
- Village Green

### **ASHTON (NDP)**

- Millennium Garden
- Hartwell Road Green
- Vale Brook Green

### **BADBY (NDP)**

- Pinfold Green

### **BARBY (NDP)**

- The Ware
- Millennium Orchard
- The Green adjacent to the allotments
- Park
- Church Walk twining sign in front of the park
- Pocket Park
- Small Park
- Lees Pitt
- Village Green
- Derry
- War Memorial and garden
- Open Space 3-9 Holme Way
- Allotments
- Camp's Copse
- Flag Pole

### **BODDINGTON (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Jubilee Field

### **BOUGHTON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Chestnut Tree Green, Butcher's Lane
- Boughton Allotments, off Howard Lane
- The Green, Butcher's Lane
- Willow Tree Green, Butcher's Lane/Spring Close
- Boughton Green, Moulton Lane
- Old Church of St Johns The Baptist, Boughton Green
- Obelisk Sports Centre open space, 400 Obelisk Rise
- Obelisk Spinney Pocket Park, off Spinney Close



- Boughton Pocket Park, off Howard Lane
- Boughton Rise Open Space, Dixon Road/Holly Lodge Drive

### **BRAUNSTON (NDP)**

- The Green
- Jetty Field
- Braunston Playing Field
- Manor Field

### **BRIXWORTH (NDP)**

- St David's Recreation Ground
- Spratton Road Recreation Ground
- The Ashway Playing Field
- Hayfields and Victors Barns Recreation Area

### **BUGBROOKE (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Land off Church Lane
- Captains Close, Great Lane
- Elm Tree Bank, High Street
- Cricket Ground, Camp Farm
- Waggon and Horses Green

### **CHIPPING WARDEN (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Cricket pitch, Culworth Road
- Allotments

### **CLIPSTON (NDP)**

- All Saint's Churchyard
- Village Green
- Haddon Fields

### **CREATON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Churchyard, Violet Lane
- Village Green, The Green

### **CRICK (NDP)**

- The Marsh and adjacent green
- The Washbrook, Main Road
- Land beyond the school towards Oak Lane
- Village Pond and land beside Bury Dyke
- Fallowfields Open Space
- Triangle of land near Access Garden Products
- St Margaret's View Open Space
- Cracks Hill
- Millennium Wood
- Jubilee Wood
- Crick Sports Field
- Crick Old Road

## **CULWORTH (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Cricket Field
- Village Green

## **DAVENTRY (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Daneholme Allotments, Welton Road
- Drayton Allotments, off School Street
- Northern Valley Park, A361
- Staverton Road Allotments, Staverton Road
- The Grange Schools, Staverton Road
- Welton Road Allotments, Welton Road
- Welton Road Cemetery, Welton Road
- Braunston and Morning Star Road
- Christchurch Drive and Ruskin Road
- Daneholme Park, Daneholme Avenue
- Daventry Parish Church Yard, Abbey Street/Church Walk/Vicar Lane
- Daventry Sports Park, A425/Browns Road
- Dewar Drive Play Area, Dewar Drive
- Eastern Way Village Green, Eastern Way
- Ericsson Close Play Area
- Fishponds Open Space, off Southway
- Fraser Close and Norton Road
- Fusilier Road Children's Play Area
- Grovelands Road Playing Field
- Hood Road Children's Play Area
- Horncastle Close Green Space
- The Inlands/Burtons Meadow Green Space
- Kelmars Mews Pocket Park
- Kentle Wood
- Livingstone Road Green Space
- Marston Way Open Green Space
- Mayfield Park, Royal Oak Way/Taper Way
- Middleton Road Pocket Parks
- New Street Recreation Ground
- Norton Close/Eastern Way Path
- Preston Drive, Lang Farm Open Green Space
- Roman Road Play Area
- Sedgemoor Way Open Green Space
- St Catherine's Close/Western Avenue Open Green Space
- Stafford Close/Western Avenue Open Green Space
- Stefen Hill Open Green Space
- Tadcaster Close Children's Play Area
- Taper Way/Furnace Drive Green Space
- The Grange Green Space
- The Hollows/Jubilee Road Open Green Space
- The Leam Children's Play Area
- The Witham Green Space
- Western Avenue to London Road Green Corridor

- Wimborne Place Open Green Space
- Worcester Way Pocket Park

### **EVENLEY (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Paddock off Church Leys
- St George's Churchyard

### **FLORE (NDP)**

- High Street Verges
- Ram Bank
- Russell Bank
- Town Yard
- Last remaining ancient orchard
- Collins Hill
- Brodie Lodge Playing Field
- Old Village Green
- Other Village Verges (Bricketts Lane, Spring Lane, Brockhall Road, The Avenue)

### **GREAT BRINGTON & LITTLE BRINGTON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Allotments, Great Brington, Back Lane and to rear of Old and New Rectory, Great Brington
- Kimbell's Field, Great Brington, Back Lane, Great Brington
- Playing Field, Little Brington, adj. Little Brington Primary School, Little Brington

### **GREAT HOUGHTON (NDP)**

- The Green
- The Cross
- Pocket Park
- War Memorial

### **GUILSBOROUGH (NDP)**

- Village Greens
- Village Recreation Ground

### **HACKLETON (NDP)**

- Longland Meadow
- Piddington Fields

### **HANNINGTON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Allotments, Red House Lane
- Pocket Park, Holcot Road
- Springfields, between Springfields & 6 Main Street

**HARLESTONE (NDP)**

- The Green
- Harlestone Playing fields
- The Allotments
- Willow Paddock

**HARPOLE (NDP)**

- Coronation Green, Carrs Way and High Street
- The Maltings, outside Carr House
- The Green Tree, Glassthorpe Lane and High Street
- Green Space opposite Manning Watt House
- Millennium Green and Flagpole, Larkhall Lane
- Village Sign Green, Northampton Road
- Village Pound, Park Lane Playing Fields, Larkhall Lane
- Allotments, Larkhall Lane

**HELLIDON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- The Green, Opposite Red Lion PH
- Post Box Green, Catesby End

**HINTON IN THE HEDGES (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Village Green

**HOLCOT (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Allotments, Moulton Road
- Old School, Main Street
- Playing Field, Back Lane
- Washbrook, Sywell Road
- Crossroads Green, Brixworth Road/Moulton Road

**KILSBY (NDP)**

- Devon Ox Green
- Malt Mill Green
- Butts Lane
- Recreation Ground
- Allotments
- Junction of Main Road and North Street
- Churchyard
- Hall Close Circular Green
- Jubilee Plantation
- The grassed area on either side of Main Road in the vicinity of zebra crossing near junction of Main Road and Manor Road

**KING'S SUTTON (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Land opposite the Gatehouse, Upper Astrop Road
- Land west and south of the Manor House

**LONG BUCKBY (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Long Buckby Recreation Ground, Station Road

#### **MAIDWELL WITH DRAUGHTON (NDP)**

- Brampton Valley Way
- Recreation Ground, Loder Hall

#### **MOULTON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2 AND NDP)**

- Green Area, Adjacent to Nature Reserve, Thorpeville/Ashley Lane
- Moulton Allotments, off Rose Tree Close
- Pages Brook Valley
- Moulton Public Gardens
- Land at the end of The Nurseries
- Field adjacent to Barlow Lane (Lantsbury's Field)
- Crowfields Common Local Nature Reserve
- Busby's Meadow Pocket Park

#### **NASEBY (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Village Hall Recreation Ground, Haselbech Road
- Allotments, off High Street
- Obelisk, Clipston Road

#### **NEWNHAM (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Allotments, Coronation Road
- Playing Fields, Preston Capes Road

#### **NORTHAMPTON GROWING TOGETHER (NDP)**

- Billing Arbour
- Swanhaven Park
- Lodge Farm Field
- Lumbertubs Park
- Birds Hill Road Play Area
- Lings Playing Fields
- Lings Wood
- Foxcovert Wood
- Overstone Lane Wood
- Blackthorn Recreation Ground
- Blackthorn Community Centre green space

#### **NORTON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Village Green, Daventry Road
- War Memorial Green, Daventry Road
- Graveyard, Daventry Road
- Jack's Patch Play Area, Gouldens View
- Allotments, Daventry Road & Weedon Lane

#### **OVERSTONE (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Ass Bank, Sywell Road and Court Farm Lane
- Cow Pasture Spinney, Sywell Road
- Playing Fields, rear of Overstone Primary School, Sywell Road

**PAULERSPURY (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Church Green and associated verges
- Doctor's Green (excluding associated verges)

**PITSFORD (NDP)**

- Millennium Spinney
- The Square
- Flagpole Green
- Churchyard and green space when approaching the church
- Valley area to the west of Grange Lane north of Meadow View Cottage
- Reservoir Car Park
- T's Wood
- Jubilee Green
- Grange Lane Nature Reserve

**POTTERS PURY (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Mill Pond Conservation Area

**QUINTON (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Village Green

**ROADE (NDP)**

- Memorial Green
- Village Green, High Street
- Churchcroft Open Space
- Recreation Field, Stratford Road

**ROTHERSTHORPE (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- The Conker Field, Church Street
- The Paddock, Banbury Lane

**SILVERSTONE (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Pocket Park
- Olney Meadow Pocket Park (excluding the tract of land extending to Brackley Road between Silverstone House site and 28 Brackley Road)

**SPRATTON (NDP)**

- Recreation Ground
- Pocket Park
- Jubilee Wood
- Millennium Garden

**STAVERTON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Playing Field, Braunston Lane
- Village Green, The Green

### **STOWE NINE CHURCHES (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Closed Church of England School Playing Field, Main Street, Church Stowe
- St James Churchyard, Main Street, Upper Stowe
- War Memorial Space, Main Street, Church Stowe
- The Green, Main Street, Church Stowe

### **SYRESHAM (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- The Pound
- New Jubilee Tree, Wappenham Road
- Abbey Road
- Swingfield, Wappenham Road
- Jubilee Tree, Abbey Road
- Pocket Park

### **TOWCESTER (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Sawpits Green
- Saxon Fields
- Tove Wetland Pocket Park

### **WALGRAVE (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Red Springs Pocket Park, Kettering Road
- Upper Green, Kettering Road
- Paddocks Close, Kettering Road
- Lower Green, Hannington Lane/High Street
- Cross Roads, Bakers Lane/Holcot Road
- Cemetery, Holcot Road
- Hillside, Old Road
- Allotments, Old Road
- Playing Fields, Newlands Road
- Moated Site, Newlands Road
- Gold Street

### **WEEDON (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Allotments and Pocket Park, Church Street
- Tethering Posts, Equestrian Way

### **WELFORD (NDP)**

- Allotments
- Pocket Park
- Spinney

### **WELTON (NDP)**

- Playing Field
- St Martin's Spinney

### **WEST HADDON (NDP)**

- Old Rec

- Market Field and land linking it to the Old Rec
- Cemetery
- Morrison Park Road and Worcester Close Green
- Festival Garden, High Street, Northampton Road & Guilsborough Road
- Bowling Green
- Area surrounding Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee oak tree
- Old Forge Drive Green
- Triangular piece of land at junctions of Yelvertoft Road, Crick Road and West End
- Church Glebe Field

### **WICKEN (South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan)**

- Village Green

### **WOODFORD CUM MEMBRIS (NDP)**

- King's Corner
- The Moravian Burial Ground
- St Mary's Churchyard and the parish burial ground
- Byfield Road Recreation Ground ("Sarafield")
- Open Space in Pool Street
- Open Space opposite the Social Club
- Green Spaces on Hinton Estates
- Great Central Woodland
- Allotments by Social Club Car Park
- Meadows and Wetlands along the River Cherwell

### **YELVERTOFT (Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Part 2)**

- Old Pocket Park, Bridgend
- Tarry's End, off Elkington Road
- Memorial Green, High Street
- Jubilee Garden, High Street/Elkington Road
- Old Village Green, High Street/Footpath 9/Footpath 13
- King George's Field, off Crick Bridle Path
- Allotment Field, off Crick Bridle Path
- Cemetery, High Street
- Village Hall Playing Field and Pocket Park, Lilbourne Road



## **Appendix C: Strategic Policies of this Plan for the Purposes of Neighbourhood Plans**

### **Chapter 3: Strategy for West Northamptonshire**

SP1 Spatial Strategy (Distribution of Development)

### **Chapter 4: Placemaking**

PL1 Sustainable Design and Construction

PL6 Placemaking

PL7 Design and Amenity

### **Chapter 5: Making Great Places: Northampton**

N1 Spatial Strategy for Northampton (Principal Urban Area)

N2 Northampton, Defining the Roles of the Town Centre and the Central Area

### **Chapter 6: Making Great Places: Daventry**

D1 Spatial Strategy for Daventry (Sub-Regional Centre)

### **Chapter 7: Making Great Places: Brackley**

B1 Spatial Strategy for Brackley (Rural Service Centre)

### **Chapter 8: Making Great Places: Towcester**

T1 Spatial Strategy for Towcester (Rural Service Centre)

### **Chapter 9: Making Great Places: Rural Areas**

R1 Open Countryside

### **Chapter 10: Homes**

HO1 Housing Requirement

HO7 Standards for Accessibility, Space and Water Efficiency in New Homes

HO11 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

### **Chapter 11: Economic Growth**

EC1 Safeguarding Existing and Allocated Employment Sites

EC2 Job Creation and Provision of Affordable Workspaces

### **Chapter 12: Built and Natural Environment**

BN1 West Northamptonshire's Historic Environment

BN6 Landscapes

BN7 Special Landscape Areas

BN9 Nature Conservation

BN10 Biodiversity Net Gain

### **Chapter 13: Transport**

TR1 Sustainable Transport

TR2 Strategic Connections

### **Chapter 14: Infrastructure**

IN1 Infrastructure Delivery and Funding

## Appendix D: Criteria for Defining Confines

### Suggested approach to confines for villages:

#### 1. Introduction

The former Daventry and South Northamptonshire authorities developed their own approaches to defining settlement confines, which have been applied within the respective part 2 local plans. A single settlement confines methodology for West Northamptonshire is now needed to inform the new rural area settlement hierarchy. This appendix compares the existing Daventry and South Northamptonshire approaches to defining settlement confines and suggests draft criteria for the new West Northamptonshire Local Plan. We are seeking views on the suggested draft criteria

#### 2. What are settlement confines?

Settlement or village confines represent the extent of a settlement's main built up area and where certain policies apply. They are used to direct development to the most sustainable locations whilst protecting the character of the countryside, villages and towns.

#### 3. Comparison of the former Daventry and South Northamptonshire authorities' approaches to defining settlement confines

Daventry Part 2 Local Plan Table 3 lists the criteria for defining village confines for Other Villages (because these are not defined in the plan, unless this has been done via a Neighbourhood Plan).

South Northamptonshire Council published a Methodology for Town and Village Confines (August 2016) as part of the evidence for the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan. The methodology lists 5 criteria with key considerations for determining what should be within and outside of village confines.

Both approaches are available to view online here:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning/defining-settlement-confines-guidance>

Tables 1 and 2 below compare the criteria from the two different approaches and identifies the similarities and differences. The South Northamptonshire methodology specifically identifies "The need to try to base confines on **strong physical boundaries** that can be easily identified on the ground. (Roads, watercourses, and strong field and curtilage boundaries)" (Criteria C1). The Daventry method does not

specifically mention physical boundaries but does refer to buildings and curtilages which are 'contained', which could be taken to infer the same sort of well-defined boundaries.

In summary, the majority of criteria are the same or broadly similar (highlighted green in the tables). There are two criteria, one from each approach, which are not included in the other's approach (highlighted yellow in the tables):

1. South Northamptonshire criterion C4 allows for developments that are isolated or peripheral to the main built up part of a village, where there they meet certain criteria; and,
2. Daventry criterion F deals specifically with land between the edge of the village and a bypass.

There is one key difference in the two approaches (highlighted red), which is regarding exception sites. The South Northants approach includes them within confines (criterion C3), whereas Daventry criterion G specifically excludes them.

**Key to comparison tables**

	Both approaches are the same, or broadly similar
	Only included in one approach
	Different approach taken

**Table 1 – comparison of elements included in settlement confines**

<b>Daventry – IN</b>	<b>South Northants - IN</b>	<b>Observations</b>
<p>A. Buildings and curtilages which are contained and visually separate from open countryside that are clearly part of a coherent network of buildings that form the village</p>	<p>C1. The need to try to base confines on strong physical boundaries that can be easily identified on the ground.</p> <p>C5. Conversions of agricultural buildings have been included within the settlement boundary where they are not visually or physically detached from the settlement.</p> <p>C5. Where they occur within settlements and not adjacent to the boundary, green spaces (other than agricultural fields or paddocks) have been included in the settlement boundary.</p>	<p>Daventry approach doesn't explicitly mention boundaries, but the reference to buildings and curtilages as 'contained' could infer this.</p>
<p>B. Areas of land with planning permission for housing or community use that are directly adjacent to the village and are under construction</p>	<p>C3. developments that have taken place outside but adjoining confines (including exception sites) and outstanding planning permissions where development has started</p>	<p>Both approaches include land with consent and which are under construction adjacent to the confines. Exception sites are included in the South Northants approach, but are excluded in the Daventry approach (see below).</p>
	<p>C4. Developments that are isolated or peripheral to the main built up part of a village, where there they meet criteria: at least 30dph, have at least 20 dwellings, are within 100m of the main settlement and do not have a separate identity.</p>	<p>Daventry approach makes no allowance for this.</p>

**Table 2 – comparison of elements outside of settlement confines**

<b>Daventry – OUT</b>	<b>South Northants - OUT</b>	<b>Observations</b>
<p>C. Gardens or areas of open space which relate to the open countryside taking into account the character and appearance of the garden and the surrounding area</p>	<p>C1. large gardens on the edges of villages that extend into the open countryside or the character of which relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the main built up part of a village.</p> <p>C5. Green spaces (including but not limited to designated Local Green Spaces) are an important element of the landscape of settlements and have been excluded from settlement boundaries wherever they occur adjacent to the boundary</p>	<p>Both approaches exclude gardens and open spaces/green spaces which relate more to the surrounding countryside.</p>
<p>D. Individual and groups of dwellings and buildings that are detached or peripheral to the village and relate to the open countryside rather than the built form of the village</p>	<p>C5. farmsteads standing on the edge of the built form of settlements should be excluded as they relate more to the rural context. Converted agricultural buildings that are physically separate from the settlement boundary, or physically adjacent but retain a separate character (for example, having an access point that is some distance from the settlement, or remaining part of a larger complex continuing in agricultural use).</p>	<p>Both approaches exclude buildings and development which is detached or peripheral.</p> <p>South Northants approach allows for isolated developments that are above a certain size and meet other requirements to have their own confines (see C4 above).</p>

<p>E. Areas of employment or leisure use, including public open space, that is detached or peripheral to the village</p>	<p>C2. undeveloped land that is, in use or appearance, more closely related to adjoining open countryside than to the built up part of a village or that affords important views into or outward from a village or an attractive setting for listed or important buildings or conservation areas.</p> <p>C5. equestrian developments; housing for agricultural or forestry workers; garden centres and nurseries; and extensive community facilities such as hard surfaced sports grounds (including pavilions) and car parks, where they have been built outside existing settlement boundaries.</p> <p>C5 Existing employment sites on the periphery of a settlement, which are significant in size in comparison with the settlement's scale, or are clearly beyond a settlement and irrespective of scale, are excluded from the development boundary</p>	<p>South Northants criterion C5 goes into detail on a number of different uses, including for employment, the scale of them</p>
<p>F. Land which would otherwise be outside the confines, even if it is between the edge of the village and a bypass</p>		<p>South Northants approach has no reference to bypasses.</p>
<p>G. Rural Exception Sites</p>		<p>Exception sites are included in the South Northants approach (see above).</p>

#### 4. Suggested West Northamptonshire village confines criteria

Based on the above comparison and assessment of the two former authorities' approaches to settlement confines, the following West Northamptonshire settlement confines criteria are suggested.

**The following will be classified as being inside the confines:**

1. Buildings and curtilages, including converted agricultural buildings, which are:
  - contained by strong physical boundaries,
  - visually separate from open countryside; and
  - clearly part of a coherent network of buildings that form the village,
2. Green spaces (other than agricultural fields or paddocks) where they are located within settlements and not adjacent to the boundary.
3. Areas of land with planning permission, adjacent to the buildings and curtilages conforming to criterion 1, that are completed or under construction.
4. Developments that are isolated or peripheral to the main built up part of a settlement, where they meet criteria: at least 30dph, have at least 20 dwellings, are within 100m of the main settlement and do not have a separate identity.

**The following will be classified as being outside the confines:**

5. Gardens and areas of open space (including, but not limited to, designated Local Green Spaces) on the edges of settlements which relate more to the open countryside than the built up part of the village, taking into account the character and appearance of the garden/open space and the surrounding area.
6. Individual and groups of dwellings and buildings (including farmsteads and converted agricultural buildings) that are detached or peripheral to the settlements and relate to the open countryside rather than the built form of the settlement.
7. Areas of employment or leisure use, including public open space, that are detached or peripheral to the settlement.
8. Land which would otherwise be outside the confines, even if it is between the edge of the settlement and a bypass.
9. Rural Exception Sites.

#### Exception sites



As identified above, the key difference between the two former authorities' approaches is regarding exception sites. For reference, rural exception sites are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as: *"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. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding"*.

The Daventry approach specifically excludes exception sites from settlement confines, whereas South Northamptonshire included exception sites (which have consent and are under construction) within confines. The Council is considering continuing the Daventry approach for the new criteria which would mean all exception sites would be excluded from settlement confines. This may mean that some existing confines in the former South Northamptonshire area would need to be revised.

### **Isolated and peripheral developments**

The South Northamptonshire methodology makes provision for developments that are isolated or peripheral to the main built-up part of a settlement, where there they meet specific criteria, to be included within confines. The Daventry criteria makes no allowance for such instances, but there are a number of settlements within the former South Northamptonshire area which are formed of two or more separate boundaries and it is therefore proposed to retain this criterion.

### **Land adjacent to bypasses**

The Daventry criteria specifically classifies land between the edge of a settlement and a bypass as being outside of the confines. The South Northamptonshire methodology was silent on this. However, it is considered beneficial to retain this criteria for both the existing cases in the former Daventry area and for the new and proposed bypass locations in the former South Northamptonshire area.

### **Existing Confines**

The Daventry Part 2 Local Plan does not define confines for Other Villages (the lowest tier of the hierarchy), although some Other Villages do have confines defined via a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Confines are otherwise determined when the need arises (e.g. the determination of a planning application) according to the criteria in Table 3 of the Daventry Part 2 Local Plan. Conversely, the equivalent settlements within the former South Northamptonshire area, known as Small Villages, do have their confines defined in the Part 2 Local Plan. The new West Northamptonshire Local Plan will need a consistent approach to settlement confines and so the Council is considering defining confines for all settlements in the hierarchy.

## **Suggested approach to confines for Towns:**

### **The following will be classified as being inside the confines boundary:**

1. Buildings and curtilages, which are:
  - contained by strong physical boundaries,
  - visually separate from open countryside, and;
  - clearly part of a coherent network of built development
2. Green spaces where they occur within built development
3. Areas of land allocated for future built development, which are contiguous with other existing or proposed built development.

### **The following will be classified as being outside the confines boundary:**

4. Areas of open space which are wholly on the edge of existing built development
5. Areas of land allocated for open space which are wholly on the edge of existing or proposed built development
6. Individual and groups of buildings that are detached or peripheral to the urban area and relate to the open countryside rather than the built form of the settlement.

## **Appendix E: Housing Trajectory –**

to be included in the Regulation 19 version. Included in the Housing Background Paper for Regulation 18