

Sustainability Appraisal for the Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046

Document Information

Title: Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal for the Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046

Status: Draft for Consultation

Date of approval for consultation: Overview & Scrutiny Panel - Performance & Growth (2 September 2026), Cabinet (9 September 2026) and Full Council (9 September 2026).

Document availability: The Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal for the Pre-Submission Local Plan can be found on the Council's [consultation portal](#). Copies can be downloaded from the portal and responses to the consultation may be entered directly into the portal. A hard copy can be viewed at Customer Services Reception, Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. This office is open from 8:45 to 17:00 Mondays to Thursdays and 8:45 to 16:30 on Fridays.

Please note: This document may be available in alternative formats on request.

Non-technical Summary

Non-technical Summary

Purpose of this non-technical summary and the SA

Purpose of this Non-Technical Summary and Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.1** This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) explains, in plain language, the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) prepared alongside the Pre-Submission Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046.
- 1.2** The purpose of the SA is to ensure that the Local Plan promotes sustainable development by considering environmental, social and economic effects throughout the Local Plan-making process. The appraisal has informed decisions on growth levels, site allocations, strategic policies and development management policies. It has also helped identify mitigation measures and opportunities to maximise positive outcomes.
- 1.3** At Regulation 19, SA provides a clear, finalised assessment of the Pre Submission Local Plan and demonstrates how sustainability considerations have shaped the strategy and policy choices.
- 1.4** Alongside the SA, the Council undertook a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The HRA examines whether the Local Plan could adversely affect internationally protected wildlife sites.
- 1.5** The HRA was particularly important due to the presence of several internationally designated habitats and wetland systems including the Ouse Washes and other ecologically sensitive areas. Through the HRA process, additional mitigation measures were identified relating to recreational impacts, water quality, water resource management and habitat protection. These recommendations were incorporated directly into the Local Plan and SA process.

Local Plan Context

- 1.6** Huntingdonshire is a predominantly rural district characterised by market towns, villages, extensive agricultural landscapes, and nationally important environmental assets such as the Great Ouse Valley, Grafham Water, Portholme Meadow, and the Ouse Washes. Alongside these strengths, the district faces challenges including housing demand, infrastructure pressures, climate change, water scarcity, and the need to protect its natural and historic environment.
- 1.7** The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 provides the framework for managing growth and development between 2021 and 2046. Guided by the themes of **Pride in Place, Inclusive Economy, Health Embedded, Environmental Innovation, and Travel Transformed**, the Plan seeks to deliver sustainable growth while enhancing quality of life and environmental resilience. It aims to provide at least **32,200 new homes**, support around **15,400 jobs**, allocate significant employment land, deliver strategic growth locations and infrastructure investment, strengthen green and blue infrastructure networks, and contribute towards achieving **net zero carbon emissions by 2050**.

Sustainability Appraisal Process

- 1.8** The SA is a staged process that runs alongside Local Plan preparation. It comprises:
 - **Stage A:** Scoping the appraisal.
 - **Stage B:** Assessing the sustainability of the Local Plan and alternatives, identifying mitigation measures and monitoring proposals.
 - **Stage C:** Preparing the SA Report.
 - **Stage D:** Consulting on the Local Plan and SA Report.
 - **Stage E:** Post-adoption reporting and monitoring.
- 1.9** The SA is currently at **Stage D**, while the Local Plan is at the **Pre-Submission (Regulation 19)** stage.

Non-technical Summary

1.10 As part of Stage A, baseline information for Huntingdonshire was compiled (see Appendix A of the SA Report). This stage also involved reviewing relevant policies, plans and programmes (PPPs) that influence, or may be affected by, the Local Plan and contain environmental protection objectives.

1.11 The baseline evidence and plans and programmes review identified Huntingdonshire as an area with both significant opportunities and challenges. The district benefits from a strong location between Cambridge, Peterborough and London, a diverse economy, attractive market towns, and important environmental assets. However, it also faces pressures including housing affordability, an ageing population, and increasing climate change risks such as flooding, heat stress and water scarcity.

1.12 Key issues highlighted by the evidence include:

- Reliance on private vehicles.
- High transport-related carbon emissions.
- Pressure on wastewater infrastructure.
- Biodiversity loss and reduced habitat connectivity.
- Economic disparities between communities.
- Town centre challenges linked to changing retail trends.

1.13 Understanding these sustainability issues informed the development of the **SA Framework**, which provides 16 sustainability objectives against which the Local Plan and its alternatives have been assessed:

Climate emergency

- SA1 - Contribute to achieving the district's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040
- SA2 - Improve adaptability and resilience to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency
- SA3 - Manage Huntingdonshire's water resources in a sustainable manner and reduce the risk all potential sources of flooding to people, properties and the environment

Environmental

- SA4 - Make efficient use of land by maximising development on previously developed land where this is not of high biodiversity value and minimising that on the best and most versatile agricultural land
- SA5 - Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible natural green space and enhance the strategic green and blue infrastructure network and links to it
- SA6 - Promote conservation, enhancement, recovery and connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance
- SA7 - Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the distinctiveness of settlements
- SA8 - Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution

Socio-economic

- SA9 - All people have access to high quality affordable homes that meet their needs across their lifetime
- SA10 - Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities to promote social inclusion particularly amongst those most at risk of experiencing discrimination, poverty and social exclusion
- SA11- Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities
- SA12 - Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure
- SA13 - Strengthen, modernise and diversify the economy and promote opportunities for growth of indigenous companies as well as encouraging sustainable inward investment
- SA14 - Support the successful response of town, and village retail centres to changing shopping and social trends

Non-technical Summary

- SA15 - Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities
- SA16 - Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting(s)

1.14 Together these objectives create a balanced framework that captures environmental, social and economic sustainability outcomes.

Consultation at the Scoping Stage

- 1.15** The SA Scoping Report was consulted on with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.
- 1.16** Public consultation was also undertaken in 2023, with responses helping to strengthen the appraisal framework and evidence base.

What options were considered

- 1.17** The Council adopted an iterative and evidence-led approach which involved testing a wide range of growth scenarios before selecting its preferred strategy. The alternatives were assessed against the SA Framework and supported by extensive technical evidence.

Housing Growth Strategy Evolution, Reasonable Alternatives and Reasons for Selection

- 1.18** The housing strategy was developed through the Further Issues and Options (2024), Preferred Options Local Plan (2025), and Pre-Submission Local Plan (2026), informed by consultation responses, demographic and housing evidence, and SA findings. The assessment of reasonable alternatives focused on the level of housing growth required and its distribution across the district.
- 1.19** At the Further Issues and Options stage, the Council used the Government's standard method for assessing housing need as a starting point and considered three alternatives:

- **Option A:** Standard method housing need.
- **Option B:** Standard method plus 5%.
- **Option C:** Standard method plus 10%.

1.20 Higher growth options were considered to support affordability, economic growth, infrastructure investment, and the district's relationship with Greater Cambridge and the wider region. Six alternative spatial strategies were also assessed:

- Continuation of the existing Local Plan strategy
- Strategic town expansions
- Growth along public transport corridors
- Growth focused on the strategic road network
- Dispersed growth across settlements
- New communities combined with dispersed growth

1.21 Consultation responses showed support for all three housing growth options. Many respondents favoured either a 5% or 10% uplift to improve flexibility, affordability, and economic opportunities, while others preferred the standard method figure to limit environmental and infrastructure impacts.

1.22 Following updated national guidance and further evidence, the Preferred Options Local Plan identified a minimum housing need of **29,251 dwellings** for 2021-2046. The Council applied an uplift in excess of 5%, resulting in a requirement of approximately **32,200 homes**, to provide flexibility against changes in housing need calculations and uncertainty in site delivery. This approach was retained in the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

1.23 The housing requirement of approximately 32,200 homes was selected because it provides a robust supply of housing, supports affordability objectives, and offers resilience if housing need increases or delivery rates fall below expectations. The standard method option was not pursued because it provided limited flexibility, while an uplift of between 5% and 10% would provide sufficient flexibility.

Non-technical Summary

- 1.24** The Pre-Submission Local Plan directs over 80% of growth to market towns, service centres, and new communities, with more limited growth in villages to support rural services and communities. Major allocations include the sites within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster, The Lattenburys new community, and other sustainable locations identified through the settlement hierarchy and site assessment process.
- 1.25** The SA found that concentrating growth in sustainable settlements would improve access to jobs, services, education, healthcare, and public transport, while reducing the need to travel and supporting healthier, lower-carbon lifestyles. Alternatives based on dispersed development or strategic-road-led growth performed less favourably due to increased reliance on private vehicles, higher emissions, and reduced accessibility. A strategy based solely on major town expansions was also discounted because it could place excessive pressure on existing infrastructure and limit opportunities to support smaller communities.
- 1.26** Overall, the Council concluded that providing approximately 32,200 homes through a settlement-focused growth strategy represents the most balanced and sustainable approach to meeting housing needs while supporting economic growth, infrastructure delivery, and environmental objectives.
- Employment Strategy Evolution, Reasonable Alternatives and Reasons for Selection**
- 1.27** The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 shows a clear evolution in its approach to employment growth, informed by consultation, evidence gathering and the SA. At the Further Issues and Options stage (2024), three alternatives were considered: a low-growth approach focused on supporting existing businesses; a medium-growth approach providing sufficient employment land for expansion; and a high-growth approach aimed at creating business clusters and capitalising on strategic growth sectors. Alternative locational strategies were also assessed, including directing development to Established Employment Areas (EEAs), strategic road corridors, mixed-use urban extensions, sustainable locations and market towns.
- 1.28** Evidence highlighted Huntingdonshire's strong links to the Cambridge-Peterborough economy, the opportunities presented by Alconbury Enterprise Zone, and potential growth in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, logistics and research-intensive sectors. Employment activity was already concentrated in Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and established employment locations.
- 1.29** Consultation responses generally supported a medium-to-high growth approach. Parish councils favoured growth aligned with infrastructure provision, while developers and landowners supported a more ambitious strategy to attract investment, encourage business clustering and create higher-skilled jobs. There was also broad support for locating employment in accessible and sustainable locations.
- 1.30** Following preparation of the Economic Growth Strategy and Economic and Employment Needs Assessment, the Preferred Options Local Plan (2025) selected a moderate-high growth scenario. Evidence identified demand for around 922,000 square metres of employment floorspace and approximately 15,400 additional jobs by 2046. This approach combined labour market forecasts, market signals and opportunities arising from major infrastructure investment.
- 1.31** The Pre-Submission Local Plan (2026) retains this strategy through Policy LP 1, focusing employment growth within sustainable settlements, market towns, service centres, established employment areas and strategic locations such as the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster, Alconbury Weald and Peterborough Services and Fenstanton. The strategy was chosen because it aligns jobs and housing growth, supports higher-value sectors, maximises infrastructure investment benefits, promotes sustainable access to employment, and provides flexibility for future economic change.
- 1.32** Lower-growth, EEA-only and highway-led alternatives were rejected because they would not adequately meet forecast employment needs and performed less favourably in sustainability terms, particularly due to increased car dependency, transport emissions and infrastructure pressures. SA findings showed that concentrating jobs in sustainable settlements and mixed-use

Non-technical Summary

locations would improve access to employment, services and public transport, while supporting healthier and more inclusive communities. Overall, the selected strategy was judged to provide the most sustainable balance between economic growth, environmental objectives, infrastructure capacity and social outcomes, supporting around 15,400 jobs to 2046.

Site Options and their Reasonable Alternatives

- 1.33** A total of 437 sites were submitted through the Call for Sites process and were subject to a comprehensive, multi-stage assessment. The evaluation began with a constraint screening exercise to identify any fundamental issues that would prevent development. Sites then underwent a Land Availability Assessment to determine whether they were available and deliverable within the plan period. Further assessment included SA, infrastructure testing, flood risk assessment, heritage assessment, and HRA to ensure that each site was considered against a broad range of environmental, social, and economic factors.
- 1.34** The assessment process resulted in 53 sites being rejected at the initial stage due to fundamental constraints that made them unsuitable for development. A further 41 sites were ruled out through availability and deliverability testing. The remaining 343 sites were assessed in detail, of which 225 were identified as reasonable alternatives for consideration.
- 1.35** The preferred site allocations emerged from this detailed assessment process and generally demonstrated strong sustainability credentials. These sites typically have good access to existing services and facilities, support opportunities for active travel, are less affected by flood risk, minimise impacts on landscape character and heritage assets, and can be integrated effectively with existing settlements. Examples of preferred allocations include Wyton Airfield, Lodge Farm, The Lattenburys, Giffords Park, East of St Neots, and a number of strategically located urban extensions around market towns.

- 1.36** Conversely, many alternative sites were not taken forward because they performed less favourably against the assessment criteria. The most common reasons for rejection included significant flood risk, potential harm to heritage assets, poor accessibility to services and employment opportunities, infrastructure limitations, and landscape sensitivity. These factors reduced their suitability for allocation when compared with the preferred sites.

Appraisal of the Local Plan

Vision and Objectives

- 1.37** The SA concluded that the Local Plan Vision establishes a coherent and sustainable framework to guide future development. It highlights a number of key strengths that demonstrate a balanced approach to growth and environmental stewardship. These include a strong commitment to addressing climate change through ambitious sustainability objectives, alongside a clear recognition of the importance of health and wellbeing in creating thriving communities. The Vision also promotes economic inclusion, ensuring that opportunities for growth and prosperity are accessible to a wide range of residents. In addition, it places significant emphasis on the delivery of sustainable infrastructure to support future development, while prioritising the protection and enhancement of environmental assets. Collectively, these elements contribute to a robust and forward-looking vision for sustainable development.

Sustainability Appraisal Summary of the Local Plan Policies

- 1.38** The SA found that the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 performs positively across most sustainability objectives and that the preferred hybrid growth strategy represents the most balanced environmental, social and economic option. The strategy focuses development in market towns, service centres and strategic growth locations with good access to jobs, services, infrastructure and public transport, while allowing limited growth

Non-technical Summary

in rural settlements. This approach was assessed as the most effective in delivering housing and economic growth while minimising environmental impacts.

Climate Change and Carbon Reduction

- 1.39** Climate-related policies achieved some of the strongest appraisal results. The SA concluded that directing growth to sustainable locations, supporting renewable energy generation and reducing emissions from new development would make a significant contribution to climate mitigation and adaptation. For example, LP 16: Approach to Renewable Energy Schemes was assessed as having significant positive effects by supporting renewable energy generation and contributing to net-zero ambitions. Similarly, LP 28: Minimising Embodied and Operational Carbon in New Buildings performed strongly by promoting energy-efficient design, sustainable construction and whole-life carbon reduction. LP 20: Supporting Carbon Capture Through Nature also scored highly due to its support for woodland creation, peatland protection and natural carbon sequestration.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

- 1.40** The appraisal found strong positive effects for biodiversity, habitat protection and green infrastructure. Policies were strengthened to support biodiversity net gain, habitat connectivity and the protection of important environmental assets such as the Great Fen and Great Ouse Valley. LP 19: Green and Blue Infrastructure and LP53: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation performed particularly well by promoting ecological networks, protecting designated sites and delivering nature recovery. The SA concluded that these policies help mitigate the impacts of growth while creating opportunities for environmental enhancement.

Water Resources and Flood Risk

- 1.41** Water management emerged as a key sustainability issue due to flood risk, wastewater capacity and water stress. The SA prioritised development in flood zone 1 and discounted many alternatives with significant flooding

constraints. Policies such as LP 21: Managing Flood Risk, LP 22: Managing Waste Water, LP 23: Managing Surface Water, and LP 24: Water Efficiency all achieved major positive effects against water-related objectives. These policies require sustainable drainage systems, efficient water use, wastewater infrastructure upgrades and the application of a sequential approach to flood risk.

Housing and Social Inclusion

- 1.42** Housing policies generated significant positive effects by addressing affordability, accessibility and specialist housing needs. The Plan provides for around 32,200 homes and seeks to ensure that growth contributes to inclusive and balanced communities. A strong example is LP 18: Providing Affordable Homes, which scored highly for meeting housing needs and reducing inequalities through increased affordable housing provision. Policies on accessible and adaptable homes and specialist housing also performed well by supporting older people, disabled residents and vulnerable groups.

Health and Wellbeing

- 1.43** Health considerations are embedded throughout the Plan. The SA found that policies promoting active travel, green spaces, community facilities and healthy design would improve wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. LP 17: Health and Wellbeing was one of the strongest-performing social policies. The revised policy broadens Health Impact Assessment requirements and strengthens consideration of healthy lifestyles, access to services and social inclusion. Likewise, LP11: Placemaking for Larger Scale Developments scored highly because it promotes walkable neighbourhoods, green infrastructure and integrated community facilities.

Economy and Employment

- 1.44** The appraisal concluded that economic growth policies make a positive contribution to sustainability by supporting approximately 15,400 jobs and significant employment floor space growth. The preferred strategy aligns

Non-technical Summary

housing and employment growth and focuses development in accessible locations. LP 14: Supporting and Enabling Strategic Infrastructure achieved significant positive effects by facilitating transport, utilities and digital infrastructure that underpin investment and business growth. The SA also found that mixed-use developments and established employment areas perform particularly well because they reduce commuting and support local economic resilience.

Transport and Connectivity

- 1.45** Transport was a key factor in determining sustainability performance. The SA consistently found that concentrating growth in locations served by public transport delivers better outcomes than dispersed development patterns. LP 15: Transport, Travel and Connectivity and LP 30: Supporting Active and Sustainable Travel performed strongly by encouraging walking, cycling, public transport use and reduced reliance on private vehicles. The appraisal showed that development focused around sustainable transport corridors achieves better climate, health and accessibility outcomes than highway-led or dispersed growth options.

Conclusion

- 1.46** Overall, the Local Plan delivers predominantly positive sustainability outcomes. The strongest benefits arise from policies addressing climate change, renewable energy, biodiversity recovery, flood risk management, affordable housing, healthy communities and sustainable transport. While some adverse effects are associated with greenfield development and increased pressure on infrastructure, these are largely mitigated through policy requirements, site selection, green infrastructure provision and ongoing monitoring. Overall, the preferred strategy was judged to provide the most sustainable balance between environmental protection, social wellbeing and economic growth.

Sustainability Appraisal Summary of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster

- 1.47** The North Huntingdon Growth Cluster offers opportunities for significant employment and supports wider economic objectives. It is the largest Local Planned growth area in Huntingdonshire, bringing together Huntingdon Racecourse, Land North of the A141, Lodge Farm and Wyton Airfield. Together, these developments are expected to deliver around 8,900 new homes and 198.5 hectares of employment land, significantly expanding Huntingdon's role as a major residential, business, logistics, innovation and defence hub. The Plan also identifies the ongoing developments at Alconbury Weald and Ermine Street within the Cluster.
- 1.48** The scale of growth will place substantial pressure on infrastructure, particularly transport, healthcare, education, utilities and environmental services. Increased demand on the A141 corridor, A1307, A14 junctions and routes into Huntingdon town centre will require major transport improvements, including new junctions, active travel networks, mobility hubs and enhanced public transport. Coordinated delivery of these measures will be essential to prevent congestion.
- 1.49** The growing population will also increase demand for healthcare services, despite Local Plans for new neighbourhood health facilities and redevelopment of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. Similarly, significant investment will be needed in education, including new primary schools, expanded secondary capacity, early years provision and specialist facilities.
- 1.50** Additional pressure is expected on water, wastewater and drainage infrastructure, with likely upgrades needed to the Water Recycling Centres, alongside integrated water management and sustainable drainage solutions to manage flood risk.
- 1.51** Overall, although the development will require substantial infrastructure investment, it is expected to deliver positive long-term benefits by creating sustainable new communities with homes, jobs, services and transport links in one location, reducing the need for longer-distance travel and reinforcing Huntingdon's position as a key growth centre within the district.

Non-technical Summary

Climate Change and Sustainable Development

- 1.52** The SA concluded that the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster performs strongly against climate and sustainable development objectives because it focuses growth in an accessible location close to existing services, jobs and infrastructure. By creating large mixed-use communities, the cluster can reduce the need for long-distance commuting and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use. The coordinated development of strategic infrastructure, including improvements to the A141 corridor and sustainable transport networks, further strengthens its sustainability performance.

Housing and Community Creation

- 1.53** The Growth Cluster plays a crucial role in meeting the district's housing requirement and supports the overall strategy to deliver approximately 32,200 homes by 2046. The appraisal recognised that large strategic sites provide opportunities for comprehensive masterplanning, affordable housing, community facilities and supporting infrastructure. Wyton Airfield, the largest brownfield allocation in the district, performed particularly well because it can deliver around 4,000 homes alongside community facilities, open space, affordable housing, healthcare and research uses. The site offers an opportunity to create a self-sustaining community rather than simply adding housing to existing settlements.
- 1.54** The SA found that these strategic sites have greater capacity to deliver balanced communities than many smaller allocations because schools, healthcare, recreation and infrastructure can be planned and delivered alongside development.

Economic Growth and Employment

- 1.55** Economic performance was one of the strongest aspects of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster. The area contributes significantly to the district-wide objective of creating approximately 15,400 jobs and supporting economic diversification. Wyton Airfield achieved particularly positive scores due to its links with the defence and innovation sectors and its ability to

accommodate employment uses, research and development activities, skills training and key-worker housing. The site supports the emerging innovation corridor around Huntingdon and creates opportunities to align housing growth with employment growth.

- 1.56** The SA highlighted that locating homes and jobs within the same strategic growth area helps reduce commuting distances and contributes positively to both economic and environmental objectives.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

- 1.57** Although the scale of development creates pressure on environmental assets, the SA concluded that biodiversity impacts can be effectively managed through extensive mitigation measures. The strategic sites include significant requirements for biodiversity net gain, habitat creation, green corridors and open space. Wyton Airfield performed positively because of its ability to provide substantial green infrastructure, habitat enhancement and ecological connectivity as part of a comprehensive masterplan. Similarly, Lodge Farm incorporates requirements for biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage and landscape mitigation.
- 1.58** The appraisal concluded that the scale of these sites provides opportunities to create strategic environmental improvements that smaller developments would struggle to deliver.

Water Resources and Flood Risk

- 1.59** Flood risk and water management were key considerations in the assessment. The preferred sites generally performed well because they were sequentially selected and supported by mitigation measures. For example, Wyton Airfield has only limited areas affected by flood risk and is considered suitable for sustainable drainage solutions. Allocation requirements include water management measures, sustainable drainage systems, natural flood management and wastewater infrastructure provision.

Non-technical Summary

- 1.60** The SA concluded that water-related risks are manageable and can be addressed through policy requirements and ongoing monitoring.

Health, Accessibility and Social Inclusion

- 1.61** The appraisal identified significant positive effects for health and wellbeing. The cluster benefits from proximity to Huntingdon and existing services, while strategic-scale development allows delivery of healthcare facilities, recreation areas, active travel routes and community infrastructure.
- 1.62** The inclusion of open space, walking and cycling routes, affordable housing and local facilities is expected to support healthier lifestyles, improve access to services and reduce inequalities. The SA concluded that the preferred allocations would contribute positively to community cohesion and quality of life.
- 1.63** The North Huntingdon Growth Cluster delivers **strong positive effects across housing, economic growth, health, accessibility and sustainable development objectives**. Strategic allocations such as **Wyton Airfield** and **Lodge Farm** perform particularly well because they combine large-scale housing delivery with employment opportunities, infrastructure investment, green infrastructure and community facilities. While the scale of development creates challenges relating to biodiversity, water management and transport, these impacts are considered capable of mitigation through comprehensive masterplanning, policy requirements and long-term monitoring. As a result, the Growth Cluster was identified as one of the most sustainable locations for accommodating significant growth within Huntingdonshire.

Sustainability Appraisal Summary of the Local Plan Sites Allocations

- 1.64** The SA assessed proposed allocation sites against environmental, social and economic objectives, including climate change, biodiversity, flood risk, landscape, housing, health, accessibility, transport and economic growth. Across the district, preferred allocations generally performed best where they were closely related to existing settlements, had good access to services and employment, were located in areas of low flood risk, and could

be integrated with existing infrastructure. Sites with significant flood risk, heritage impacts, landscape sensitivity, poor accessibility or limited infrastructure capacity were often discounted.

Climate Change and Sustainable Locations

- 1.65** A key finding was that sites located in sustainable settlements and close to public transport, services and employment opportunities performed most positively against climate change objectives. Such sites support shorter journeys, greater use of walking and cycling, and reduced reliance on private vehicles. Strategic growth locations, including major urban extensions and new communities, scored well where they could deliver integrated infrastructure, active travel networks and mixed-use development. For example, **Fenstanton 1 (Galley Hill)** and **Peterborough Services 1** performed strongly due to its accessibility to employment, schools, services and strategic transport connections.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

- 1.66** Biodiversity considerations played a major role in site selection. Sites affecting internationally or nationally designated habitats, ancient woodland, County Wildlife Sites or significant ecological networks generally performed less favourably. Allocated sites were typically those where ecological impacts could be mitigated and where opportunities existed to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure.
- 1.67** **Bury 2** was selected primarily for biodiversity and green infrastructure benefits rather than housing development, while **Bluntisham 2** was supported because it includes substantial green infrastructure provision, biodiversity enhancements and suitable mitigation measures.

Non-technical Summary

Water Resources and Flood Risk

- 1.68** Flood risk was one of the most influential factors in site assessment. The SA prioritised sites in flood zone 1 and frequently discounted sites affected by significant fluvial or surface water flooding. A sequential approach was used to identify sites with the lowest flood risk.

Housing and Community Benefits

- 1.69** Preferred allocations generally demonstrated strong performance in supporting housing delivery while maintaining access to services and community facilities. Sites that represented logical extensions to settlements and could be integrated with existing neighbourhoods were favoured over isolated or poorly connected locations. Some sites in villages have been identified as they perform important roles in sustaining village services and providing some growth to settlements and provide greater market choice.

Health, Accessibility and Social Inclusion

- 1.70** The SA found that sites with good access to healthcare, education, employment, public transport and active travel routes delivered the strongest social sustainability outcomes. Such sites help reduce inequalities, encourage healthy lifestyles and improve access to opportunities.

Economy and Employment

- 1.71** Employment and mixed-use sites performed best where they reinforced established employment areas or were well connected to strategic transport routes and labour markets. The appraisal favoured locations that supported local job creation while reducing commuting distances.
- 1.72** Examples include **Yaxley 1**, which extends the successful Eagle Business Park and benefits from strong accessibility, and **Kimbolton 10**, an expansion of the existing Bicton Industrial Estate that supports local economic growth. **Great Paxton 2** also performed positively because it adjoins an established industrial area and strengthens local employment provision.

Conclusion

- 1.73** The SA concluded that the preferred allocation sites offer the most balanced sustainability outcomes across the district. They generally provide good accessibility, lower flood risk, opportunities for active travel, housing delivery, biodiversity enhancement and economic growth, while avoiding many of the significant heritage, landscape, ecological and infrastructure constraints affecting alternative sites. Although some allocations involve greenfield development and require mitigation, the appraisal found that the selected sites collectively support sustainable growth and align with the Local Plan's environmental, social and economic objectives.

Significant effects of the Local Plan on human health and inequalities

- 1.74** The SA embeds health and equality considerations throughout the Local Plan rather than treating them as separate issues. It identified key challenges including an ageing population, housing affordability, unequal access to services, rural isolation, limited public transport, deprivation, and health impacts from air pollution and inactivity.
- 1.75** To address these issues, the SA assessed all policies and site allocations against objectives focused on:
- **SA9:** Providing affordable, high-quality homes that meet people's needs throughout their lives.
 - **SA10:** Improving access to community services and facilities, particularly for vulnerable groups.
 - **SA12:** Reducing car dependency and promoting walking, cycling, and public transport.
- 1.76** The appraisal found that health and equality are integral to the Local Plan's overall strategy. Significant positive impacts are expected from:
- Delivery of affordable, adaptable, and specialist housing

Non-technical Summary

- Improved access to green and blue infrastructure, open spaces, and recreational opportunities
- Investment in healthcare, community facilities, and active travel infrastructure
- Creation of walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods
- Increased access to employment opportunities and services

1.77 The Local Plan is expected to reduce health inequalities, support social inclusion, improve housing security, and enhance wellbeing, particularly for lower-income households, older people, people with disabilities, and rural communities.

1.78 Some risks remain, including pressure on healthcare and community infrastructure, air quality impacts from growth, and continued accessibility challenges in rural areas. However, these are mitigated through infrastructure-led growth, sustainable transport measures, green infrastructure, phased development, support for local services, and digital connectivity.

Cumulative effects of the Local Plan

1.79 The Pre-Submission Local Plan is expected to deliver significant positive cumulative sustainability benefits to 2046 through the combined effects of its spatial strategy, development policies, infrastructure requirements and site allocations. Assessment against key sustainability objectives suggests overall positive outcomes for climate action, housing, community wellbeing, environmental enhancement, economic growth and social inclusion, provided that environmental and infrastructure pressures are effectively managed.

1.80 Key positive effects include:

- **Climate change:** Concentrating over 80% of growth in sustainable locations supports public transport, active travel, lower-carbon lifestyles, renewable energy, energy-efficient development and nature-based climate solutions.

- **Housing and communities:** Delivery of at least **32,200 homes** across a range of tenures and needs, alongside schools, healthcare, community facilities and green spaces, helping address affordability and population growth.
- **Environment and biodiversity:** Strong support for habitat restoration, biodiversity recovery, green and blue infrastructure, and ecological connectivity through projects such as the Great Fen and Nature Recovery Network.
- **Health and wellbeing:** Improved access to housing, open space, active travel routes and community services is expected to enhance physical and mental health.
- **Economic opportunity and inclusion:** Provision for around **15,400 jobs**, employment land, affordable housing and community infrastructure is expected to support inclusive economic growth and reduce barriers to opportunity.

1.81 Key risks and challenges include:

- Pressure on **water resources, wastewater infrastructure and flood risk management**
- Potential impacts on **sensitive habitats, biodiversity and greenfield land**
- The need for **transport, healthcare, education and utility infrastructure** to keep pace with growth
- Ongoing accessibility challenges in some rural areas

1.82 While there are risks relating to environmental capacity and infrastructure delivery, mitigation measures, supporting evidence studies and ongoing monitoring are expected to ensure these do not outweigh the Local Plan's overall positive outcomes. The Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan refines rather than changes the Regulation 18 strategy. It is more evidence-based, coherent and deliverable, with stronger focus on climate resilience, infrastructure, health, water, biodiversity, affordable housing and economic competitiveness, improving its soundness and sustainability while maintaining the core development strategy.

Non-technical Summary

Mitigation Measures and Enhancement Opportunities

- 1.83** The Local Plan demonstrates not only that mitigation is proposed, but that specific policies and strategic interventions directly address identified cumulative effects.
- **Climate Change and Net Zero:** Growth-related emissions are mitigated through a net zero pathway to 2050, energy-efficient development, renewable energy, sustainable transport, and carbon sequestration measures. Strategic growth areas are Local Planned around active travel and public transport to reduce car dependency.
 - **Housing and Communities:** Infrastructure pressures are addressed through the delivery of affordable, accessible and specialist housing alongside schools, healthcare, community facilities and open space. Funding and delivery are secured through masterLocal Planning, CIL and Section 106 agreements.
 - **Biodiversity and Natural Environment:** Biodiversity impacts are mitigated through Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas, biodiversity net gain, habitat connectivity, and contributions to Nature Recovery Network objectives, particularly within key environmental corridors such as the Great Fen and Great Ouse Valley.
 - **Landscape and Environmental Quality:** Policies protect landscape character and local distinctiveness through high-quality design, placemaking, strategic landscaping and green infrastructure, with additional safeguards for sensitive areas such as the Great Fen.
 - **Water Resources and Flood Risk:** Risks are reduced through flood risk policies, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), water efficiency measures, a preference for development in flood zone 1, and alignment of growth with wastewater infrastructure upgrades.
 - **Health and Wellbeing:** The Local Plan promotes healthier communities through accessible green spaces, recreation facilities, active travel infrastructure and healthcare provision linked to growth.
 - **Inequality and Social Inclusion:** Affordable housing, accessible homes, specialist accommodation and support for rural services help

reduce social exclusion and improve access to housing, services and employment.

- **Economy and Employment:** Provision for 15,400 jobs and significant employment space supports economic growth while integrating jobs and housing to reduce commuting and create more sustainable communities.

- 1.84** The Local Plan uses a coordinated approach combining sustainable growth, infrastructure delivery, climate action, environmental protection, affordable housing and health-focused placemaking to minimise adverse cumulative effects and maximise positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

Influence of the Sustainability Appraisal and Evolution of the Local Plan

- 1.85** The SA has been integral to shaping the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046, informing strategy development, policy formulation and site selection from the outset. Through the assessment of alternatives, the SA supported a spatial strategy that focuses growth in the district's most sustainable locations, including market towns, service centres and strategic growth areas, while allowing proportionate development in rural communities.
- 1.86** The SA identified climate change as a key challenge, leading to policies that promote climate resilience, energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport, flood risk management and nature-based carbon capture. It also influenced environmental policies by highlighting the importance of biodiversity, landscape character and green and blue infrastructure, resulting in stronger protections and enhancement measures.
- 1.87** Sustainability considerations were embedded in site selection, with allocations assessed against factors such as flood risk, biodiversity, heritage, accessibility and landscape impacts. The SA also helped refine policies

Non-technical Summary

through an iterative process of identifying risks, recommending mitigation and enhancing positive outcomes, informed by consultation feedback and updated evidence.

- 1.88** As the Local Plan evolved from the Issues Stage to the Pre-Submission Plan, the SA guided the refinement of the settlement hierarchy, growth strategy and policy framework. The final plan provides for at least 32,200 homes and around 15,400 jobs in sustainable locations, supported by strengthened climate, environmental and development management policies.
- 1.89** Overall, the Local Plan has been shaped through an evidence-led process guided by the SA findings, technical evidence and consultation feedback. The result is a strategy that balances growth with environmental protection, climate resilience and community wellbeing, demonstrating that sustainability has informed and improved the Plan at every stage of its preparation.

How HRA influenced the Local Plan

- 1.90** A key finding of the HRA was that water quality and water quantity could affect several European sites, including Fenland SAC, Nene Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar, Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar, Portholme SAC, Woodwalton Fen Ramsar and The Wash. In response, the Local Plan includes policies on Managing Waste Water, Managing Surface Water, Enabling Water Efficiency and Managing Flood Risk, requiring development to demonstrate treatment capacity, minimise impacts on watercourses, incorporate sustainable drainage and achieve high standards of water efficiency. The Appropriate Assessment concluded that, with measures identified through the Integrated Water Management Strategy and Water Cycle Study, adverse effects on site integrity could be avoided.
- 1.91** The HRA also identified recreational pressure as a potential issue for several designated sites. This influenced policies on Promoting Green and Blue Infrastructure, Supporting Carbon Capture Through Nature, Protecting our Nature Conservation Sites and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity. In particular, the Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas policy

establishes a district-wide network, including the Great Fen, Great Ouse Valley and Nene Valley, to provide accessible natural greenspace and reduce pressure on sensitive sites.

- 1.92** The HRA strongly influenced site allocations, with major developments required to deliver green infrastructure, habitat creation, biodiversity enhancements and recreational provision through comprehensive masterplanning. Key examples include Wyton Airfield, Huntingdon Racecourse, Land North of the A141, East of Loves Farm and South of Godmanchester, where extensive open space, ecological connectivity and biodiversity measures are required.
- 1.93** Urbanisation impacts, including lighting, noise, disturbance and effects on functionally linked habitats, were also identified. The Local Plan responds through policies on Protecting our Nature Conservation Sites, Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity, Creating High Quality Places and Spaces, Ensuring Amenity for New Buildings and Neighbours, and Protecting Trees, Woodlands, Hedges and Hedgerows, requiring ecological assessment, habitat retention, landscape buffering and mitigation measures.
- 1.94** For air quality, the HRA highlighted Portholme SAC due to its proximity to the strategic road network. This informed policies on Facilitating Transport, Travel and Connectivity, Supporting Active and Sustainable Travel, Providing Electric Vehicle Charging Points and Preventing and Reducing Air Pollution, with major allocations expected to support modal shift and reduce traffic emissions.
- 1.95** Overall, the HRA has shaped the Local Plan by informing site selection, strategic policies, allocation-specific mitigation and project-level ecological assessment. Its findings are embedded throughout the Plan, supporting the conclusion that it can be implemented without adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Non-technical Summary

Consultation and Representations

Statutory Consultee Influence on the Sustainability Appraisal and Local Plan

- 1.96** The Council is required to consult Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency on the SA. Their feedback played a significant role in shaping both the SA and the Local Plan. Further details of engagement are set out in the Duty to Cooperate Compliance Statement.
- 1.97** **Natural England** focused on biodiversity, ecological connectivity, designated sites, water and air quality, nature recovery and the potential impacts of development on the Ouse Washes and other sensitive habitats. It also raised concerns about cumulative effects and aspects of the SA methodology. In response, the Council commissioned additional ecological assessments, strengthened Habitats Regulations Assessment work, refined SA methodologies, enhanced biodiversity policies and expanded Green and Blue Infrastructure provisions. Site-specific mitigation requirements were introduced where necessary, and ecological evidence informed both allocation decisions and policy development.
- 1.98** **Historic England** supported the plan-led approach but sought stronger consideration of heritage assets within both the Local Plan and the SA. It requested additional heritage evidence, Heritage Impact Assessments and clearer integration of heritage issues into appraisal and policy frameworks. The Council responded by undertaking further heritage assessments, strengthening policy wording and incorporating site-specific mitigation. Heritage considerations were also given greater prominence within design, environmental and infrastructure policies.
- 1.99** **The Environment Agency** concentrated on flood risk, water resources, water quality, wastewater capacity, climate resilience and compliance with environmental legislation. It emphasised the need for robust evidence and stronger mitigation measures. In response, the Council updated flood risk and water evidence, including Strategic Flood Risk Assessments, Water Cycle Studies and Integrated Water Management work. SA assessments

were refined, water and drainage policies strengthened, and water management requirements embedded within site allocations and growth planning.

- 1.100** The consultation process provides a clear audit trail showing how evidence, SA conclusions and stakeholder feedback directly influenced the final Plan, supporting its preparation as an iterative, evidence-led and policy-compliant document.

Main Changes to the Sustainability Appraisal Arising from Consultation

- 1.101** Consultation feedback throughout the Scoping, Further Issues and Options, Preferred Options and Pre-Submission stages led to substantial refinement of the SA. The framework was strengthened through clearer sustainability objectives, improved assessment criteria, more transparent scoring and greater consideration of biodiversity, climate change and health. Climate change objectives were enhanced and supported by dedicated evidence, ensuring growth options were assessed against net zero and climate resilience ambitions.
- 1.102** Biodiversity assessment was significantly expanded through additional ecological studies, strengthened HRA work and incorporation of Local Nature Recovery Strategy objectives. Flood risk and water management evidence was also strengthened through Strategic Flood Risk Assessments, Water Cycle Studies and Integrated Water Management evidence, resulting in a more robust flood-risk-led approach to site assessment.
- 1.103** Heritage considerations were given greater prominence following additional Heritage Impact Assessments and revised appraisal criteria. Feedback on housing growth, settlement patterns, transport and infrastructure also led to updated evidence, reassessment of growth options and stronger links between SA and infrastructure planning. Collectively, these changes transformed the SA into a more robust, transparent and influential tool that directly informed growth strategies, site allocations and mitigation requirements.

Non-technical Summary

Monitoring Proposals

- 1.104** Monitoring is a fundamental part of the Local Plan process, ensuring that the plan achieves the outcomes anticipated through the SA and remains effective over time. The Council will monitor the plan's performance through its Authority Monitoring Report, using a range of indicators to assess progress across key areas. These include housing delivery, the provision of affordable housing, employment growth, biodiversity outcomes, carbon emissions, renewable energy production, flooding incidents, water usage, infrastructure delivery, health and wellbeing outcomes, and the uptake of sustainable travel options. By regularly reviewing these indicators, the Council will be able to identify whether the Local Plan is performing as expected. Where monitoring reveals unforeseen adverse effects or underperformance, appropriate corrective action can be taken, including policy amendments, a review of the Local Plan, or the introduction of additional mitigation measures to address identified issues and support the achievement of sustainable development objectives.

Local Plan. Consequently, the Local Plan is considered justified, effective, positively prepared and consistent with national policy, providing a robust basis for submission, examination and eventual adoption.

Overall Sustainability Appraisal Conclusion

- 1.105** The SA concludes that the Pre-Submission Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 represents the most sustainable option available when compared to the reasonable alternatives considered.
- 1.106** The preferred strategy successfully balances growth, environmental protection and community wellbeing. It provides for substantial housing and employment growth while directing development towards sustainable settlements, supporting climate objectives, protecting biodiversity and ensuring infrastructure is delivered alongside growth.
- 1.107** Although growth will inevitably generate environmental pressures, particularly in relation to water resources, infrastructure demand and the use of greenfield land, the SA finds that these impacts can be effectively managed through the extensive mitigation measures embedded within the

1	Sustainability Appraisal	19
2	Sustainability Appraisal Methodology	24
3	What has been done up to now	29
	Stage A - Scoping and SA Framework	29
	Stage B - SA of options and Preferred Options Plan	34
	Stage C - Developing SA report	36

Contents

4	Structure of this SA report	37	D3: Making decisions and providing information	251
5	Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan	38	6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan	252
	Growth Strategy Options Testing and Strategic Reasonable Alternatives Considered	38	E1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring	252
	Identification of strategic reasonable alternatives	38	E2: Responding to adverse effects	261
	Approach to defining strategic reasonable alternatives	39	Appendix 1 - SA Framework	262
	Summary of alternatives considered and taken forward for appraisal	40	Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria	267
	Approach to Site Options and Reasonable Alternatives	47	Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options	279
	Rationale for Discounting Certain Reasonable Alternatives	73	Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites	298
	How evidence shaped the Strategy	74	Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites	303
	Conclusion	77	Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission	396
	D1: Public participation on the draft plan and the SA report	78	Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission	404
	Statutory consultation undertaken	78		
	Summary of comments on Sustainability Appraisal and how they were addressed	79		
	Main changes to SA arising following consultee comments	84		
	D2: Appraising significant effects of the Local Plan	85		
	Assessment of Vision and Plan Objectives	85		
	Assessment of Strategic and Development Management Policies	92		
	Assessment of Site Allocations	155		
	Cumulative Effects of the Pre-Submission Local Plan	224		
	Mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities	227		
	Assessing Significant Effects of the Plan on Human Health and Inequality	230		
	Changes to the Local Plan from Preferred Option stage	233		
	How HRA has influenced the Local Plan	235		
	How SA has influenced the Local Plan	240		
	Evolution of the Local Plan and its sustainability benefits	243		
	SA recommendations and iterations tracker	247		

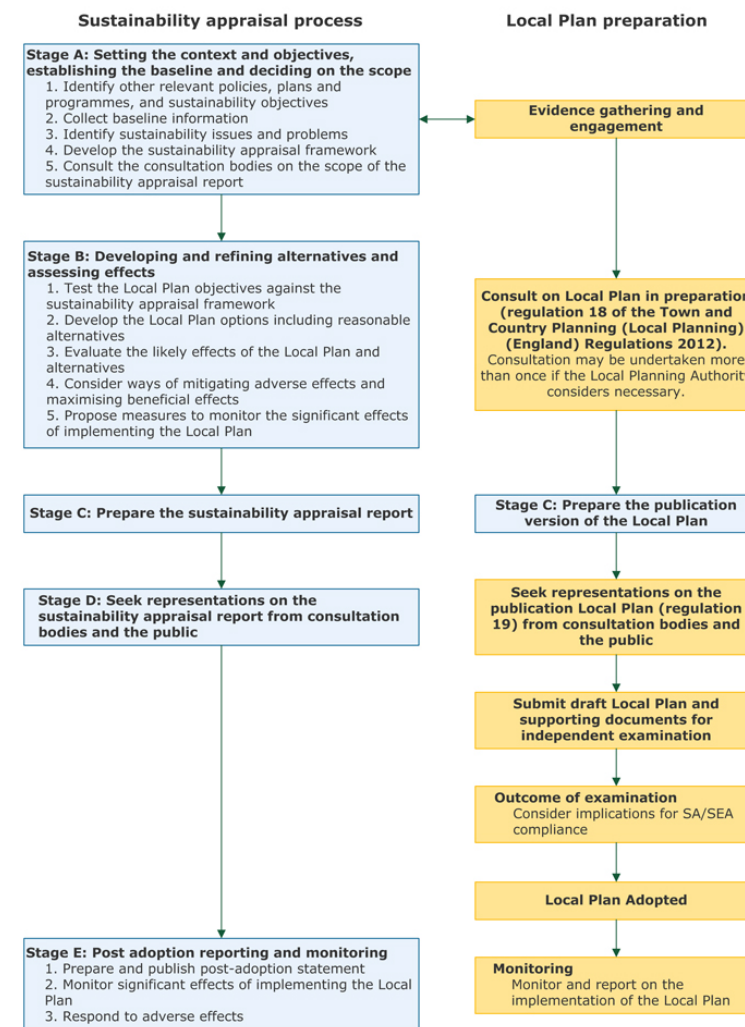
1 Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.1 When drawing up new planning documents the effects they will have on the environment and people's quality of life, both now and in the future are some of the most important things to consider. To be sure that the plan does not cause economic, environmental and social problems, at the heart of the plan production process there is a system of assessment known as Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- 1.2 SA is a systematic process for assessing the extent to which the emerging plan will help to achieve sustainable development. It is an opportunity to consider ways by which the plan can contribute to improvements in economic, environmental and social conditions, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the plan might otherwise have.
- 1.3 The commitment to the achievement of sustainable development is set out at an international and national level.
- 1.4 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Government's view of what constitutes sustainable development is set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). The NPPF uses the United Nations definition of sustainable development as '*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*'. The NPPF also refers to the [United Nation's 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development](#) which address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection by 2030. Members of the United Nations (including the United Kingdom) have agreed to pursue these goals. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 1.5 For plan-making this means that:
 - a. all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
 - b. strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 1.6 Legal requirements for new planning documents require an assessment of the plan's impact on the environment to be undertaken. This process is known as Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and is required under the SEA Directive. In 2004, the European SEA Directive was transposed into UK law through the [Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#), (commonly referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations).
- 1.7 Furthermore, section 19 of the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 \(as amended\)](#) requires a local planning authority to carry out an SA of each of the proposals in a Local Plan during its preparation. More generally, section 39 of the Act requires that the authority preparing a Local Plan must do so '*with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development*'. Sustainability appraisals incorporate the requirements of the 2004 Environmental Assessment Regulations, meaning the SA and SEA are carried out together as part of the preparation of planning documents and are collectively known as the SA process.

1 Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.8** The methodology for the SA process takes into account the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on [Plan Making](#) and Sustainability Appraisals and incorporates requirements set out in the 2005 '[A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)'. The SA process consists of five stages (A-E), each of the stages are undertaken in tandem with the development of a local plan, as illustrated below.

Figure 1.1 Flowchart of the SA process alongside Local Plan production



The new Local Plan for Huntingdonshire

- 1.9** The new Local Plan is being prepared under the 'legacy' plan making system so the requirements for SA are retained. The methodology for SA is set out in the next section.
- 1.10** The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 provides the statutory framework for managing growth, development and environmental protection across the district between 2021 and 2046. It establishes a long-term vision, strategic objectives, development strategy, planning policies and site allocations that will guide decisions on future planning applications and infrastructure investment. The Plan seeks to balance economic growth, social well-being and environmental protection in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and national planning policy.
- 1.11** The Local Plan is intended to meet identified housing, employment and infrastructure needs while responding to the challenges of climate change, ecological decline, water resource pressures and changing demographic needs. It provides an evidence-based framework for directing growth to the most sustainable locations, protecting valued landscapes and heritage assets, enhancing biodiversity, and ensuring that new development contributes positively to the quality of life of existing and future communities.
- 1.12 Vision and Strategic Objectives**
- 1.13** The overarching vision is for Huntingdonshire to become a place characterised by:
- Pride in place
 - An inclusive and resilient economy
 - Health and well-being embedded in communities
 - Environmental innovation and climate resilience
 - Transformed travel patterns and connectivity

1.14 The vision seeks to create sustainable communities supported by high-quality housing, employment opportunities, infrastructure, nature recovery and reduced carbon emissions. It aligns with the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan.

1.15 The Plan's objectives can be grouped under five themes:

1. **Pride in Place** - to create attractive, distinctive and resilient communities supported by quality housing, social infrastructure and strong local identity.
2. **Inclusive Economy** - to support business growth, innovation, investment, rural diversification and higher-value employment opportunities while strengthening the district's role within the wider regional economy.
3. **Health Embedded** - to improve physical and mental health outcomes through well-designed places, accessible services, active lifestyles and appropriate housing provision.
4. **Environmental Innovation** - to address climate change through renewable energy, biodiversity enhancement, carbon sequestration, water efficiency and nature-based solutions.
5. **Travel Transformed** - to reduce dependence on private vehicles by promoting walking, cycling, public transport and digital connectivity.

How the SA influences the Local Plan

1.16 SA is an integral part of the plan production process and is a core element of good planning. It is necessary to ensure that development occurring within the district takes the most sustainable form possible in economic, environmental and social terms. The SA is required to be undertaken in accordance with national guidance. The SA has been undertaken in-house as part of the production of the Local Plan so that the SA and plan production are fully integrated.

1 Sustainability Appraisal

Other appraisals and assessments

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

Habitats Regulations Assessment

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

Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.20** The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. The Council also needs to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty. The Council therefore needs to understand how its decisions and activities impact on different people and how they are affected by policies and practices. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is the method by which the Council can assess the impact of a new strategy, policy or decision. The new Local Plan is supported by a separate EqIA.

- 1.21** The assessment focuses primarily on identifying circumstances where an adverse impact may occur; an adverse impact is defined as occurring when a strategy, policy or decision has a disproportionately negative effect on a protected group or groups. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion and belief
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Health Impact Assessment

- 1.22** HIA is a process used to evaluate the significance of the potential health effects of a proposed plan. It helps to inform choices about actions to prevent ill-health, promote good health and reduce health inequalities. When applied in the planning system, an HIA puts people at the heart of the process and seeks to address the barriers and opportunities for creating healthy places. The HIA can help identify a set of evidence-based practical recommendations to promote and protect the health of local communities.

- 1.23** A key contribution of HIA is examining who benefits and who may be disadvantaged.

- 1.24** The SA will assess impacts on:

- Older people
- Children and young people
- Disabled people

- Low-income households
- Ethnic minority groups
- Areas experiencing deprivation

1.25 [Guidance from Public Health England](#) indicates that a health impact assessment may be combined with an SA or completed as a standalone document. For the new Local Plan, health considerations have been integrated into the SA.

2 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

2 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

2.1 The purpose of this chapter is to formulate a methodology for the SA and to complete the necessary steps to enable the Council to draw up the Local Plan and undertake the SA. The Council proposes a methodology for the SA process that is based on the tasks and stages set out in the government's ['A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'](#).

2.2 [Schedule 2](#) of the SEA Regulations sets out the information that must be provided within the SA:

1. an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;
2. the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;
3. the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
4. any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;
5. the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;
6. the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as:
 - a. biodiversity,
 - b. population,
 - c. human health,
 - d. fauna,
 - e. flora,
 - f. soil,
 - g. water,
 - h. air,
 - i. climatic factors,
 - j. material assets,
 - k. cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage,
 - l. landscape, and
 - m. the interrelationship between the above factors;

7. the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;
8. an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;
9. a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10;
10. a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.

2.3 The issues (a-m) identified are reflected in the topics used throughout this scoping report. To ensure all of these issues are addressed, the following table shows which topic addresses each of the Schedule 2 issues. The significant effects on these need to be assessed in terms of short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects.

Sustainability Appraisal Methodology 2

Table 1 Scoping report topics and the Schedule 2 issues they address

Issues listed in Schedule 2	Scoping report topic
a. biodiversity	• Biodiversity, Habitats and the Natural Environment • Green Infrastructure and Open Space
b. population	• Housing • Population and Health • Income and Deprivation • Employment and Businesses • Retail and Town Centres • Education
c. human health	• Population and Health • Income and Deprivation • Green Infrastructure and Open Space
d. fauna	• Biodiversity, Habitats and the Natural Environment
e. flora	• Biodiversity, Habitats and the Natural Environment
f. soil	• Land, Soils and Agriculture
g. water	• Flooding and Water
h. air	• Pollution
i. climatic factors	• Climate Emissions and Targets • Flooding and Water

Issues listed in Schedule 2	Scoping report topic
j. material assets	• Housing • Travel and Transport • Digital Infrastructure and Communications • Community Services and Facilities • Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency • Waste and Recycling
k. cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage	• Heritage
l. landscape	• Landscape
m. the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in (a) to (l)	• Many of these topics overlap, where they do so this has been reflected in the baseline commentary for the topic(s).

2 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

2.4 [Schedule 1](#) of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the issues referred to in Schedule 2 (a-m):

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
 - the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
 - the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
 - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to
 - the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
 - the cumulative nature of the effects,
 - the transboundary nature of the effects,
 - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
 - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
 - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,

- exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
- intensive land-use,
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status

2.5 The stages and tasks covered by this scoping report are set out below (Stage A). Tasks A1 to A4 are not intended to be completed in a purely linear process as they will inform each other. The iterative nature of the SA process is summarised in the Figure 2.1 from the government's ['A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'](#).

2.6 Stages B to E in the SA/SEA process, set out below, and are carried out as part of the plan production process. Stage E will lead to indicators that will be reported on in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) as part of the monitoring of the effectiveness of the Local Plan. M

2.7 Tasks B2, B3, B4 and B5 are not intended to be completed in a purely linear process as they will inform each other. Stage E will help considerations of whether or not to review the plan and will feed into future sustainability appraisal processes for future plans. This is also reflected in the below figure.

Sustainability Appraisal Methodology 2

Figure 2.1 SA tasks process flow chart

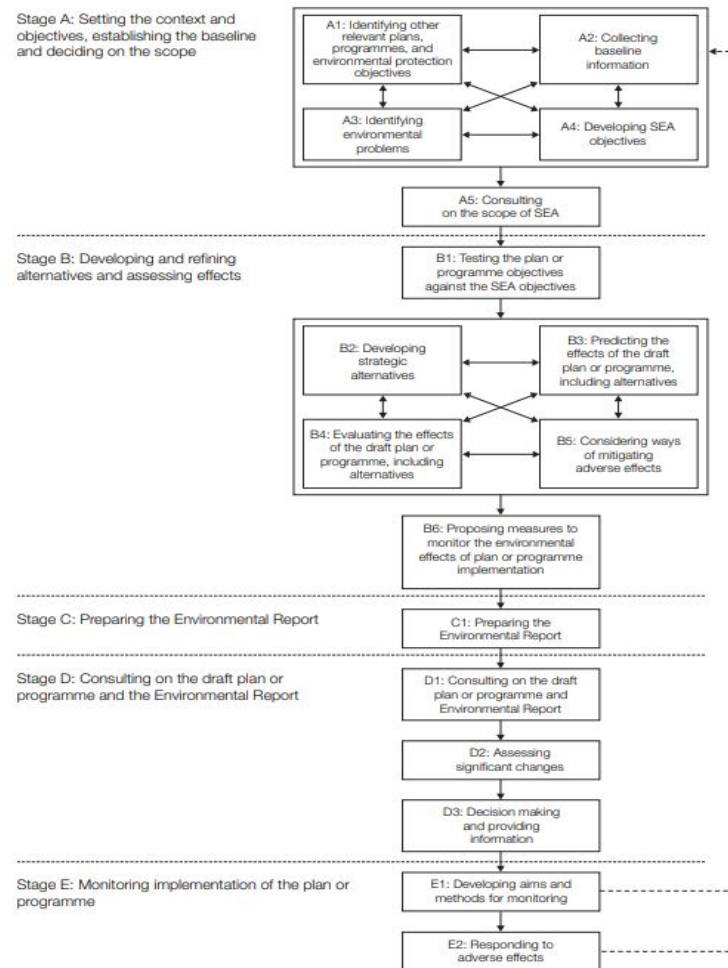


Table 2 Stages A to E in the SA/SEA process

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

A1: Identifying relevant plans and programmes' (Schedule 2, (1) and (5))

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

A2: Collecting baseline information' (Schedule 2, (2) and (3))

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

A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems' (Schedule 2, (4) and Schedule 1, (1))

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

A4: Developing the SA framework' (Schedule 2, (6))

- The purpose of this task is to provide a means by which the environmental performance of the plan or programme and alternatives can be assessed.

A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA' (Part 3(5))

- The purpose of this task is to ensure that the SA covers the likely significant environmental effects of the plan and to ensure that the SA process is and will be robust and suitably comprehensive in order to support production of the plan.

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

2 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

B1: Testing the plan objectives against the SA framework (Schedule 2, (6))

- The purpose of this task is to identify potential synergies or inconsistencies between the objectives of the plan and the SA objectives.

B2: Developing plan options (Part 3(12) and Schedule 2, (8))

- The purpose of this task is to develop and refine options.

B3: Predicting the effects of the plan and alternatives (Schedule 2, (6))

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

B4: Evaluating the effects of the plan and alternatives (Schedule 2, (6))

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

B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects (Schedule 2, (7))

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

B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan (Schedule 2, (9))

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

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

C1: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report (Part 3(12) and Schedule 2, (6) to (10))

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

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

D1: Public participation on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal report (Part 3(13))

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

D2: Appraising significant changes (Schedule 2, (6))

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

D3: Making decisions and providing information (Part 4(16))

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

Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the plan on the environment

E1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring (Part 4(17))

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

E2: Responding to adverse effects (Part 4(17))

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

What has been done up to now 3

3 What has been done up to now

- 3.1** This section summarises the key SA work to date, starting with Stage A 'Scoping Stage', moving towards testing Plan options (Stage B) and the preparation of the SA report (Stage C).

Stage A - Scoping and SA Framework

A:	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.	Known as the 'Scoping Stage' the purpose of this stage is to establish the context for sustainability appraisal by assembling the evidence needed to inform the appraisal and to establish the framework by setting up sustainability objectives and decision aiding questions, for undertaking the appraisal (Stage B).
-----------	--	--

- 3.2** The scoping stage (Stage A) must identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the sustainability appraisal report. It should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives.

- 3.3** This chapter sets out the work completed for Stage A tasks as identified in Chapter 2 'Sustainability Appraisal Methodology'. Each task being:

- A1: Identifying relevant policies, plans, programmes and objectives
- A2: Collecting baseline information
- A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems
- A4: Developing the SA framework
- A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA

- 3.4** Below, the outcomes from each stage are summarised. For each task, there is commentary within this SA on how each was achieved. To view each in detail, please view the separate [scoping report](#).

A1 - Identifying relevant plans, programmes and strategies

- 3.5** Plans, programmes and strategies that were considered to be relevant were reviewed. A full list of these is provided in Appendix 1 to the SA. The appendix splits these into international, national, regional, sub-regional, county and local level documents. The key aims, objectives, and targets/indicators for each plan, programme and strategy are identified alongside how they will shape the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and what baseline topic they relate to. More detail on the plans, programmes and strategies reviewed can be found in Appendix 1 of the [scoping report](#).

A2 - Collecting baseline information

- 3.6** The baseline information has been split into three groupings: climate emergency, environmental and socio-economic. These groupings are used throughout the scoping report. More detail on the baseline information can be found in the [scoping report](#).

A3 - Identifying sustainability issues and problems

- 3.7** Following the collection of baseline data, the following key sustainability issues and problems were identified and what could happen if the Local Plan did not progress:

Sustainability issues and problems
Carbon Emissions and Targets: • Increased summer temperatures will impact on comfort and usability of existing properties • Drier summers and wetter winters will create issues for flooding, water storage and management, soil and agricultural productivity and habitat survival • CO₂ emissions are reducing across industrial, commercial, domestic and public sectors • CO₂ emissions are very high for transport, influenced by the presence of the A1, A14 and East Coast Mainline Railway coupled with the largely rural nature of the district

3 What has been done up to now

Sustainability issues and problems
- Per capita emissions are significantly higher than for England but typical for Cambridgeshire - Increasing the climate resilience and energy efficiency of buildings and spaces
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency: - Renewable power generation within Huntingdonshire has shifted from a focus on wind turbines to solar farms requiring extensive areas of land but with some scope for complementary agricultural use - The age of the housing stock means that retrofitting of energy efficiency measures will be crucial in boosting the sustainability of the district's homes - Fuel poverty was already an issue for over 1 in 10 households before the April 2022 price rises; this is expected to become more intense in the short term - Access to mains gas is not universal throughout the district with some locations relying on individual oil tanks; in such circumstances alternative community heating systems may offer a more sustainable solution - The visual impact of on-shore renewable energy production needs to be balanced with the impact on local landscape and communities
Flooding and Water: - The impacts of climate change will see increases in extreme weather events, leading to increased rainfall, rainfall intensity and sea level rises all of which will increase the impact of all sources of flooding in the district. Potential to impact on existing and new developments, infrastructure and agricultural productivity, social and economic impacts across the district - Potential need to set aside land for flood mitigation measures due to increased flood risk and understand effectiveness flood management infrastructure - Increased flood risk may influence where development can be sustainably located - Ensuring that new growth does not adversely affect water resources or water resources management infrastructure and that there are sufficient measures in place to balance water supply across the district - Ensuring that homes and businesses are resilient to flooding and provide effective water management to maintain water resources for all - Ensuring new development does not adversely impact on the ecological and biological status of water bodies

Sustainability issues and problems
Waste and Recycling: - Many tonnes of waste are sent to landfills and recycling centres - Increasing levels of recycling and re-using materials reduces how much material ends up in landfills reducing their environmental effects and supporting a circular economy - Growth places additional demand on existing waste and recycling collection services - The waste attributed to the construction of new buildings
Landscape: - Huntingdonshire's landscape and its distinctive qualities are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, insensitive new development and land management practices - Water management is key to landscape character throughout much of the district - The expansive, flat wetlands of the Fens are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change degrading fertile peat soils and its landscape character - The River Great Ouse flows through or around three of Huntingdonshire's four market towns providing a high quality landscape setting to them and recreational opportunities but also an increased risk of flooding
Land, Soils and Agriculture: - A very high proportion of the district's agricultural land is classified as best and most versatile, whilst this is beneficial for production and food security it provides challenges for focusing development onto less valuable land - Degradation of peat and soil erosion resulting in the loss of the most fertile soils - There are limited remaining opportunities for largescale reuse of previously developed land
Biodiversity, Habitats and the Natural Environment: - There are several sites designated at an international and national level for their biodiversity and habitat value as well as non-designated sites identified for their local nature conservation value - Nature conservation sites and ancient woodland are vulnerable to new developments and land management practices. - Two thirds of SSSIs in Huntingdonshire are in a favourable state, with approximately a third of SSSIs not in a favourable condition, although these are in a recovering state

What has been done up to now 3

Sustainability issues and problems
- Visitor pressures on designated and non-designated sites may harm the quality of these sites for nature conservation and vital habitats - Nature conservation sites and other natural environments are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change - Trees are a natural carbon store, with established and mature trees taking in the most carbon
Green Infrastructure and Open Space: - Huntingdonshire has several strategic green infrastructure areas: the Great Fen, Nene Valley, Great Ouse Valley and the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds - Strategic green infrastructure and localised provision of open green space provide important social benefits to human health and wellbeing as well as opportunities for habitat and biodiversity conservation and enhancement - Green infrastructure and open space must be located in accessible places - Several public parks and gardens are managed to the Green Flag Award standard, with others aspiring to the standard
Pollution: - The most significant air quality issues arise from traffic and congestion - Air, noise and light pollution can have serious implications on the health and wellbeing of people and cause harm to the natural environment and disrupt the lifecycles of wildlife - Homes, employment, schools, services and facilities should be accessible via walking, cycling and public transport - Light and noise pollution can reduce the tranquillity of the countryside and green spaces within settlements
Housing: - Ensuring the delivery of an ongoing supply of new homes in sustainable locations - Ensuring new homes provide a mix of types, sizes and tenures aligned with the composition of the local population - Affordability ratios of house prices to around 9 times average earnings create significant stress in the housing market and result in strong social sustainability challenges

Sustainability issues and problems
- Proactive work through the prevention duty regarding homelessness has high effectiveness rates and reduces social sustainability challenges through the trauma otherwise experienced by those who become homeless - Ensuring a range of accessible, adaptable and specialist new homes are available suitable to meet the changing needs of residents as the population ages overall
Population and Health: - The ageing and in some locations declining population may lead to challenges for the social sustainability of communities, for health and social provision and provision of appropriate housing options. - Decreasing proportion of the population is of working age raising the proportion of dependants. - Natural change is decreasing and may result in a negative rate of population growth unless in-migration is sufficient to counterbalance falling population numbers - GP surgeries are concentrated in larger settlements necessitating residents of almost all villages to travel for appointments or rely on telephone or other remote forms of consultations - Health indicators suggest that Huntingdonshire's population is typically slightly healthier than that for England on average but deaths from particulate air pollution were higher than average in 2019 although it should be noted that this was prior to the rerouting of the A14 and consequent impact on air quality management areas
Income and Deprivation: - Huntingdonshire shows great disparity across the district in terms of income and deprivation - Median weekly pay in Huntingdonshire is in decline potentially creating a less financially stable population
Employment and Businesses: - Post-pandemic recovery: addressing the decline in the number of jobs in the district - Supporting and maintaining a stable economy: facilitating growth of key industries by providing appropriate land for development and expansion - Supporting rural enterprises to provide sustainable job opportunities in outside the existing employment clusters - Addressing the post-pandemic decline in the number of enterprises in the district

3 What has been done up to now

Sustainability issues and problems
- Facilitating access to higher level occupations where required across the district - Addressing the contribution that Huntingdonshire makes to Knowledge Intensive industries - Providing complementary enterprises to support supply chains and economic growth
Travel and Transport: - Huntingdonshire is well located in terms of the strategic road network creating pressure from logistics businesses for new sites and generating high levels of road based through travel and locally generated car travel - A variety of road and active travel infrastructure improvements are proposed which may reduce congestion, improve journey times and increase the attractiveness of active travel modes for journeys - The district's semi-rural nature means some parts are relatively remote which increases reliance on private vehicles and engenders viability challenges for public transport; the distances involved can make walking and cycling unattractive options for many journeys
Digital Infrastructure and Communications: - Reducing inequality, economic opportunity and vital access to services via digital infrastructure - Reducing social exclusion by providing improved access to improved online services especially in rural areas - Enabling businesses and rural businesses to thrive through improved broadband and mobile coverage - Decreasing rural isolation through improved broadband and mobile coverage
Retail and Town Centres: - Increase in retail/ town centre use vacancies in key locations that provide accessible sustainable access to leisure, services and retail, impacting on social and economic health of the district - Potential contraction of the high street and detrimental impacts on business viability - Perceived safety threats from vacant units and low activity levels potentially creating inhospitable and unsafe neighbourhoods - Ensuring high streets in the district provide easy access to leisure, services and retail

Sustainability issues and problems
Tourism and Leisure: - The conservation of wildlife and landscapes are not harmed through tourism and leisure pursuits - Tourism and leisure play an important role in people's health and well being so needs to be accessible to all - Growth places additional demand on existing tourist attractions and leisure facilities - Local tourist attractions and leisure facilities contribute towards the local economy and supports local communities through employment, voluntary opportunities and celebrating local heritage and past times
Community Services and Facilities: - Availability of multi-use community spaces where people can gather - Sustainable access to services and facilities across the district - Retention of and long-term sustainability of community services and facilities
Education: - Ensuring residents have access to a range of educational providers in sustainable locations to meet the growing population - Ensuring education levels and range of qualifications are available for all to facilitate social mobility and job prospects for residents, intern contributing to the economic growth of the district - Providing enough SEND provision as a result of new growth
Heritage: - There are many designated and non-designated structures assets, a small proportion are judged to be at risk - Heritage assets face pressures from future development that may cause harm to them and to their setting - Conservation areas may see a gradual erosion of their special features which may undermine the original reasons for designation - Significant archaeology may yet to be discovered - Climate change and flooding events pose significant risks to the historic environment

What has been done up to now 3

A4 - Developing the sustainability appraisal framework

3.8 Following the review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies, the identification of baseline information and sustainability issues and problems, the following SA objectives were considered to be:

Climate emergency

- **SA1** - Contribute to achieving the district's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040
- **SA2** - Improve adaptability and resilience to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency
- **SA3** - Manage Huntingdonshire's water resources in a sustainable manner and reduce the risk all potential sources of flooding to people, properties and the environment

Environmental

- **SA4** - Make efficient use of land by maximising development on previously developed land where this is not of high biodiversity value and minimising that on the best and most versatile agricultural land
- **SA5** - Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible natural green space and enhance the strategic green and blue infrastructure network and links to it
- **SA6** - Promote conservation, enhancement, recovery and connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance
- **SA7** - Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local distinctiveness of settlements
- **SA8** - Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution

Socio-economic

- **SA9** - All people have access to high quality affordable homes that meet their needs across their lifetime

- **SA10** - Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities to promote social inclusion particularly amongst those most at risk of experiencing discrimination, poverty and social exclusion
- **SA11** - Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities
- **SA12** - Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure
- **SA13** - Strengthen, modernise and diversify the local economy and promote opportunities for growth of indigenous companies as well as encouraging sustainable inward investment
- **SA14** - Support the successful response of town, local and village retail centres to changing shopping and social trends
- **SA15** - Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities
- **SA16** - Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting(s)

3.9 A series of decision aiding questions have been drawn up for each objective. The decision aiding questions have been specifically worded so that the appraisal can be applied to the three different types of policy that will be part of the new Local Plan. This means that there is at least one decision aiding question for strategic, site specific and development management policies for each objective.

3.10 The full sustainability appraisal framework, including all the decision aiding questions, can be found in 'Appendix 1 - SA Framework'

A5 - Consulting on the scope of the sustainability appraisal

3.11 The council consulted on the scope of the SA with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, often referred to as the SA Bodies. Consultation with environmental bodies ran between 20 October and 30

3 What has been done up to now

November 2022. Their comments were compiled into a table alongside the Council's response to them highlighting where amendments have been, this is in Appendix 2 of the [scoping report](#).

- 3.12 The draft scoping report was made available for anyone to make comments between 1 February and 15 March 2023. This was so that the scoping report is as robust as possible and to promote participation in production of the new Huntingdonshire Local Plan. Comments received can be viewed on our [consultation portal](#), a summary of these comments and the changes made to the report can be found in Appendix 3 of the [scoping report](#) and in the Statement of Consultation.
- 3.13 The [scoping report](#) as completed following consultation is available in the Local Plan evidence library.

Stage B - SA of options and Preferred Options Plan

B:	Develop options and appraise effects.	The purpose of this stage is to appraise the plan objectives, options and preferred options/policies, to propose measures for alleviating adverse effects and maximising benefits and to propose indicators for monitoring the plan's sustainability.
----	---------------------------------------	---

- 3.14 This stage integrates the SA process into plan preparation and completing the appraisals at an early stage so that the findings can inform and shape the way that all parts of the plan evolve in a meaningful way.
- B1: Testing the plan objectives against the SA framework
 - B2: Developing plan options
 - B3: Predicting the effects of the plan and alternatives
 - B4: Evaluating the effects of the plan and alternatives
 - B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects
 - B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan
- 3.15 Stage B started with the appraisal of options which were consulted on in the Autumn of 2024 within the Further Issues and Options paper. The SA of these options were consulted on between between 18 September and 27 November 2024 and can be viewed on the [consultation portal](#). Comments received are also summarised in the Statement of Consultation.
- The Further Issues and Options Paper 2024 sets out options and further questions for a series of issues that are key to the future planning of Huntingdonshire. The issues covered were:
 - The Local Plan Vision and Objectives
 - Settlement Hierarchy for Huntingdonshire

What has been done up to now 3

- Approach to Employment and Economy Housing Figures and Requirement
- Achieving well-designed and beautiful places (note no options have been put forward at this stage but the Further Issues & Options Paper includes an additional question)
- Growth Strategy Options Green and Blue Infrastructure
- The Approach to Climate Change
- Tackling Flooding and Water
- Housing Tenures and Housing Mix
- Transport and Connectivity

3.16 Each of these issues have a series of options and questions. The options put forward within the consultation material were appraised through SA to assess how each potential option performs against the strategic options developed in the SA Framework (stage A4 of the Scoping Report) and each of these options will be scored using the following scoring matrix below.

3.17 These options alongside technical evidence and engagement shaped a Preferred Options Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal which completed stage B. These were consulted on between 5 November and 17 December 2025.

3.18 A summary of how the growth strategy was developed is set out in B2: Developing plan options. This can be found in the [Preferred Options SA report](#). This chapter has been taken forward into next stage of the SA process (Stage D) and updated in chapter 'Growth Strategy Options Testing and Strategic Reasonable Alternatives Considered' with the further technical evidence and consultation comments gathered to refine strategy options further.

3.19 Stage B1: Testing the plan objectives against the SA framework is where we identified potential synergies or inconsistencies between the objectives of the Local Plan, referred to as Spatial Objectives and the SA Objectives established in Stage A. This can be found in the [Preferred Options SA report](#).

3.20 Reflecting the iterative and interconnections between tasks B3, B4 and B5, were undertaken together and can be found in the [Preferred Options SA report](#). These tasks are where we developed and refined options for the development strategy, policies and site allocations for the Local Plan. It is also where we predicted the significant effects of the plan and alternatives, whether they are economic, social or environmental; it is where we evaluated the predicted effects of the plan and alternatives in order to assist in the refinement of the plan. Finally, it is to ensure that adverse effects are identified and potential mitigation measures are considered.

3.21 The Preferred Options draft Local Plan (2025) sets out the preferred strategy, policies and sites. Each of these preferred options have been appraised here:

- **Development Strategy** - this consists of eighteen policies, a vision, set of objectives and a climate change ambition. These policies are assessed using the strategy decision aiding questions of the SA framework.
- **Development Management Policies** - this consists of four sections exploring design, employment, housing and the natural and historic environment. These policies are assessed using the policies decision aiding questions of the SA framework.
- **Sites** - this consists of 68 appraisals for 67 site allocations and the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone. These policies are assessed using the sites decision aiding questions of the SA framework unless they are of a strategic scale then the strategy questions were used to appraise the site.

3.22 The preferred policies put forward within the draft local plan have gone through SA to assess how each draft policy performs against the relevant set of decision aiding questions set out in the 'Appendix 1 - SA Framework'. Each of these draft policies will be scored using the following scoring matrix:

3 What has been done up to now

Score	Effect of the approach
++	Contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective
+	Contributes to the achievement of the objective
N	No clear relationship to achieving the objective, the outcome is uncertain or the outcome may depend on delivery specific factors
	The objective is not relevant to the proposal
-	Detracts from achievement of the objective
--	Significantly detracts from achievement of the objective

3.23 Following the appraisal of policies is stage B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the plan. This can be found in the [Preferred Options SA report](#). This is where we set out how we propose to measure and monitor the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan Update by ensuring that adverse effects are identified and potential mitigation measures are considered. Following the close of the Preferred Options consultation and the subsequent refinement of the Local Plan and its policies, the way policies will be monitored as been updated in 6 'Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan'.

Stage C - Developing SA report

C:	Prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Report.	The purpose of this stage is to present the findings from Stage B in a form suitable for public consultation and use by decision makers.
-----------	--	--

3.24 The Sustainability Appraisal Report is a key output and a critical part the SA process. It is a specific requirement of the SEA requirements (see 2 'Sustainability Appraisal Methodology'), where it is known as the Environmental Report. As such, this stage consists of the following task:

- C1: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

3.25 In deciding the length and the level of detail to be provided in a Sustainability Appraisal Report, we need to bear in mind its purpose as a public consultation document. It is likely to be of interest to a wide variety of readers, including decision-makers, other plan/ programme-making authorities, statutory consultees, non-government organisations, and members of the public. As such it needs to be prepared with this range of users in mind. It is also required to include a 'Non-technical Summary'.

3.26 At the Pre-Submission stage (Autumn 2026), the SA consists of several reports with linked appendices:

- Scoping Report
- Sustainability Appraisal of Options to support Further Issues and Options consultation
- Sustainability Appraisal of Sites
- Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal
- Pre-Submission Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal

4 Structure of this SA report

- 4.1** This report appraises the Pre-Submission Local Plan and assess how the SA has shaped the development of the Plan. It specifically reviews how growth strategy and sites options have been appraised and assessed to reach a set of preferred options, it summarises the consultation responses made on the Preferred Options Local Plan and identifies significant changes made to policies and site allocations.
- 4.2** The report also sets out how evidence base has shaped options and how the SA has influenced the Local Plan development.
- 4.3** The report also sets out the monitoring framework for the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

D:	Consultation and development of the plan.	The purpose of this stage is to consult on the report, to appraise significant changes to the plan objectives, options and preferred options/ policies appraised in Stage B and to explain how the SA process has shaped the plan.
-----------	---	--

5.1 This stage gives the public and consultation bodies an opportunity to express their opinions on the findings of the environmental report and to use it as a reference point in commenting on the plan. It is also an opportunity to gather more information through the opinions and concerns of the public. Consultation and engagement ensures the environmental implications of any significant changes to the draft plan are assessed and taken into account. It also provides information on how the Sustainability Appraisal Report and consultees' opinions were taken into account in deciding the final format of the plan to be adopted.

5.2 This stage consist of the following tasks:

- D1: Public participation on the draft plan and the Sustainability Appraisal report
- D2: Appraising significant effects
- D3: Making decisions and providing information

Growth Strategy Options Testing and Strategic Reasonable Alternatives Considered

5.3 This chapter sets out how we have developed our Pre-Submission growth strategy, housing and economic growth aspirations and tested reasonable alternatives throughout the plan making process. It sets out how the strategy options have evolved from the further issues and options stage through technical evidence gathering to inform a preferred strategy in the draft Preferred Options Local Plan and been further refined for the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

5.4 This chapter identifies the strategic alternatives, how we defined what are reasonable alternatives, and how we discounted alternatives and taken forward our chosen strategy forward.

Identification of strategic reasonable alternatives

5.5 The preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 has been informed by a comprehensive and iterative process of evidence gathering, consultation, testing and refinement. Throughout plan preparation, we have sought to identify, assess and compare a range of reasonable alternatives capable of addressing Huntingdonshire's future housing, employment and infrastructure needs while responding to climate change, environmental constraints and community aspirations.

5.6 The requirement to consider reasonable alternatives arises from the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework, which require Local Plans to be justified, evidence-led and informed by a proportionate assessment of realistic alternative approaches. We therefore approached plan preparation as a process of understanding what level of growth was required, where that growth could be accommodated most sustainably, and how development could contribute positively to the district's long-term social, economic and environmental objectives.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.7 At the earliest stage of plan preparation, consultation focused on the fundamental question of how Huntingdonshire should grow between 2021 and 2046. Rather than beginning with a predetermined strategy, we explored a broad range of options relating both to the scale of growth and to its geographical distribution. These options reflected matters raised through community engagement, national policy requirements, demographic evidence, economic forecasts, settlement patterns and emerging climate change evidence.

5.8 A wide range of evidence informed this process, including the Local Housing Needs Assessment, Economic and Employment Needs Assessment, Sustainability of Settlements Assessment, Strategic Transport Assessment, Climate Change evidence, Land Availability Assessments, infrastructure and viability planning studies, habitats regulations assessment, ecological constraints assessment, the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy, the Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan, and responses received from residents, parish councils, statutory consultees, infrastructure providers and developers. Together these documents established the framework within which alternative strategies could be developed and tested.

5.9 Three overarching strategic questions emerged and informed the generation of alternatives:

- What level of housing growth should the district plan for?
- What level of employment growth should be supported?
- How should housing and employment growth be distributed across Huntingdonshire to maximise sustainability benefits while minimising adverse effects?

5.10 The alternatives identified ranged from relatively modest approaches focused on maintaining existing development patterns through to more transformational strategies centred on strategic growth locations, major urban extensions, transport-led development and new communities. These included employment growth scenarios and different approaches to directing future economic development.

Approach to defining strategic reasonable alternatives

5.11 Not every theoretical option constitutes a reasonable alternative for the purposes of plan-making. Consequently, we applied a clear and consistent methodology to determine which options should be subject to detailed assessment.

5.12 To be considered a reasonable alternative, an option needed to demonstrate a realistic prospect of meeting development requirements and being delivered within the plan period. It was also necessary for alternatives to be supported by an identifiable land supply, capable of being assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process and sufficiently distinct from other options to allow meaningful comparison.

5.13 The Sustainability Appraisal provided the principal mechanism through which alternatives were evaluated. Each alternative was assessed against a framework of environmental, social and economic objectives developed during the Scoping Stage of the SA (see 'Appendix 1 - SA Framework' for the full framework and decision aiding questions). The SA Framework covers the following matters:

- climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- carbon emissions and energy use;
- biodiversity and nature recovery;
- flood risk;
- landscape character;
- heritage assets;
- housing provision;
- economic growth;
- accessibility;
- sustainable transport;
- health and wellbeing;
- social inclusion; and
- infrastructure delivery.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.14 The appraisal process was not undertaken as a single exercise. Instead, alternatives were refined progressively as further evidence became available and consultation responses were received. As understanding of development needs evolved, some alternatives were strengthened, some merged with other approaches and others were discounted where they were found to perform less favourably against key sustainability objectives or where delivery risks became apparent.

5.15 This iterative process ensured that the eventual preferred strategy emerged through a transparent comparison of realistic alternatives rather than through retrospective justification of a predetermined outcome.

Summary of alternatives considered and taken forward for appraisal

5.16 We considered a number of strategic alternatives towards the quantum of housing and employment growth the Local Plan should Plan for and where this growth could be located. Options were developed following the close of the Issues Engagement Papers consultations in July 2023. This consultation identified further issues to investigate for potential strategy and growth options.

5.17 Following refinement and initial screening, a collection of realistic alternatives were identified for detailed assessment. These alternatives represented the principal strategic choices available to us and formed the basis of subsequent Sustainability Appraisal work which is available in the [SA for Further Issues and Options consultation report](#).

Housing Growth

5.18 The Further Issues and Options Paper identified the following reasonable alternative options for housing growth that were appraised through the [SA for Further Issues and Options consultation report](#):

- Plan for the standard method number

- Plan for the standard method with a 5% uplift to allow a small amount of flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected
- Plan for the standard method with a 10% uplift on the standard method number to allow a some flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected or affordability ratios worsen

Discounted options for housing growth

5.19 Early work considered options based on either historic completion rates or development levels below identified housing need. These options would have limited the scale of growth planned for across the district. Whilst such approaches would have reduced the immediate requirement for land allocations, the evidence demonstrated that they may fail to meet objectively assessed housing needs and would be inconsistent with national planning policy requirements on using the standard method figure. The Sustainability Appraisal also identified potential adverse social consequences, including reduced affordable housing delivery and increased pressure on housing affordability. Furthermore, lower levels of housing growth would provide less support for economic growth ambitions and could increase vulnerability to speculative development proposals. Consequently, lower growth options were discounted at an early stage.

5.20 A strategy based solely upon delivery of the Government's standard method housing requirement would have enabled minimum compliance with national policy. However, as the plan period extends to 2046, concerns were identified regarding long-term flexibility and resilience. Evidence demonstrated that relying solely upon the minimum requirement could leave the plan vulnerable to future changes in national policy, delivery delays on large strategic sites or changes in local housing needs. As a result, this approach was not selected as the preferred option.

5.21 The Local Plan provides an uplift greater than 5%, this is considered to provide sufficient flexibility against non-delivery of any allocated sites where the landowners circumstances or intentions change and a reduced response to the government's aspirations to rapidly boost housebuilding.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.22** Other options proposed during the Further Issues and Options consultation included a 20% uplift to be able to respond to unexpected changes and unspecified higher numbers to support wider economic growth and to support government aspirations to significantly boost housing growth. An uplift this high could have significant environmental impacts and would significantly go beyond the standard method figure potentially resulting in an unsustainable pattern of growth up to 2046.

Sustainability Performance and Key Findings

- 5.23** The Sustainability Appraisal found that while the 5% and 10% uplift options performed fairly similarly, with the 10% marginally resulting in some potentially more adverse impact arising from pressure of an increased housing target. However, planning for growth at this marginally increased level provides the Local Plan with greater flexibility for changes in market demand and supply of housing across the Plan period.

Employment Growth

- 5.24** The Further Issues and Options Paper identified the following reasonable alternative options for employment growth that were appraised through the [SA for Further Issues and Options consultation report](#):
- A. Plan for limited (low) employment growth to support Huntingdonshire's existing businesses. Growth guided exclusively by criteria based policies
 - B. Plan for sustainable (medium) growth by supplying a sufficient amount of employment land/ allocations to allow for some business expansion and investment and to provide a flexible approach to changing market conditions
 - C. Plan for ambitious (high) growth capitalising on key priority sectors of the wider economy and creating business clusters

Discounted options for employment growth

- 5.25** The low-growth employment option focused on retaining existing businesses and limiting new employment land allocations. Evidence demonstrated that this approach would not adequately support Huntingdonshire's economic ambitions or fully capitalise on opportunities arising from the district's strategic location within the Cambridge-Peterborough economic area. It would also be unlikely to meet identified employment needs or support growth in emerging sectors such as advanced manufacturing, research and development, life sciences and innovation-based industries. As a result, the low-growth scenario was rejected.
- 5.26** National policy asks that an evidence based approach to determining employment and economic need is undertaken. The Economic and Employment Needs Assessment indicates demand for approximately 922,000 sqm of employment floorspace and approximately 15,400 additional jobs by 2046. The options tested included accounting for labour demand, labour supply, past trends, and the impact of potential adjustments on these. Rather than relying on a single approach, the preferred scenario combined elements of the aspirational labour demand scenario (high growth) and the future residence-based labour supply scenario (medium demand). This hybrid approach reflects not only the sentiment put forward in the responses to the Further Issues and Options consultation but also our economic ambitions and the scale of housing-led population growth anticipated in the district, aligning it with labour supply as a result of population growth. It also takes into consideration and aligns with the scale of strategic scale demand which multiple agents and landowners identified for storage and distribution uses.

Sustainability Performance and Key Findings

- 5.27** The Sustainability Appraisal found that medium-to-high growth scenarios generated the most favourable balance of outcomes. Key findings included:
- Employment growth is essential to achieving wider economic objectives.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- Strong alignment is required between housing and employment provision.
- Co-location of homes and jobs reduces commuting impacts.
- Public transport-accessible locations consistently perform best.
- Established Employment Areas remain important economic assets.
- Logistics-focused growth alone performs less favourably because of transport impacts and lower job densities.

- C. Focus employment growth next to or within large scale housing sites promoting mixed use development aligning employment growth with housing growth
- D. Focus employment growth in sustainable locations such as allocating sites that are accessible by public transport and active travel
- E. Focus employment growth in existing economic centres which are located in market towns and larger settlements

Spatial Distribution of housing and economic development

5.28 The Further Issues and Options Paper identified the following reasonable alternative options for the distribution of growth that were appraised through the [SA for Further Issues and Options consultation report](#):

- A. Continue with the existing growth strategy set out in our current Local Plan (Policy LP 2 Strategy for Development).
- B. Focus on strategic expansions to existing towns
- C. Focus growth on public transport corridors
- D. Concentrate development around the strategic road network
- E. Distribute growth across many settlements in Huntingdonshire and limit growth in our towns creating dispersed growth
- F. Provide 1 one or more new community/ies plus some dispersed growth.
- G. Hybrid spatial strategy consisting of development focused in sustainable locations served by public transport, employment and infrastructure with freestanding strategic developments and limited dispersed growth

5.29 The following options were proposed specifically related to employment growth locations:

- A. Focus employment growth within and adjacent to Established Employment Areas
- B. Focus employment growth strategically along major highways such as the A1

Discounted options for spatial distribution of housing and economic growth

5.30 A strategy involving widespread distribution of growth across villages and smaller settlements was examined as a means of supporting rural communities. Although this approach offered some localised benefits through supporting village services, Sustainability Appraisal findings consistently demonstrated poorer overall sustainability performance. Development dispersed across numerous settlements was associated with increased reliance on private vehicles, longer travel distances, higher carbon emissions and greater difficulties in delivering infrastructure efficiently. Accessibility to employment opportunities, education facilities and healthcare services was also generally weaker than in more concentrated growth patterns. For these reasons, a predominantly dispersed strategy was rejected.

5.31 A strategy that focused significant proportions of growth around the A1, A14 and A428 strategic road corridors offered potential advantages in terms of regional connectivity and access to certain employment opportunities. This could give rise to greater emphasis on logistics development along strategic highway locations. However, both the Sustainability Appraisal and climate-related evidence indicated that these options would be heavily dependent on private vehicle use. They therefore performed less favourably against objectives relating to carbon reduction, sustainable transport and climate change mitigation. Concerns were also identified regarding patterns of fragmented development and reduced support for existing settlements and town centres. The Sustainability Appraisal also noted that logistics-based development generally generates lower employment

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

densities than several other sectors and therefore provides a less balanced employment strategy. These considerations contributed to their rejection as standalone strategies.

- 5.32** A further alternative involved retaining the broad spatial approach of the adopted Local Plan without significant amendment. While this would have provided continuity, the option did not adequately reflect updated evidence relating to settlement sustainability, climate change, infrastructure investment opportunities and future housing requirements. It was therefore considered insufficiently responsive to changing circumstances and was not taken forward as the preferred strategy.
- 5.33** Testing of these alternatives through SA ultimately demonstrated that no single option performed best against all objectives. Instead, the strongest results were achieved through a hybrid strategy that combined the advantages of several approaches while avoiding the weaknesses associated with any single growth model.
- 5.34** This was also reflected in the responses to the Further Issues and Options consultation whereby a hybrid option based around existing strategy (option A) with a focus on towns (option B) and with elements of other options included was preferred. Key reasons for the option choices were that they could utilise existing infrastructure, reduce car dependency, and supports town centre and established employment area vitality. Key concerns raised on the options included protecting rural areas, the countryside, designated landscapes, and natural environment in addition to ensuring that growth sites have good access to existing infrastructure, such as roads, sewage, and public transport.
- 5.35** Many supported an option that enforces sustainable locations for development supported by public transport, employment, appropriate infrastructure and reduction in congestion (options A, B and C). Responses in principle supported promoting sustainable travel (Option C), but concerns were raised about whether this option would result in fragmented development, too much reliance on transport projects and potentially greater integration challenges. Focussing growth around the strategic road network

(option D) was supported by those promoting logistics but was viewed by others as the least sustainable due to increased car dependency and environmental impacts not aligning well with climate and accessibility ambitions.

- 5.36** Those that wished an alternative option (Option G) generally identified scenarios such as proportionate growth of existing sustainable settlements. Option E dispersed growth was associated with assisting in providing affordable housing and supporting local services but was also viewed by some respondents as being the least sustainable as it could increase car usage, put additional strain on infrastructure in smaller settlements and does not align as well with climate and accessibility ambitions. Option F with its focus on new communities was noted for its potential to deliver significant infrastructure and create self-sustaining communities. However, some concerns were raised regarding their reliance on long term infrastructure delivery, risks in isolating early residents and use of greenfield land.

Sustainability Performance of Each Alternative

Alternative	Economic	Social	Environmental
Existing Strategy	Moderate	Good	Moderate
Urban Extensions	High	High	Moderate
Public Transport Corridors	High	High	Strong
Strategic Roads	High	Moderate	Weak
Dispersed Growth	Moderate	Moderate	Weak
New Communities	High	High	Moderate to Strong

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.37 The Sustainability Appraisal consistently found that concentrated and accessible growth patterns performed best in relation to carbon reduction, public transport viability, active travel opportunities, access to services and employment, infrastructure efficiency, economic activity and integration, and health and wellbeing outcomes. It also has the potential to improve housing delivery and affordability.

5.38 Strategic sites and new communities provide opportunities for comprehensive placemaking.

5.39 Conversely, there could be increased pressure on existing infrastructure and have traffic implications if mitigation is not delivered.

5.40 Development is likely to be concentrated on greenfield land around existing settlements due to the limited amount of brownfield land available within the district. Development will have an impact on landscape character, this can be mitigated and by concentrating development towards existing settlement, this impact can be reduced.

5.41 The key findings of the Sustainability Appraisal for employment development found:

- A focus on Established Employment Areas supports development in proven locations where there is existing infrastructure and market confidence.
- A focus on strategic highway locations could promote strong logistics connectivity at a local and regional level but is likely to increase car dependency and yield a lower job density and may not support existing economic centres
- Focusing employment within or next to large scale housing sites to promote a mix of uses performance strongly in terms of sustainability with opportunities to integrate a mix of uses to support jobs near homes and reducing commuting distance and carbon emissions
- Employment in sustainable locations to public transport and active travel performance strongly by supporting a modal shift, reducing

carbon emissions and provide long term sustainability and health benefits but may not support rural economy opportunities.

- Focusing development in existing employment centres such as market towns and larger settlements reinforces the role of market towns, supports business clustering and utilises existing infrastructure but may not support rural economy opportunities.

5.42 The appraisals concluded that a hybrid strategy combining growth in principal settlements and/or strategic growth clusters, transport-connected locations and new communities achieves the most balanced environmental, social and economic outcomes. This approach forms the basis of the Regulation 18 and also Regulation 19 spatial strategy.

Further refinement of a preferred spatial strategy

5.43 Considering the above, the six spatial options were further refined into four reasonable alternative growth strategies (including a package of reasonable alternative sites) which were taken forward for further technical testing and SA:

- Strategy 1 - Strong focus on towns and cities
- Strategy 2 - Sustainable locations served by public transport employment and infrastructure i.e. Market towns and service centres
- Strategy 3 - Dispersed growth to support existing settlements – Some market town growth, but focus on service centres, large villages and villages
- Strategy 4 - Freestanding strategic developments and limited dispersed growth – Some market town growth, but focus on freestanding strategic sites, some small freestanding sites and service centres and large villages

5.44 The methodology in identifying reasonable alternative sites that make up the package of sites for each of these strategies are explained in the chapter 'Approach to Site Options and Reasonable Alternatives' and set

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

out in 'Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites'. The strategic reasonable alternative sites are identified in 'Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites'.

- 5.45** Each of the strategy options were appraised through the SA framework, the outcomes of these appraisal can be found in 'Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options'. In sustainability terms, all four strategies have elements where they perform positively and negatively against the SA objectives, although, on balance, Strategies 2 and 4 perform most positively.
- 5.46** The Further issues and Options consultation showed that Options A, B and C were generally favoured, these have therefore formed the basis for two of the refined Strategy Options but elements of all Options have been taken forward into the refined reasonable alternatives. Each Strategy Option proposes enough housing growth to meet the Government's standard method number with a 10% buffer to allow for sufficient flexibility.
- 5.47** Following the Sustainability Appraisal on these options and the outcomes of technical evidence documents, such as climate change evidence, transport, infrastructure, flooding, and Habitats Regulations Assessment, it was concluded that Strategy 2 will form the base of a preferred options strategy with elements of the remaining three strategies being incorporated where they align to provide a hybrid option that responds to the technical evidence gathering and maximises its sustainability performance against the SA framework.⁽¹⁾

1 For each option, there is a strong focus on finding sites as a priority in flood zone 1, then flood zone 1 with minimal surface water flood risk, then flood zone 1 with more substantial surface water flood risk, then 80% flood zone 1 with minimal surface water flood risk.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Table 3 Growth strategy options for evidence testing

Strategy Option	Description of the Strategy and strategic sites included	Evolution from Further Issues & Options
Strategy 1 - Strong focus on towns and cities	Focusing on market towns in Huntingdonshire and proximity to Peterborough, includes Godmanchester which is close to Huntingdon, Farcet, Yaxley and Alwalton due to proximity to Peterborough and strategic sites and large-scale commercial near Peterborough. Includes Service Centres that fit with the strategy (Godmanchester and Yaxley), and also Local Service Village & Village sites completely in flood zone 1 to satisfy the sequential test. Includes Lodge Farm, Chesterton Garden Village, Chesterton land west of the A1 option A (commercial), Nook Farm, Sibson Garden Community, East of St Neots and Brampton Cross (commercial)	Options A, B, C
Strategy 2 - Sustainable locations served by public transport employment and infrastructure i.e. Market towns and service centres	Focusing on market towns in Huntingdonshire and Service Centres. Includes sites in the Service Centres of Alconbury, Bluntisham, Brampton, Godmanchester, Kimbolton, Little Paxton, Sawtry, Somersham, Stilton, Yaxley and also Local Service Village and Village sites completely in flood zone 1 to satisfy the sequential test. Includes Lodge Farm, Wyton Airfield and East of St Neots.	Options A, B, C and partially option D and considering responses to option G
Strategy 3 - Dispersed growth to support existing settlements – Some market town growth, but focus on service centres, large villages and villages	Dispersed growth with some market town development in Huntingdonshire, but with more focus on the Service Centres, Large Villages and Villages. Service Centres include Alconbury, Bluntisham, Brampton, Godmanchester, Kimbolton, Little Paxton, Sawtry, Somersham, Stilton, Yaxley. Local Service Villages include Alwalton, Earith, Ellington, Elton, Farcet, Great Gransden, Great Paxton, Great Staughton, Hemingford Grey, Hilton, Needingworth, Pidley, Spaldwick and The Offords. Sites are also identified within 23 villages. Also includes Local Service Village and Village sites completely in flood zone 1 to satisfy the sequential test. Includes Chesterton land west of the A1 option A (commercial), Lodge Farm and Wyton Airfield and East of St Neots.	Option E and partially option D and considering responses to option G
Strategy 4 - Freestanding strategic developments and limited dispersed growth – Some market town growth, but focus on freestanding strategic sites, some small freestanding sites and service centres and large villages	Focus on freestanding sites including Sapley Park Garden Village, Brampton Cross (commercial), Chesterton Garden Village & Bottom Lodge Farm (Chesterton), The Lattenbury's, Wyton Airfield and Hungary Hall Farm. Remaining development distributed in Service Centres and Local Service Villages with no village development. To support the freestanding strategy Colne Fen was identified for commercial leisure, Galley Hill in Fenstanton for commercial use and Midloe Grange for BNG uses.	Option F

Preferred Options

5.48 Following an SA of these options, consultation responses and the gathering of technical evidence, the following options were selected as the preferred strategic approach in the Preferred Options Local Plan to 2046:

- Plan for the standard method with an uplift in excess of 5% on the standard method number to allow some flexibility in case some sites do not deliver as expected or affordability ratios worsen

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- Hybrid approach towards economic growth combining elements of high and medium growth options
- Hybrid spatial strategy consisting of development focused in sustainable locations served by public transport, employment and infrastructure with freestanding strategic developments and limited dispersed growth, this includes:
 - Strategic growth at sustainable locations such as Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey, Alconbury Weald, Wyton Airfield and the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster.
 - Protection and enhancement of Established Employment Areas
 - Support for innovation-led industries and appropriate logistics development
 - Integration of mix of uses within major growth locations and new communities
 - Some dispersed growth across Huntingdonshire to support the sustainability of smaller settlements

5.49 Testing of these alternatives ultimately demonstrated that no single option performed best against all objectives. Instead, the strongest results were achieved through a hybrid strategy that combined the advantages of several approaches while avoiding the weaknesses associated with any single growth model. This conclusion informed the development of the preferred strategy taken forward into the Regulation 19 Plan.

Approach to Site Options and Reasonable Alternatives

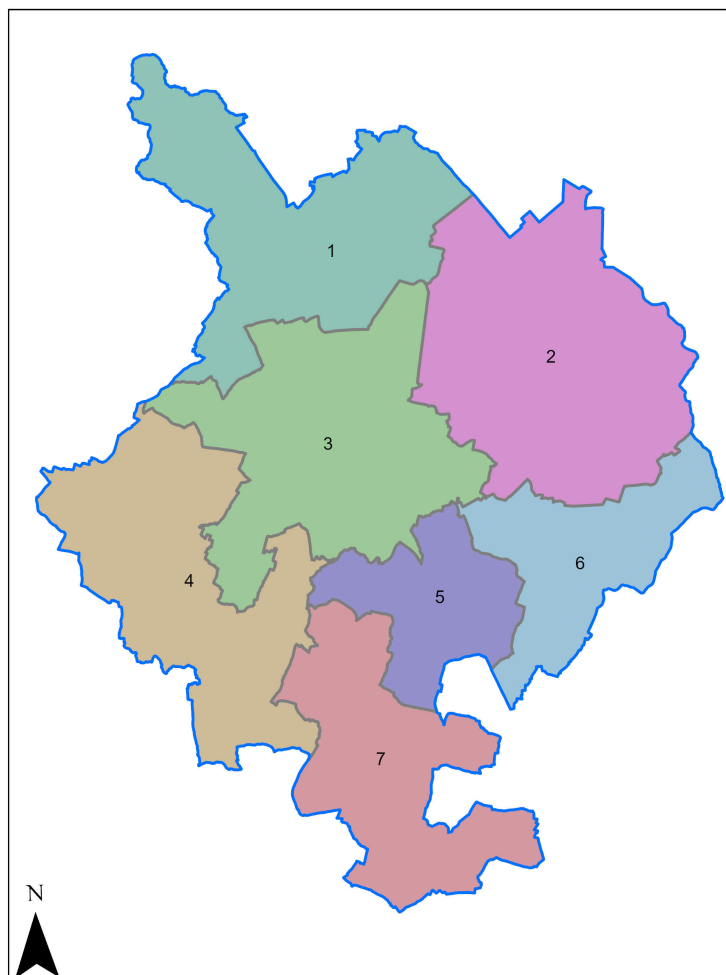
5.50 This section provides a comparative summary of the site options and their reasonable alternatives, presenting the appraisal results against the SA Objectives using the established site appraisal criteria.

Site identification

5.51 Through the [Call for Sites](#), a total of **437 sites** were submitted for consideration. All sites submitted during the Call for Sites can be viewed on an [interactive map](#). To assist in the navigation of site assessments, the district was been divided into seven groups, divided as follows and shown spatially in the below map.

1. **Northern Huntingdonshire** - Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley; Yaxley wards
2. **North Eastern Huntingdonshire** - Ramsey; Somersham; Warboys wards
3. **Northern Central Huntingdonshire** - Alconbury; Sawtry; the Stukeleys wards
4. **Western Huntingdonshire** - Great Staughton; Kimbolton wards
5. **Central Huntingdonshire** - Brampton; Godmanchester & Hemingford Abbots; Huntingdon wards
6. **Eastern Huntingdonshire** - Fenstanton; Hemingford Grey & Houghton; Holywell-cum-Needlingworth; St Ives wards
7. **Southern Huntingdonshire** - Buckden; Great Paxton; St Neots wards

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan



Site Assessment and refinement to identify reasonable alternative sites

5.52 All the sites were assessed through the in-combination Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. The LAA contains individual assessments of each sites and Sustainability Appraisal appraises sites against the sustainability objectives, the outcomes of the SA were fed back into the LAA to conclude which sites were considered potentially suitable for further consideration.

5.53 Of the 437 site submitted, 53 sites were found to have fundamental constraints:

- Grade 1 agricultural land, unless the proposed use is compatible (e.g., community orchard, garden, or flood-mitigation use).
- Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) covering more than half the site, unless for water-compatible or flood-mitigation purposes.
- Common land, village green, or designated Local Green Space, unless the use aligns with the designation.
- National or local nature conservation designations (SSSI, LNR, LGS, SAC, SPA, Ramsar), unless the proposal supports biodiversity, green infrastructure, or nature conservation.
- Irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland or veteran trees, where development would result in their loss.

5.54 These constraints mean the site is not taken forward for detailed assessment or considered a reasonable alternative in line with national guidance. Information on sites that were not considered to be reasonable alternatives and were not taken for the full SA can be found in the [Land Availability Assessment](#).

5.55 The remaining 384 sites progressed to full LAA assessment. 41 sites were found to be unsuitable, unachievable or undeliverable at LAA stage and did not progress to an SA. These are not reasonable alternatives. Issues identified included significant flood risk, access challenges or ownership constraints.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.56 This left 343 sites progressing to an SA using the sites or strategy decision aiding questions from the SA framework. Sites that were over 2,500 homes and/or 120,000 sqm of floorspace were assessed using the strategy questions due to their scale and potential in shaping a Local Plan strategy and were therefore not directly comparable to smaller sites. The outcomes of the SA for these sites were then fed back into the LAA to reach an integrated conclusion on each site's potential suitability for development and, by extension, its potential for allocation in the Local Plan to 2046. At this stage, of the 343 sites, 118 sites were discounted, leaving 225 sites as potentially suitable for further consideration and an indicative development capacity calculated. A summary table is provided in 'Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites' which details which sites these were.

5.57 These 225 sites formed the basis of four spatial strategy options to test, each representing a distinct pattern of growth:

- Strategy 1 – Strong focus on towns and cities
- Strategy 2 – Sustainable locations served by public transport, employment and infrastructure (market towns and service centres)
- Strategy 3 – Dispersed growth to support existing settlements (service centres, large villages and villages, with some market town growth)
- Strategy 4 – Freestanding strategic developments with limited dispersed growth (strategic sites, some small freestanding sites, service centres and large villages)

5.58 The approach was taken to consider sites within each LAA area for allocation within each of the four strategies tested to ensure that the Local Plan supports the whole district given the extensive rural area. This allows consideration of NPPF paragraph 83 which supports the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas and identifying opportunities for villages to grow and thrive.

5.59 Each strategy was tested through the technical evidence base, including the SFRA, Water Cycle Study, transport modelling, infrastructure assessments, and Habitat Regulations Assessment, alongside the SA.

5.60 This testing demonstrated that a hybrid approach drawing primarily on Strategies 2 and 4 performed most favourably, offering a balanced distribution of growth that aligned with infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints and maximises its sustainability performance against the SA framework. This informed the sites that would be included in the Preferred Options Regulation 18 Local Plan. It is important to note that even though a site may be considered a reasonable alternative in sustainability terms, it does not necessarily mean it will be allocated as further technical evidence and the eventual spatial strategy would further shape the sites selected. 'Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites' provides a summary of the reasons sites were discounted at this stage and the reasons others were included in the Preferred Options Local Plan.

5.61 The sites forming this hybrid strategy were taken forward into the Preferred Options Local Plan and consulted on between September and December 2025. The LAA and SA were updated throughout plan preparation to reflect evolving evidence, and refined constraint assessments. Similarly, the SA followed the statutory multi-stage SEA process, with each stage revisiting earlier assumptions, reappraising reasonable alternatives, and incorporating new evidence and consultation feedback. The LAA and SA documents include boxes titled 'Updates after initial assessment', this summaries any changes that were made through consultation feedback such as amendments by site promoters or the outcomes of technical evidence documents like the SFRA. Collectively, these iterative processes ensure that all reasonable alternatives are assessed in a consistent, transparent, and proportionate manner, and that the emerging spatial strategy is informed by the most up-to-date evidence and sustainability considerations.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.62 Amendments to the Preferred Options Local Plan site allocations were made. Following consultation on the Preferred Options Local Plan, and informed by updated technical evidence and further heritage assessments, the draft allocations were refined with the following draft allocations being removed:

- Ramsey 3: East of Wood Lane
- Somersham 2: South of College Farm
- Bluntisham 1: South of Rectory Road
- Alwalton 1: North of 23-33 Oundle Road
- Bythorn 1: West of Warren Lane

5.63 A small number of additional sites were also included at this stage and consulted on between May and June 2026 in the [Additional Preferred Sites](#). These sites include additional village-scale allocations in Catworth, Bythorn, Ellington, Grafham, Spaldwick and Ramsey Forty Foot, which enhance flexibility and geographic distribution of supply. These sites were selected because they could boost short-term housing supply and were located in areas with demonstrated capacity in wastewater and education infrastructure, ensuring that their inclusion remained consistent with the evidence base and the overall spatial strategy.

5.64 The removal and addition of sites resulted in a revised set of allocations presented in the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

Reasonable alternative site review

5.65 This section provides an overview of the sustainability performance of reasonable alternative sites. It is important to note that even though a site may be considered a reasonable alternative in sustainability terms, it does not necessarily mean it will be allocated as further technical evidence and the eventual spatial strategy would further shape the sites selected.

5.66 For clarity, the following sections analyse the reasonable alternatives sites grouped by the settlements and areas within which they are situated, reflecting the structure used in the LAA documents.

5.67 To support effective cross-referencing, the sequence of sites follows the order used in the in-combination Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal Site reports. Site identification numbers are consistent with those used in the in-combination Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal Site reports available on the [evidence library webpage](#). These reports provide the assessment of all 437 sites submitted to the Council.

5.68 The colour-coding reflects the status of each site within the Plan-making process:

- Sites in **bold** indicate those proposed for housing allocation
- Sites that are underlined were draft allocations at the Preferred Options stage but were subsequently removed from the Pre-Submission Local Plan
- Sites in *italics* were not draft allocations at the Preferred Options stage but have since been included in the Pre-Submission Local Plan

5.69 Throughout Local Plan preparation, reasonable site options and alternatives were assessed to a consistent level of detail. Some sites were appraised more than once to reflect updated boundaries or new evidence; however, only the most recent appraisal iteration is included.

5.70 To support interpretation of the appraisal summary, the scoring framework comprises two positive scores (++ , +), one neutral score (N), and two negative scores (-- , -). A full explanation of how scores and colour coding have been applied is set out in the 'Appendix 1 - SA Framework' and 'Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria'.

5.71 All reasonable site options and alternatives were subject to rigorous assessment at earlier stages of Plan preparation. Detailed appraisals are presented in the in-combination Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal Site reports available on the [evidence library webpage](#).

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.72** The summary of reasonable alternative site assessments provided below applies a **'no-mitigation-on' approach**, appraising each site solely on its baseline physical characteristics without assuming any form of mitigation.

Northern Huntingdonshire

- 5.73** Northern Huntingdonshire consists of the Stilton, Folksworth & Washingley and Yaxley wards.

Relevant Site Options

- 5.74** Alwalton 1 (CfS: 23-24298), was initially allocated in the Preferred Option Local Plan but following the public consultation, additional evidence and conclusions presented in the [Heritage Impact Assessments](#), the site was removed in the Pre Submission Plan due to heritage constraints, scale of the proposal and transport impacts. The site is constrained by its impact on the rural approach to the village, the conservation area, nearby listed buildings and its proximity to the A1.
- 5.75** Chesterton 1 (CfS: 209) offered significant employment potential but was detached from existing settlements, relied on major infrastructure investment and would urbanise a substantial area of countryside. Chesterton Garden Village (Chesterton 2, CfS: 23-2414) could have delivered a new community of around 1,000 homes, but the scale of growth would fundamentally alter the character of a very small village and require extensive new infrastructure. Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to the impact of these sites and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated.
- 5.76** Conington 3 (CfS: 382) was considered more appropriate for biodiversity net gain than built development, while Conington 4 (CfS: 381) was an isolated employment site with limited sustainability credentials and poor public transport accessibility.

- 5.77** The Elton sites (CfS: 58, CfS: 59, CfS: 60, CfS: 61, CfS:62 and CfS: 23-24300) were generally constrained by a combination of flood risk, landscape sensitivity, heritage impacts and concerns that development would erode the village's historic character and countryside setting.

- 5.78** From a health and inequalities perspective, many of the sites also performed less favourably because of their relative remoteness from services and facilities, limited sustainable transport opportunities, potential exposure to environmental nuisances, or the pressure they could place on existing community infrastructure. Consequently, the sites did not present a sufficiently balanced sustainability case when considered against the full range of environmental, social, economic, health, and equality objectives. Accordingly, all of the sites identified above were discounted from further consideration in the Local Plan.

- 5.79** The Farcet sites (CfS: 30, CfS: 108, CfS: 149, CfS: 175 and CfS: 177) benefited from strong accessibility and proximity to Peterborough but raised significant concerns regarding coalescence with the urban area. In particular, Farcet 3 (CfS: 149) would more than double the size of the village and fundamentally change its character.

- 5.80** None of the housing site options in Folksworth and Washingley (CfS: 132, CfS: 220 and CfS: 23-245), Glatton (CfS: 117), Great Gidding (CfS: 192, CfS: 193, CfS: 194, CfS: 349) and Haddon (CfS: 307) are proposed allocations in the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that, although these sites generally performed positively in relation to flood risk and biodiversity considerations, their development would lead to the loss of agricultural land and encroachment into the countryside, which weighed against their suitability relative to alternative site allocations. The residential sites in Folksworth & Washingley, Glatton, Great Gidding and Haddon offered opportunities for modest housing growth but were often constrained by limited access to employment, services and public transport. In Great Gidding and Glatton particularly, landscape sensitivity, conservation area considerations and the setting of listed buildings reduced their overall sustainability performance.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- 5.81** For employment sites, Folksworth and Washingley 2 (CfS: 130), Haddon 4 (CfS: 206) and **Haddon 5 (CfS: 212)** performed more strongly in economic terms, with significant potential for employment growth linked to the A1(M) corridor. The Level 2 SFRA assessed showed that **Haddon 5 (CfS: 212)** is 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site was put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan as Peterborough Services 1 with criteria addressing landscape impact, ecology, phasing, traffic impact, noise and air quality.
- 5.82** **Holme 5 (CfS: 23-243)** emerged as the preferred option in Holme against four other reasonable alternatives (CfS: 38, CfS: 157, CfS: 181 and CfS: 23-244) because it was able to accommodate growth adjacent to the existing settlement while avoiding the more significant landscape and environmental sensitivities affecting other Holme sites, particularly those closer to the Great Fen and other ecological assets. The site demonstrated a stronger ability to integrate with the village and access existing services while limiting adverse impacts on settlement character. The site's proximity to community facilities and opportunities for active travel may also help support healthier lifestyles and social interaction, contributing positively to residents' wellbeing. The site promoter also seeks to provide retail and/or health uses alongside housing development providing an additional sustainability benefit.
- 5.83** In Stilton, site **Stilton 2 (CfS: 165)** performed better than five alternative sites (CfS: 51, CfS: 131, CfS: 142, CfS: 186, and CfS: 23-2412) because it made use of previously developed or less sensitive land, reducing pressure on open countryside and agricultural land. It also benefited from relatively good access to village facilities and services while presenting fewer landscape concerns than several edge-of-settlement alternatives. Improved access to local services can help reduce the need to travel longer distances for everyday needs, supporting health outcomes and helping to ensure that less mobile groups, including older people and young people, are able to access essential facilities more easily. The site also now has planning permission (24/00238/FUL). **Stilton 5 (CfS: 186)** provided an opportunity for a larger extension that could be integrated with the existing settlement

pattern while avoiding some of the constraints affecting other Stilton sites, including heritage, landscape and accessibility limitations. It offered a proportionate contribution to housing needs with a clearer relationship to the village than several competing options (CfS: 51, CfS: 131, CfS: 142 and CfS: 23-2412). Its location also presents opportunities to enhance walking and cycling connections, supporting physical activity and improving access to local services and community facilities for a broad range of residents.

- 5.84** In total, six reasonable alternatives were considered in Yaxley (CfS: 18, CfS: 126, CfS: 273, CfS: 228, CfS: 301, CfS: 23-241 and CfS: 23-2444) and were subject to SA. Site **Yaxley 1 (CfS: 18)** was considered one of the most sustainable locations for employment development within the Northern Huntingdonshire area by virtue it being located on the edge of Yaxley located in sustainable travel distance and forming a third phase to the established Eagle Business Park making it easier to integrate into the existing settlement. The site now has planning permission (23/00973/OUT). Policy criteria addressing flood risk is provided in the policy wording. These sustainability considerations make the site more preferable to Yaxley 2 (CfS: 126), another employment site located on the opposite side of the village which was not ultimately considered a reasonable alternative due to its significant constraints. Housing sites in Yaxley were discounted due to sustainability concerns regarding flood risk, landscape and infrastructure concerns.

Conclusion

- 5.85** Since the Preferred Options stage, Alwalton 1 has been removed as an allocation but the other five proposed site allocations in the northern Huntingdonshire area have been retained. None of the site options in Alwalton, Chesterton, Conington, Elton, and Farcet have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan, as assessment against landscape, heritage, environmental, infrastructure, and settlement strategy considerations determined that alternative sites represented more suitable development options.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.86 The Sustainability Appraisal found that they offered appropriate opportunities for growth while maintaining good accessibility, integrating effectively with existing settlements, and avoiding many of the significant constraints affecting alternative options. In contrast, many of the reasonable alternatives were more heavily constrained by impacts on the countryside, ecological sensitivities, flood risk, poorer accessibility, or weaker relationships with existing built-up areas. Refinement of the Local Plan since the Preferred Options stage does not change this overall view.

5.87 From a health and inequalities perspective, the preferred sites are also more likely to support healthy and inclusive communities by providing better access to services, employment opportunities, public transport and active travel networks. By reducing barriers to accessing essential facilities and promoting sustainable travel choices, the allocations have the potential to contribute positively to health outcomes and help address inequalities experienced by more vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Overall, these sites were considered to make a positive contribution to the Plan's spatial strategy, sustainability objectives, and wider health and wellbeing outcomes and were therefore selected for allocation.

North Eastern Huntingdonshire

5.88 North Eastern Huntingdonshire consists of Ramsey, Somersham and Warboys wards.

Relevant Site Options

5.89 Broughton 1 (CfS: 153) had in sustainability terms potential to provide modest housing growth within the settlement boundary but would require significant design mitigations to overcome landscape and heritage impacts. It was not taken forward into the Preferred Options Local Plan due to its surface water flood risk.

5.90 **Bury 1 (CfS: 141)** and **Bury 2 (CfS: 188)** clearly emerged as the strongest development opportunities, with **Bury 2** performing a complementary role as a biodiversity and green infrastructure site rather than a residential

allocation. **Bury 1** benefits from being partly previously developed land within the existing settlement, close to Ramsey town centre, schools, employment opportunities, bus services and local facilities. The redevelopment of a former industrial site also supports efficient land use and reduces pressure on undeveloped countryside. Although the site lies within the conservation area, the assessments concluded that heritage impacts could be successfully addressed through high quality design and masterplanning. By contrast, Bury 3 (CfS: 162) and Bury 4 (CfS: 277) were not considered suitable for development because they form part of the protected settlement break identified within the Bury Neighbourhood Plan. Their development would undermine the established separation between Bury and Ramsey and conflict directly with neighbourhood plan policy. Bury 5 (CfS: 279) and Bury 6 (CfS: 289) performed less strongly due to substantial flood risk, greater landscape sensitivity, and, in the case of Bury 6, significant conservation area and heritage constraints.

5.91 **Bury 7 (CfS: 84)** was preferred because it forms a logical extension to the ongoing redevelopment of the former RAF Upwood site. It is previously developed land, free from significant flood risk, capable of accommodating substantial green infrastructure, and can be integrated into an evolving mixed-use community. The site also performs well in accessibility terms, particularly for employment opportunities, and avoids many of the landscape, flood risk and heritage constraints affecting other large-scale options in and around Bury. Its relationship with committed and emerging phases of development at RAF Upwood provides a degree of certainty and strategic coherence that alternative sites could not match. It forms another extension to former RAF Upwood alongside **Upwood and the Raveleys 1 (CfS: 82)**.

5.92 In Old Hurst, the only promoted site, Old Hurst 1 (CfS: 23-24308), although technically capable of accommodating development, the environmental and landscape impacts, combined with the limited sustainability credentials of the location, meant that the site did not compare favourably with preferred allocations elsewhere and was therefore not taken forward for allocation.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.93 In Pidley-cum-Fenton, whilst a number of sites, including Pidley-cum-Fenton 2 (CfS: 189), Pidley-cum-Fenton 3 (CfS: 190), Pidley-cum-Fenton 4 (CfS: 217) and Pidley-cum-Fenton 5 (CfS: 214), presented opportunities for modest housing growth, custom and self-build provision, or specialist accommodation, the settlement as a whole performs relatively poorly in sustainability terms due to its limited range of local services, lack of a primary school, limited employment opportunities, and dependence on private vehicle travel. Most sites were greenfield locations on grade 2 agricultural land and, although generally free from significant flood risk, biodiversity and heritage constraints, they offered only limited opportunities to enhance strategic green infrastructure or improve sustainable transport connectivity. Collectively, the sites would have resulted in dispersed and largely car-dependent growth that was not considered to represent as sustainable or balanced a pattern of development as preferred alternatives elsewhere in the district.

5.94 In Upwood and The Raveleys, **Upwood and the Raveleys 1 (CfS: 82)** was considered as a further phase of development associated with the former RAF Upwood. While in Upwood and the Raveleys parish, it adjoins Bury and Ramsey so is functionally linked to a market town making it very sustainable in terms of access to services and facilities. It is also at low risk of flooding with minimal landscape, ecological and heritage impacts. Further expansion of RAF Upwood was dependent upon the successful delivery and integration of earlier phases, together with the provision of supporting infrastructure and services to meet the needs of an expanding community. Together, these reasons supported the site's allocation. Alternatively, Upwood and the Raveleys 2 (CfS: 287) located in the main settlement of Upwood and the Raveleys did not perform as well in sustainability terms so was not allocated.

5.95 Warboys contained a significant number of promoted sites with four being considered as reasonable alternatives (Warboys CfS: 172, Warboys 6 CfS: 148, Warboys 10 CfS: 314 and Warboys 12 CfS: 85) ranging from modest infill opportunities to substantial urban extensions and strategic-scale housing proposals. While a number of sites would have delivered housing

and potentially strengthened the role of the settlement, many were located on prominent open countryside edges where development would have had significant impacts on landscape character and important views into and out of the village. Several sites were of a scale that would have represented a substantial extension to the settlement and raised concerns regarding their ability to integrate successfully with the existing community. Access and infrastructure constraints were also recurring issues, with some proposals relying upon new highway arrangements or access routes that had not been sufficiently demonstrated as deliverable. When compared against preferred allocations elsewhere in the district, the Warboys site options generally performed less favourably in terms of landscape impact, integration, accessibility, deliverability and overall sustainability. Consequently, none were considered to represent the most appropriate locations for allocation through the Plan.

5.96 Wistow 1 (CfS: 152), whilst physically capable of accommodating development, the environmental and sustainability disadvantages associated with the Wistow sites meant that they did not perform as favourably as alternative locations and were therefore not allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan.

5.97 The market town Ramsey is very sustainable in terms of access to services and facilities. It had several sites that were considered reasonable alternatives, **Ramsey 4 (CfS: 262)** was allocated as it was sequentially at a lower risk of flooding than other sites such as Ramsey 5 (CfS: 92). Ramsey 3 (CfS: 268) was initially allocated in the Preferred Option Local Plan subsequently removed from Pre-Submission Plan. Upon review of the concerns and objections raised to the loss of community land at Ramsey 3, the site has been removed as a draft allocation despite the rationale for allocating it being to secure the long term use of the wider site for community open space uses.

5.98 Ramsey consists of several related villages, in Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey 14 (CfS: 53) was promoted for open space and moorings. The site was allocated in the Preferred Options Plan and retained. The site provides

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

sustainability benefits and leisure uses. Site *Ramsey 17* (CfS: 271) was added to the Plan following the Preferred Options consultation. The site was preferred as it provides a sustainable development opportunity on the edge of Ramsey Forty Foot largely contained visually by existing landscape features and at low risk of flooding so upon review of the allocations was allocated.

- 5.99** Within Somersham, the preferred sites emerged because they offered a stronger balance between accessibility, integration with the existing settlement and deliverability than competing alternatives and we sequentially preferable in terms of flood risk. **Somersham 1 (CfS: 163)** benefits from the reuse of previously developed land within the settlement and provides an opportunity to regenerate an established site in a sustainable location. Its brownfield status and close relationship with existing services and infrastructure distinguish it from a number of greenfield alternatives.
- 5.100** **Somersham 8 (CfS: 270)** and **Somersham 11 (CfS: 339)** were preferred because they represent logical extensions to the village that can be integrated with existing development patterns while maintaining access to services, schools, employment opportunities and community facilities. Although both require careful landscape treatment and infrastructure planning, the assessments concluded that their constraints were capable of mitigation and were generally less severe than those affecting alternative sites. The College Farm sites also provide flexibility in delivering housing growth in a manner that can be coordinated with infrastructure provision and masterplanning.
- 5.101** The site option **Somersham 6 (CfS: 233)**, was initially allocated in the Preferred Option Local Plan subsequently removed from Pre-Submission Plan. Following a review of comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cite concern regarding infrastructure capacity, cumulative impact of all draft allocations on the village, transport impacts, landscape harm and scale of the proposal, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.

Conclusion

- 5.102** None of the site options in Broughton, Old Hurst, Pidley-cum-Fenton, Warboys, and Wistow have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. Whilst a number of sites offered opportunities for housing growth, employment development, renewable energy generation or community benefits, the assessment of reasonable alternatives concluded that these sites did not perform as favourably as the preferred allocations when assessed against the full range of sustainability, environmental, infrastructure and settlement strategy objectives.
- 5.103** From a health, equality and sustainable development perspective, these sites generally performed less favourably than the preferred allocations due to a combination of landscape sensitivity, limited accessibility to services and employment opportunities, dependence on private vehicle travel, infrastructure uncertainties and difficulties integrating development with existing settlement form. Whilst individual sites offered some benefits, including housing delivery, specialist accommodation, self-build provision, renewable energy generation and biodiversity gains, the cumulative evidence demonstrated that these benefits were outweighed by environmental, sustainability and deliverability concerns. Accordingly, the Council concluded that the sites did not represent the most appropriate or sustainable locations for growth and they have not been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan.
- 5.104** Sites **Bury 1, Bury 2, Bury 7, Ramsey 4, Ramsey 17, Upwood and the Raveleys 1, Somersham 1, Somersham 8 and Somersham 11**, have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan.[1] They were selected for allocation because they represented the most sustainable and deliverable options within their respective settlements when assessed against the reasonable alternatives through the Sustainability Appraisal and Land Availability Assessment process. The assessments demonstrate that, while each site is subject to some constraints, these are capable of mitigation and are generally less significant than those affecting competing options. The selected sites were preferred because they achieved the most

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

favourable balance between development objectives and environmental protection within their respective settlements. They generally offer stronger accessibility to services, employment, schools and public transport; better opportunities to integrate with existing communities; and fewer or more manageable constraints than competing alternatives. Sites removed from the Preferred Options Plan (Ramsey 3 and Somersham 6) were based on consultation feedback and concerns regarding cumulative impact, consequently, the preferred allocations provide the most robust basis for delivering the Plan's housing and employment requirements while supporting sustainable growth, protecting settlement character and maintaining consistency with the wider spatial strategy.

- 5.105** From a health and inequalities perspective, the preferred allocations are more likely to support healthy and inclusive communities because they provide good access to employment, education, community facilities, public transport and active travel networks. These characteristics can help reduce barriers to opportunity, encourage healthier lifestyles and improve access to essential services for a wide range of residents, including older people, younger people and households without access to a private car. Consequently, the allocations make a positive contribution to the Plan's spatial strategy, sustainability objectives and wider wellbeing outcomes and were therefore selected for allocation.

North Central Huntingdonshire

- 5.106** North Central Huntingdonshire consisting of the Alconbury, Sawtry and the Stukeleys wards.

Relevant Site Options

- 5.107 Abbots Ripton 3 (CfS: 259)** emerged as the strongest and most deliverable option in Abbots Ripton. Unlike several competing sites, it benefits from a partial previously developed land component, including an existing commercial building and agricultural structures, creating opportunities for redevelopment and the retention and expansion of local employment space

alongside new housing. The site is well related to the existing settlement, close to the village's services and facilities, and capable of being integrated into the established community through appropriate masterplanning. The Sustainability Appraisal also identified positive accessibility to local facilities, employment opportunities at Alconbury Weald, and the potential to enhance local economic activity. While Abbots Ripton 1 (CfS: 106) demonstrated some positive characteristics, particularly limited landscape impact and the ability to form a contained extension to the village, it is located within a much smaller and more rural hamlet with very limited services and infrastructure, making it less sustainable than Home Farm South.

- 5.108** The strategic-scale Sapley Park Garden Village proposal (Abbots Ripton 6 CfS: 197) offers long-term opportunities but raises substantial infrastructure, landscape, transport, heritage and settlement separation issues and was considered a much longer-term proposition rather than a proportionate allocation for growth in Abbots Ripton. The site was not included in the Preferred Options Local Plan, but was reconsidered as a reserve site in the consultation on additional site allocations held between May and June 2026. This explored the possibility of including the site in Plan as a reserve site so it would not form part of the local plan's housing allocations, but will only be considered for release if the authority's Annual Monitoring Report indicates there is a need to. It was considered suitable based on its potential to contribute towards strategic contributions towards unlocking strategic new infrastructure such as the A141 if needed to do so. Following a review of consultation feedback and concern regarding cumulative impact and the scale of the site, it was not taken forward as a reserve site in the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

- 5.109** Within Alconbury, **Alconbury 1 (CfS: 164)** and **Alconbury 2 (CfS: 359)** were identified as the preferred options because they represent logical extensions to the settlement and perform strongly in accessibility terms. Both sites are close to village facilities, schools, recreation opportunities and employment concentrations at Alconbury Weald and the Enterprise Zone. They are capable of accommodating meaningful levels of growth while remaining connected to the existing community. **Alconbury 1** was

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

particularly attractive because it comprises low quality agricultural land, is largely unconstrained by flood risk, can be effectively integrated with surrounding development, and offers flexibility to provide housing alongside employment opportunities. Although careful design is required to address the setting of nearby listed buildings and potential impacts associated with the A1 corridor, these issues were considered capable of mitigation through site design and landscaping. **Alconbury 2** was preferred over a number of larger and more constrained alternatives because, notwithstanding its flood risk considerations, it is closely related to the existing settlement and capable of delivering a significant proportion of the housing requirement in a sustainable location. The site benefits from good access to facilities and employment and can incorporate open space and green infrastructure. While the SA highlighted concerns regarding scale and access via Globe Lane, the site nevertheless provides a more sustainable opportunity than alternatives that are either poorly connected to the village or heavily constrained by landscape impacts.

5.110 Alconbury 4 (CfS: 329) and Alconbury 6 (CfS: 321) were promoted for employment development but are more isolated from established community infrastructure and are affected by issues relating to accessibility, landscape exposure and, in the case of Alconbury 6, fundamental highways concerns identified through consultation. Alconbury 7 (CfS: 367) benefits from proximity to Alconbury Weald but would require substantial mitigation to maintain separation from Little Stukeley and avoid adverse effects on landscape character. Strategic employment development at Alconbury 8 (CfS: 232) was considered and tested in the evidence base but ultimately discounted from allocation as it would located more employment growth than what was needed in a single location away from existing market towns, service centres and established employment areas as well as more than the district total need as demonstrated through the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment.

5.111 In Alconbury Weston, promoted sites (CfS: 13, CfS: 43, CfS: 137, CfS: 178, CfS: 195, CfS: 298, CfS: 327 and CfS: 23-249) offered housing, specialist accommodation, employment and mixed-use potential, but none

represented sustainable or appropriate locations when assessed against landscape, ecological, accessibility and settlement pattern considerations. Evidence identified landscape sensitivity, ecological constraints, infrastructure limitations and difficulties integrating development with the village as key factors. Many residential sites were visually exposed, extended the settlement edge and had limited pedestrian connectivity. Larger strategic proposals (Alconbury Weston 8 CfS: 43 and Alconbury Weston 6 CfS: 327) raised additional concerns including impacts on sensitive countryside, proximity to Monks Wood, and uncertainty around infrastructure delivery. Technical constraints such as pipeline easements, biodiversity issues, flood risk and access limitations further reduced suitability. Collectively, the sites would not deliver as sustainable, integrated or balanced a pattern of growth.

5.112 Within Sawtry, the preferred combination of **Sawtry 3 (CfS: 88)**, **Sawtry 4 (CfS: 52)**, **Sawtry 7 (CfS: 380)**, **Sawtry 9 (CfS: 385)**, **Sawtry 11 (CfS: 155)** and **Sawtry 17 (CfS: 23-24188)**, emerged because collectively they provide the most balanced and sustainable means of accommodating growth around an established Service Centre. The assessments demonstrate that these sites generally benefit from strong access to schools, employment areas, local shops, health facilities, public transport and the village's extensive range of community infrastructure. They also represent logical extensions to existing development patterns and are capable of being integrated with the settlement without creating isolated or poorly connected development. The selected sites performed more favourably than a number of larger alternatives around the edges of Sawtry because they avoid the most significant landscape, transport and settlement form concerns identified through the appraisal process. Collectively, they provide flexibility in delivery, allow growth to come forward from multiple directions, and reduce reliance on any single strategic site. Their scale is generally more proportionate to the settlement, enabling development to be integrated into existing neighbourhoods and infrastructure networks while maintaining the overall character of the village.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- 5.113** Alternative sites promoted (CfS: 11, CfS: 15, CfS: 161, CfS: 330, CfS: 338, CfS: 384 and CfS: 335) elsewhere around Sawtry were generally subject to greater concerns relating to flood risk, landscape exposure, infrastructure requirements, environmental constraints or their relationship with the built form of the village. The preferred sites therefore achieved the strongest overall balance between housing delivery, accessibility, environmental protection and community integration.
- 5.114** In Spaldwick, several sites (CfS: 86, CfS: 351, CfS: 353, CfS: 23-24284, CfS: 23-24285, CfS: 23-24286 and CfS: 23-24322) were constrained by flood risk, landscape impact and heritage concerns. Several sites south of the A14 were substantially affected by fluvial and surface water flood risk, limiting suitability. Other sites, would extend development into prominent countryside and harm the village's rural setting and heritage assets. Accessibility limitations and reliance on private vehicle travel further reduced sustainability. Some proposals were disproportionate to the settlement's role and lacked demonstrated infrastructure capacity. Overall, the sites did not represent the most sustainable alternatives at preferred Options stage. However, upon review of sites and further information from the site promoter illustrating phasing for the development to allow integration, *Spaldwick 4* (CfS: 305), was later allocated at the Pre-Submission stage.
- 5.115** Within The Stukeleys, of the smaller sites promoted, **The Stukeleys 3 (CfS: 28)** was identified as the preferred option because it provides a modest and proportionate extension to Great Stukeley that can be accommodated without materially altering the character of the settlement. The site is well related to the existing built form, benefits from good access to local facilities and employment opportunities in Huntingdon and Alconbury Weald, and is capable of being integrated into the surrounding residential area through appropriate design and landscaping.
- 5.116** The Stukeleys 1 (CfS: 77) is an existing site allocation in the Local Plan to 2036 and has a planning application on the site. The Local Plan to 2046 identifies it as an existing commitment carrying it forward into the new plan.

The Stukeleys 5 (CfS: 221) and **The Stukeleys 6 (CfS: 276)** are preferred allocations due to their sustainable location and opportunities to providing employment in sustainable locations.

- 5.117** The Stukeleys 2 (CfS: 36) is a strategic site but is the least sequentially preferable strategic site when considering flood risk and the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy ranks the site as one of the least accessible. The site's proximity to Alconbury Weald also raised concern over delivery of the site which may be impacted by market absorption due to its proximity to an ongoing strategic housing scheme with the potential to slow housing delivery in the district and thus not contributing effectively to the Governments housing delivery targets.
- 5.118** Upton and Coppingford 1 (CfS: 34) was allocated for self and custom build housing and had more opportunities for integration with the wider settlement. The settlements' highly rural, dispersed pattern and very limited services meant strong reliance on private vehicle travel. Public transport and active travel opportunities are minimal. Benefits of providing self and custom build plots provide a sustainability benefit in meeting different needs of the housing market so was identified as a preferred allocation.
- 5.119** In Winwick, the single promoted site (Winwick 1 CfS: 299) was technically available and capable of small-scale housing, but Winwick's very limited services, facilities and transport options meant high car dependency. Development would extend into countryside with limited wider benefits. Landscape and visual impacts were also identified. The site did not present a strong planning case compared with more sustainable alternatives.

Conclusion

- 5.120** None of the site options in Alconbury Weston and Winwick have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. Whilst a number of sites offered opportunities for housing growth, employment development, or community benefits, the assessment of reasonable alternatives concluded that these

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

sites did not perform as favourably as the preferred allocations when assessed against the full range of sustainability, health, environmental, infrastructure and settlement strategy objectives.

- 5.121** Across Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Sawtry, Spaldwick, The Stukeleys and Upton and Coppingford the selected allocations were preferred because they achieved the most favourable balance between supporting development needs and protecting environmental, landscape and heritage interests. Compared with reasonable alternatives, they generally provide stronger access to services, employment opportunities, schools and community facilities; better opportunities for integration with existing settlements; and fewer or more manageable constraints. Sites affected by substantial heritage harm, flood risk, landscape sensitivity, transport limitations, poor settlement integration or significant infrastructure challenges were either discounted or not progressed.
- 5.122** From a health and inequalities perspective, the preferred allocations are more likely to support healthy and inclusive communities because they provide good access to employment, education, community facilities, public transport and active travel networks. These characteristics can help reduce barriers to opportunity, encourage healthier lifestyles and improve access to essential services for a wide range of residents, including older people, younger people and households without access to a private car. Consequently, they represented the most sustainable and deliverable options within their respective settlements when assessed against the reasonable alternatives through the Sustainability Appraisal and Land Availability Assessment process. The assessments demonstrate that, while each site is subject to some constraints, these are capable of mitigation and are generally less significant than those affecting competing options.

Western Huntingdonshire

- 5.123** Western Huntingdonshire consists of the Great Staughton and Kimbolton wards.

Relevant Site Options

- 5.124** In Brington and Molesworth, whilst a number of sites presented opportunities for modest housing growth, the assessment of reasonable alternatives identified significant constraints relating to sustainability, integration with settlement form, accessibility and environmental impacts. Brington and Molesworth 3 (CfS: 310) and Brington and Molesworth 4 (CfS: 23-2404) performed more positively in landscape and integration terms and offered a modest opportunity for housing delivery, they nevertheless occupy greenfield agricultural land and are located within a settlement with limited services, employment opportunities and public transport provision. Overall, the evidence demonstrated that growth within Brington and Molesworth would be reliant on private vehicle travel and would not perform as favourably against sustainability objectives as preferred allocations elsewhere in the district. Consequently, none of the site options were taken forward for allocation.
- 5.125** Bythorn and Keyston contained a number of promoted housing and employment sites which, whilst capable of delivering development, generally performed poorly when assessed against sustainability, accessibility and settlement strategy objectives. The villages have a limited range of services and facilities, no primary school within the settlement, limited employment opportunities and very restricted public transport provision, resulting in a high degree of dependence on private vehicle travel. Bythorn and Keyston 1 (CfS: 98) was initially identified as a potential allocation at the Preferred Options stage. It was subsequently removed at Pre-Submission and replaced with the site at Bythorn and Keyston 3 (CfS: 111). The Parish Council expressed a preference for allocating Home Farm, noting its existing access, more central location within the village, and the opportunity it presents for a high-quality, heritage-led redevelopment. Although both sites relate reasonably well to the existing settlement and could accommodate modest housing growth, each is constrained by the loss of agricultural land and limited accessibility to services and employment. Other sites, including Bythorn and Keyston 2 (CfS: 158) and Bythorn and Keyston 5 (CfS: 113),

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

would have resulted in development that failed to reflect the established form and character of the village or would have extended development into visually sensitive countryside locations.

5.126 Within Catworth, *Catworth 1 (CfS: 12)* emerged as the most sustainable and deliverable residential opportunity. The site adjoins the existing built form on the southern edge of the village and is capable of being integrated into the settlement through appropriate masterplanning and landscape mitigation. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the site is wholly within flood zone 1, is unaffected by heritage and biodiversity designations, and benefits from reasonable access to existing community facilities including the playing field and church. Whilst the site comprises greenfield grade 2 agricultural land and is exposed in the wider landscape, these constraints were considered capable of mitigation through a reduced scale of development and boundary landscaping. Upon review of sites following the Preferred Options consultation, it was added as an allocation in the Pre-Submission Local Plan due to its opportunity for growth in the early phase of the plan and also utilise existing infrastructure capacity.

5.127 By contrast, other sites in Catworth performed less sustainably. Catworth 2 (CfS: 64) was more constrained by heritage considerations, the presence of overhead power lines, and highway concerns associated with access from Brook End. Although a limited amount of development on the eastern part of the site was considered potentially acceptable, it did not provide the same certainty of delivery and integration as Catworth 1. Catworth 4 (CfS: 17) and Catworth 5 (CfS: 356) performed substantially less well because of their poor relationship to the existing village form. Both sites would extend development significantly into the countryside, were difficult to integrate with the existing community, and would have had adverse impacts on the character of the settlement. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that development on either site would not support sustainable placemaking. Catworth 7 (CfS: 357) was the most constrained site and as a result not considered a reasonable alternative. Whilst physically adjacent to parts of the village, it contains and adjoins highly sensitive heritage assets including the scheduled monument associated with the Catworth manorial complex,

listed buildings, the conservation area and the setting of St Leonard's Church. The scale of development required to bring the site forward was considered likely to cause significant harm to the character of the village and heritage significance.

5.128 Consequently, Catworth 1 represented the most appropriate allocation because it was the only residential site capable of delivering meaningful housing growth whilst avoiding the significant heritage, placemaking and settlement form concerns that affected competing options.

5.129 Within Ellington, **Ellington 4 (CfS: 23-2421)** was preferred because it provides an opportunity to utilise a previously developed or partially developed site within the existing village framework. The reuse of existing development footprints supports efficient land use and reduces reliance on undeveloped countryside, consistent with the Plan's sustainability objectives. *Ellington 3 (CfS: 35)* was identified as the strongest greenfield residential opportunity and was subsequently added to the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The site adjoins the existing built form, provides a logical extension to the settlement, and is capable of integrating effectively with surrounding development. It lies within flood zone 1, is free from significant heritage or biodiversity constraints, benefits from proximity to village facilities and has relatively good access to employment opportunities associated with Brook Farm Industrial Estate. The Sustainability Appraisal found that the site performs positively across a broad range of sustainability objectives and has fewer constraints than competing alternatives.

5.130 These sites perform more sustainably than Ellington 5 (CfS: 23-2422) and Ellington 6 (CfS: 23-2424) as they are more constrained by highways and flood risk. The preferred sites of Ellington 3 and Ellington 4 therefore offer the best balance between deliverability, settlement integration and sustainability whilst avoiding the severe flood risk constraints affecting the reasonable alternatives.

5.131 Within Grafham, two sites emerged as reasonable alternatives. **Grafham 2 (CfS: 303)** emerged as one of the most sustainable development opportunities being located adjoining existing housing, is located wholly

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

within flood zone 1, is unconstrained by heritage assets, and is within walking distance of the community shop, village hall, recreation facilities and other local services. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that it would form a logical extension to the village and could be successfully integrated through appropriate landscaping and design. *Grafham 4 (CfS: 23-2481)* was similarly preferred because it offers a further opportunity for modest growth that respects the village form and can be incorporated into the existing settlement pattern without significant landscape, heritage or environmental harm. Together, the allocated sites provide flexibility in delivery while maintaining the scale and character of the village. Upon review of sites following the Preferred Options consultation, it was added as an allocation in the Pre-Submission Local Plan due to its opportunity for growth in the early phase of the plan and also utilise existing infrastructure capacity.

- 5.132 Great Staughton 1 (CfS: 125)** was identified as the most sustainable and deliverable site. It adjoins recent development at Jewell Close, forms a natural continuation of development along The Green, and benefits from direct pedestrian access to the village. The site lies within flood zone 1, is within walking distance of the primary school, recreation facilities, village hall and public house, and can be developed at a scale consistent with the surrounding area. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the site relates well to the settlement and could be successfully integrated through landscaping and sustainable drainage measures. Alternative sites within the village were either more detached from the existing built form, more constrained by flood risk and heritage considerations, or offered less certainty regarding integration and delivery. In particular, competing options were generally less capable of reinforcing the existing settlement pattern or supporting sustainable travel within the village. Brook Farmyard (Great Staughton 4 CfS: 373, 374 and 375) was not taken forward as the site is already allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.133 Hail Weston 1 (CfS: 39)** emerged as the strongest option because it forms a logical and proportionate extension to the village, closely related to the existing High Street development pattern. The site is unconstrained by

significant flood risk, biodiversity designations or heritage assets and provides convenient access to local facilities and active travel routes. The scale of development proposed is consistent with the character of the settlement and supports modest growth without materially altering village form. Other alternatives (CfS: 182, CfS:187, CfS: 267 and CfS: 296) were generally larger, more visually prominent, or less closely related to the existing village structure. Several options would have resulted in disproportionate expansion of the settlement, greater encroachment into the countryside, or weaker integration with the established pattern of development. As a result, the allocated site achieved the most favourable balance between accommodating growth and protecting village character.

- 5.134** Within Kimbolton, **Kimbolton 1 (CfS: 7)** was preferred as the principal residential allocation because it adjoins the existing settlement, benefits from access to schools, services and facilities, and is capable of being masterplanned as a coherent extension to the village. While there are some flooding and heritage considerations, the evidence concluded that these could be successfully mitigated through layout design, open space provision and landscaping. The site therefore offers an appropriate location for residential growth consistent with the settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy.
- 5.135 Kimbolton 10 (CfS: 365)** was allocated to support employment growth. The site extends the existing Bicton Industrial Estate and offers a logical expansion of an established employment area. It provides opportunities to strengthen the local economy, improve employment self-containment and reduce reliance on longer-distance commuting. The site is not significantly constrained by heritage or biodiversity designations and benefits from its relationship to existing employment uses.
- 5.136** Competing Kimbolton sites (CfS: 31, CfS: 354, CfS: 361, CfS: 364, CfS: 23-24319) generally performed less favourably due to a combination of flood risk, landscape sensitivity, heritage impacts, detachment from the built form, or weaker relationships with existing infrastructure. Several alternatives would have resulted in less sustainable patterns of development

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

or presented greater challenges to achieving high quality placemaking. As a result, Kimbolton 1 and Kimbolton 10 were identified as the allocations that best support both housing and economic objectives while remaining consistent with the wider spatial strategy.

- 5.137** In Leighton Bromswold, the only promoted site, Leighton and Bromswold 1 (CfS: 318) was discounted due to its proximity to a water recycling centre and with no evidence to overcome odour constraints, was not considered a reasonable alternative. The village also has very few services located away from main sustainable transport routes, largescale development in this settlement would not support sustainable place-making.
- 5.138** In Old Weston, whilst the promoted sites offered opportunities for modest housing growth and biodiversity enhancement, the assessment of reasonable alternatives identified a combination of flood risk, landscape, heritage and sustainability concerns. The only site considered a reasonable alternative was Old Weston 1 (CfS: 24). Whilst some opportunities existed for small-scale housing delivery, the sites did not perform as favourably as preferred allocations elsewhere and therefore were not taken forward.
- 5.139** In Stow Longa, although the promoted sites offered potential for limited housing growth, the evidence demonstrated that the settlement performs relatively poorly in sustainability terms due to its limited range of services and facilities, absence of a primary school, limited employment opportunities and very restricted public transport accessibility. The only potentially suitable site was Stow Longa 2 (CfS: 319). Whilst development could have delivered modest housing numbers, it would have done little to improve accessibility or support a more sustainable pattern of growth. When assessed against reasonable alternatives across the district, the Stow Longa sites were found to perform less favourably in environmental, accessibility and settlement strategy terms and were therefore not allocated.
- 5.140** In Tilbrook, the only promoted site, Tilbrook 1 (CfS: 352) offered the potential for housing development and limited community benefits, including the possibility of supporting local retail provision. However, the site was discounted due to its potential impact on the conservation area and in the

setting of significant heritage assets, including the Grade I listed Church of All Saints, creating the potential for adverse impacts on the historic environment and village character. In addition, Tilbrook has a limited range of services and facilities, lacks a primary school, contains only limited employment opportunities and is served by infrequent public transport, resulting in a location heavily dependent on private vehicle travel. Whilst the site could potentially accommodate development in physical terms, the combination of heritage sensitivity, limited sustainability credentials and accessibility constraints meant that it did not perform as favourably as preferred allocations elsewhere in the district. Consequently, the site was not taken forward for allocation.

Conclusion

- 5.141** None of the site options in Brington and Molesworth, Leighton Bromswold, Old Weston, Stow Longa, Tilbrook have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. Whilst a number of sites offered opportunities for housing growth, employment development, renewable energy generation or community benefits, the assessment of reasonable alternatives concluded that these sites did not perform as favourably as the preferred allocations when assessed against the full range of sustainability, environmental, infrastructure and settlement strategy objectives.
- 5.142** From a health, equality and sustainable development perspective, the site options across Brington and Molesworth, Leighton Bromswold, Old Weston, Stow Longa and Tilbrook generally performed less favourably than the preferred allocations due to a combination of limited accessibility to services and employment opportunities, reliance on private vehicle travel, environmental and heritage sensitivities, infrastructure constraints and difficulties integrating development with existing settlement form. Whilst individual sites offered some benefits, including modest housing delivery, biodiversity enhancement, employment opportunities and potential community benefits, the cumulative evidence demonstrated that these benefits were outweighed by sustainability, environmental and deliverability

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

concerns. Accordingly, the sites do not represent the most appropriate or sustainable locations for growth and they have not been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan.

5.143 Sites **Ellington 4, Grafham 2, Great Staughton 1, Hail Weston 1, Kimbolton 1** and **Kimbolton 10**, have been carried forward from the Preferred Options to the Pre-Submission Plan.[1] Sites *Bythorn and Keyston 3, Catworth 1, Grafham 4* and *Ellington 3*, were not initially included at the Preferred Options stage, but later allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. They were selected for allocation because they represented the most sustainable and deliverable options within their respective settlements when assessed against the reasonable alternatives through the Sustainability Appraisal and Land Availability Assessment process. The assessments demonstrate that, while each site is subject to some constraints, these are capable of mitigation and are generally less significant than those affecting competing options.

5.144 Overall, the selected sites were preferred because they offered the strongest combination of settlement integration, accessibility, deliverability and sustainability. While each allocation is subject to some constraints, these were generally capable of mitigation and were less severe than those affecting alternative options. Sites discounted through the process were typically constrained by significant flood risk, heritage sensitivity, landscape impact, poor integration with settlement form, or limited prospects for creating sustainable and well-connected communities. As a result, the allocations provide a justified and robust basis for delivering the Plan's housing and employment requirements in accordance with the spatial strategy and sustainability objectives.

Central Huntingdonshire

5.145 Central Huntingdonshire consists of the Brampton, Godmanchester & Hemingford Abbots and Huntingdon wards.

Relevant Site Options

5.146 Within Brampton, the preferred allocations emerged from a range of site options that were assessed through the Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal processes. The selected sites were considered to provide the most appropriate balance between housing delivery, accessibility, settlement integration, environmental protection and deliverability when compared with competing alternatives.

5.147 **Brampton 4 (CfS: 341)** was allocated because it represents a logical and contained extension to the northern edge of the village. Although the site is greenfield land and partially affected by a Scheduled Monument, the assessments demonstrate that approximately 0.3ha of the site can accommodate residential development while the remainder can provide open space, landscape buffering, noise mitigation and protection of the monument. The site benefits from direct access to the existing road network, good accessibility to services, employment opportunities, schools and public transport within Brampton and Huntingdon, and is closely related to recently permitted residential development at Meadow View Farm. Unlike other promoted sites in Brampton, the site does not extend significantly into the Great Ouse Valley landscape and does not rely upon development in visually sensitive countryside locations. The site is also better integrated with the existing settlement. Consequently, Brampton 4 was considered one of the few sites capable of accommodating additional growth whilst maintaining settlement form and limiting impact on the landscape and mitigating identified heritage constraints.

5.148 **Brampton 12 (CfS: 242)** was selected for allocation because it performs an important strategic green infrastructure role associated with Hinchbrook Country Park. The assessments identified that extensive flood risk affects a substantial proportion of the site, making large-scale residential development inappropriate. However, the site performs strongly in terms of accessibility, proximity to the Country Park, opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement of the green infrastructure network. The site also offers potential for parking facilities and recreational infrastructure

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

to support the Country Park, reducing pressure on existing access routes and supporting wider sustainability objectives. Compared with other sites around the village that would result in significant encroachment into the countryside, loss of settlement character or adverse impacts on the Great Ouse Valley, Brampton 12 provides substantial strategic benefits through green infrastructure delivery while avoiding inappropriate built development within areas of flood risk.

- 5.149** The collective of sites Brampton 7-10 (CfS: 222, 224, 225 and 226) were initially assessed separately but consultation responses from the site promoter confirmed they should be viewed as a collective and submitted documents to overcome fundamental constraints but sustainability concerns regarding landscape impact, amenity due to nearby waste site and traffic impacts remain making it a less sustainable location for employment growth compared to other alternatives in the district.
- 5.150** Within Godmanchester, the preferred allocations were selected because they best support the settlement's role as a Service Centre, offering strong access to services, employment, public transport and community infrastructure while balancing landscape, environmental and infrastructure considerations.
- 5.151** **Godmanchester 1 (CfS: 275)** was a clear preference because it is wholly previously developed land within an existing urban area and already benefits from allocation history. The site is highly accessible to services, employment opportunities, public transport and active travel routes. Its redevelopment provides an opportunity to regenerate underused brownfield land and improve the appearance of a prominent gateway location between Godmanchester and Huntingdon. While flood risk affects part of the site, the assessments demonstrate that development can be focused within the lower-risk areas, with flood mitigation and open space incorporated into the scheme. Compared with greenfield alternatives, the site delivers significant sustainability benefits, avoids the loss of agricultural land and represents efficient use of an established urban site.

- 5.152** In the Preferred Options draft Local Plan, sites **Godmanchester 3, 5, 7, 9 and 10 (CfS: 87, CfS: 139, CfS: 285, CfS: 371 and CfS: 372)** have been combined to form a larger draft site allocation. This is for a combined capacity of 520 homes, 0.8ha extension to the Godmanchester Lawn cemetery, green infrastructure for open space, biodiversity net gain and flood mitigation and also a new roundabout on the A1198. This is to promote a comprehensive scheme to maximise its ability to integrate into the existing town and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to provision of a new junction with the A1198. This also allows for a strategic response to mitigating the flood risk arising from Stoneyhill Brook. Individually, these sites perform less sustainably but as part of a broader opportunity for comprehensively planned growth to the south-east of the town they provide a significant sustainability benefit. Although development in this location requires careful consideration of landscape impacts and infrastructure provision, the site offers the scale necessary to support a new neighbourhood that can deliver housing, infrastructure, open space and community facilities in an integrated manner. The assessments found that while individual sites in this area may perform less well if brought forward in isolation, a comprehensive development strategy provides a more sustainable solution than fragmented expansion around the town. The site performs better than smaller isolated parcels because it allows coordinated delivery of infrastructure and avoids piecemeal forms of growth. After the Preferred Options consultation, *Godmanchester 13 (CfS: 23-24180)* was added to this collective to enable further integration opportunities. This increased the capacity for the whole site from 520 to 550 homes in the pre-submission Local Plan.

- 5.153** **Godmanchester 17 (CfS: 23-24295)** was allocated because it offers redevelopment potential on previously disturbed land associated with major highway infrastructure works. Updates following consultation feedback after the initial appraisal confirmed the site was previously developed making it a more sustainable location to direct employment growth towards. It could also benefit from its location adjacent to strategic transport routes and forms part of a wider growth area capable of supporting planned expansion. Compared with other greenfield alternatives, the site's previously altered

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

character reduces the relative environmental impact of development. Its allocation also supports the creation of a coherent growth strategy alongside adjoining allocations and infrastructure improvements.

- 5.154** The alternative Godmanchester sites present greater challenges and most were not considered to be reasonable alternatives. Godmanchester 4 (CfS: 207) has some sustainability benefits being a large scale development capable of providing various uses, however, would be a very substantial expansion making integration challenging. Also, it does not make efficient use of land as currently proposed and it faces substantial challenges in providing the relief road required for access. The selected allocations therefore provide the strongest combination of brownfield regeneration, sustainable urban expansion and coordinated infrastructure delivery.
- 5.155 Hemingford Abbots 3 (CfS: 247)** was allocated because it represented a realistic opportunity to accommodate growth while maintaining consistency with the settlement hierarchy and broader spatial strategy. This site offers the opportunity for creation of a substantial new community, where the developers' aspiration is to create two linked villages situated within the lower elements of the landform designed to generate a village-style living experience while in a wholly new community. This would contribute towards the rural nature of the surrounding area. The site is also assessed as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site benefits from its strategic location adjacent to the A1198 and A1307 while being sufficiently large to accommodate development alongside substantial green infrastructure and environmental mitigation. The site provides greater deliverability, better opportunities for comprehensive masterplanning and fewer fundamental constraints. Although landscape and settlement character considerations require careful management, these impacts were considered capable of mitigation through design, landscaping and the incorporation of green infrastructure.
- 5.156** Within Huntingdon, **Huntingdon 1 (CfS: 347)** was allocated because it offers the redevelopment of a previously developed urban site within the main built-up area of Huntingdon. The site's location provides excellent access to employment, schools, healthcare, retail facilities, public transport and active travel routes. Redevelopment also supports regeneration objectives and efficient use of land within the largest and most sustainable settlement in the district. Compared with alternative sites on the edge of Huntingdon, the Amber Centre avoids significant encroachment into open countryside, minimises landscape impacts and makes better use of existing infrastructure. It is also considerably more accessible than peripheral greenfield options and contributes to regeneration. It is sequentially preferable to Huntingdon 5 (CfS: 23-24316) which is at a higher risk of flooding. Consequently, the site represents one of the most sustainable residential opportunities within Huntingdon.
- 5.157** Huntingdon 3 (CfS: 236) is an existing site allocation in the Local Plan to 2036 and has a planning application on the site. The Local Plan to 2046 identifies it as an existing commitment carrying it forward into the new plan.
- 5.158 Huntingdon 4 (CfS: 23-24288)** was allocated because it represents a major brownfield redevelopment opportunity within the built-up area of Huntingdon, one of the district's most sustainable settlement. The allocation supports the replacement and modernisation of critical healthcare infrastructure while also enabling associated residential development, key worker accommodation, care-related uses, educational facilities and healthcare research functions. The site is exceptionally well located in relation to existing services, employment opportunities, schools, public transport routes and active travel networks, allowing future development to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and reduce the need to travel.
- 5.159** The selection of Huntingdon 1 and Huntingdon 4 reflects the Local Plan's strategy of prioritising previously developed sites within the urban area of Huntingdon wherever suitable opportunities exist. Both allocations are located within the existing settlement, benefit from excellent access to services and infrastructure, and contribute towards regeneration objectives.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.160 Within Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy, the preferred allocations were selected because they provide opportunities for modest growth that can be integrated with the existing villages while avoiding the more significant constraints affecting competing sites.

5.161 Offord Cluny 7 (CfS: 156) was preferred because it forms a logical extension to the existing built form and can be integrated with the settlement through existing roads and infrastructure. The site offers a relatively contained location with opportunities for landscape mitigation and community integration. While environmental and village character considerations require careful management, the assessments found these impacts to be more manageable than those associated with other alternatives.

5.162 Offord D'Arcy 2 (CfS: 174) was allocated because it relates well to the existing settlement pattern and offers a sustainable location for modest housing growth. The site has good accessibility to village facilities, presents fewer constraints than several alternative sites and can reinforce the existing settlement structure without creating isolated or poorly connected development parcels.

5.163 By contrast, several competing sites in the Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy were more constrained by landscape sensitivity, heritage impacts, flood risk considerations or weaker relationships with the existing village form. Some alternatives would have resulted in more prominent encroachment into open countryside or would have weakened the distinction between developed and rural areas. The selected allocations therefore represented the most sustainable and deliverable opportunities available to accommodate village growth while protecting local character.

Conclusion

5.164 Sites **Brampton 4, Brampton 12, Godmanchester 1, Godmanchester 3, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 13, Godmanchester 17, Hemingford Abbots 3, Huntingdon 1, Huntingdon 4, Offord Cluny 7 and Offord D'Arcy 2** have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. They were selected for allocation because they represented the most sustainable and deliverable options

within their respective settlements when assessed against reasonable alternatives through the Sustainability Appraisal and Land Availability Assessment process. The assessments demonstrate that, while each site is subject to some constraints, these are capable of mitigation and are generally less significant than those affecting competing options.

5.165 Across Brampton, Godmanchester, Hemingford Abbots, Huntingdon and Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy, the allocated sites were selected because they consistently outperform reasonable alternatives when assessed against sustainability, accessibility, deliverability and environmental criteria. The chosen allocations generally provide stronger access to services, employment and public transport; better integration with existing communities; greater opportunities for regeneration or infrastructure delivery; and fewer or more manageable constraints than competing sites. As a result, they are more likely to support healthy lifestyles, improve access to opportunities and services, reduce social isolation, and deliver the wider health and wellbeing objectives of the Plan. Consequently, the allocations represent the most sustainable and appropriate development options within their respective settlements and are justified through the evidence contained within the Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Sites affected by significant flood risk, landscape harm, heritage sensitivities, poor accessibility, settlement separation concerns or uncertain deliverability were discounted.

Eastern Huntingdonshire

5.166 Eastern Huntingdonshire consists of the Fenstanton, Hemingford Grey & Houghton, Holywell-cum-Needlingworth and St Ives wards.

Relevant Site Options

5.167 Within Bluntisham, three sites emerged as reasonable alternatives and were all draft allocations in the Preferred Options Local Plan. **Bluntisham 2 (CfS: 248)** performed well in sustainability terms as it adjoins the northern edge of the village, lies immediately adjacent to St Helen's Primary School,

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

benefits from direct frontage to Colne Road and is within walking distance of village services, employment opportunities and public transport. The site can be integrated successfully into the settlement and has been promoted alongside significant green infrastructure, including a open space, school parking provision and biodiversity enhancements. Although development will result in the loss of greenfield agricultural land and requires mitigation for surface water flooding and recreational impacts on Berry Fen SSSI, the evidence concludes that these matters can be addressed through site design and masterplanning. **Bluntisham 6 (CfS: 23-24128)** was selected because it provides a more modest and proportionate extension to the village. Unlike many competing sites, it includes elements of previously developed land associated with an existing dwelling and equestrian uses. The site benefits from good access to village services, public transport and employment opportunities and can be integrated into the existing settlement form. Whilst development must carefully address impacts on the setting of Grade I listed St Mary's Church and provide landscaping to soften views from the surrounding countryside, these constraints were considered manageable.

5.168 Bluntisham 1 (CfS: 167) was initially allocated at the Preferred Option stage but later removed from the Pre-Submission Plan following public consultation, additional evidence and conclusions presented in the [Heritage Impact Assessments](#), who cite concern regarding heritage and impact on the Grade II* Bluntisham House as well as potential impact to ridge and furrow land. Concerns were also raised about the cumulative impact of development on services and infrastructure within Bluntisham.

5.169 Within **Colne, Colne 1 (CfS: 75)** emerged as the strongest development opportunity when compared against the alternative sites assessed around the village (Colne 3 CfS: 215, Colne 6 CfS: 316 and Colne 8 CfS: 23-24149). The site benefits from containing a mix of previously developed and greenfield land, including an existing dwelling and former agricultural buildings. This provides opportunities for the redevelopment of existing structures while limiting the extent of new encroachment into open countryside. The site is located within the settlement, benefits from existing

access, has no significant flood risk constraints, and can be integrated effectively with surrounding residential development through sensitive design and the retention of existing boundary landscaping. Colne 6 was significantly larger and more exposed within the landscape, creating greater concerns regarding openness, visual impacts and the setting of nearby heritage assets. Colne 7 (CfS: 22) performed well in regarding to employment diversification and leisure opportunities but there were concerns regarding its ecological and flood risk impact was not a preferred site.

5.170 **Fenstanton 1 (CfS: 46)** clearly emerged as the preferred option and the only site capable of delivering growth at a scale commensurate with the role of Fenstanton as a Service Centre. Galley Hill benefits from excellent accessibility to shops, schools, employment opportunities, recreation facilities and strategic transport connections. The site's location on the edge of one of Huntingdonshire's most sustainable service centres means future workers within the site would have access to a much wider range of facilities than would be available from many comparator sites elsewhere in the district. The site is also capable of delivering a substantial amount of housing in a coordinated manner, allowing infrastructure, active travel connections, green infrastructure and community benefits to be planned comprehensively. Although the site is affected by flood risk considerations, proximity to the A14 Air Quality Management Area and the need for significant infrastructure investment, the evidence indicates that these issues are capable of mitigation through masterplanning, transport improvements and drainage strategies that could provide betterment.

5.171 The alternative Fenstanton sites generally performed less favourably due to weaker connectivity, more limited development capacity, greater environmental constraints, or reduced certainty regarding delivery. Consequently, Galley Hill provides the strongest opportunity to accommodate growth in a sustainable location while supporting the wider settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.172 Houghton and Wyton 6 (CfS: 23-24291) was identified as the preferred allocation because it provides an opportunity for renewable energy generation in an area with technical potential, therefore providing a clear sustainability benefit in helping the district to transition to a net zero carbon future. Other sites considered were for housing or commercial development but faced greater concerns regarding their relationship with the existing settlement, their visual impact on the surrounding countryside, or their ability to integrate effectively with existing infrastructure.

5.173 In Earith, there are no proposed allocations. Whilst the promoted sites offered opportunities for modest housing growth and the reuse of previously developed land, the assessment of reasonable alternatives concluded that they did not perform as favourably as the preferred allocations when considered against the full range of sustainability, environmental, infrastructure and settlement strategy objectives. Earith 1 (CfS: 345) and Earith 2 (CfS: 23-2410) are located within a highly sensitive environmental setting, in close proximity to the Ouse Washes Ramsar, SPA and SSSI, Berry Fen SSSI and the Earith Gravel Pits County Wildlife Site, raising concerns regarding potential impacts on internationally and nationally important biodiversity assets. They are also constrained by surface water flood risk so more sequentially preferable sites were chosen for allocation.

5.174 No site options in Hemingford Grey have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. A significant number of promoted sites were assessed; however, the majority were constrained by extensive areas of fluvial flood risk, with many lying wholly or predominantly within flood zone 3. In several instances, flood risk represented a fundamental constraint that prevented residential development from being considered further. Beyond flood risk, a number of sites occupied sensitive positions within the Great Ouse Valley landscape, where development would have affected the character of the river corridor, important landscape views and the setting of heritage assets. Some sites were also associated with County Wildlife Sites, conservation areas or listed buildings, while others would have extended development into areas poorly related to the established settlement pattern. Although Hemingford Grey 1 (CfS: 29) and Hemingford

Grey 6 (CfS: 170) offered opportunities for open space, biodiversity enhancement, recreation or limited development, none demonstrated sufficient deliverability to justify allocation. Hemingford Grey 11 (CfS: 216) was promoted for leisure moorings but sustainability concerns regarding impact on ecology, the access and flood risk were very significant. Taken together, the evidence indicated that the Hemingford Grey site options did not represent the most sustainable or appropriate locations for growth when compared with preferred allocations elsewhere in Huntingdonshire.

5.175 None of the potential site options in Hilton have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan (Hilton 1 CfS: 42, Hilton 2 CfS: 42 and Hilton 4 (CfS: 235). While the promoted sites offered opportunities for additional housing growth, they generally consisted of greenfield sites on grade 2 agricultural land located on sensitive edges of the village where development would have extended into the surrounding countryside. The Sustainability Appraisal identified concerns regarding the adverse effects of development on landscape character, settlement form and the rural setting of the village. Several proposals would have represented a disproportionate scale of growth relative to the role and function of Hilton in the settlement hierarchy and would have relied on infrastructure and services located outside the village, including access to primary education. Public transport accessibility is limited, resulting in a greater reliance on private vehicle travel, while several sites also faced flood risk, heritage or tree preservation constraints. Although the sites were capable of delivering housing, the combined effects of landscape impact, agricultural land loss, limited accessibility and poor alignment with the settlement strategy meant that they did not perform as favourably as preferred allocations elsewhere and were therefore not allocated.

5.176 A number of sites were promoted within Holywell-cum-Needlingworth, ranging from modest housing schemes to larger-scale residential and mixed-use proposals. Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 1 (CfS: 185) was allocated due to its good level of sustainability to services and facilities and links to St Ives. In the Preferred Options Local Plan, the site was combined with Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 11 (CfS: 23-24309) to provide a more

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

comprehensive development and the opportunity to sequentially located development away from areas of flood risk. Following consultation feedback, the land parcel of Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 11 was removed, to address concerns in relation to traffic impacts, flood risk, coalescence with neighbouring settlements and landscape concerns. Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 10 (CfS23-24307), Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 8 (CfS: 23-2486) and Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 9 (CfS: 23-24306) also provided opportunities to deliver housing, employment opportunities, open space and community infrastructure but were not taken forward as sequentially preferable sites were chosen and the preferred allocations provided an overall better opportunity to integrate with the existing settlement.

- 5.177 Giffords Park (Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 7, CfS: 240)** was allocated, the site is located on land adjoining St Ives but is located in Holywell-cum-Needlingworth parish. The site's location adjoining a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy, makes it a highly sustainable location in terms of access to services and facilities, shops, employment, public transport and community facilities. It also presents opportunities for development that could be integrated with an existing place.
- 5.178** In St Ives itself, only St Ives 3 was considered a reasonable option. This was promoted for housing on a previously developed site but was not eventually chosen due to integration challenges and need for noise mitigation to mitigate the impact of the A1123 and nearby employment uses. There were also ongoing discussion between the landowner and users of the site so deliverability was unclear. It should be noted that there were other reasonable sites adjoining St Ives, that are functionally linked to the town, albeit they are located in neighbouring parishes (Holywell-cum-Needlingworth 7 and Wyton on the Hill 4).
- 5.179** The promoted site options in Wyton on the Hill included a mixture of large-scale strategic proposals, most notably **Wyton Airfield (Wyton on the Hill 1 CfS: 95)**, Hungary Hall (Wyton on the Hill 2 CfS: 47) and **Lodge**

Farm (Wyton on the Hill CfS: 256). The scale of these sites offered the potential to accommodate significant housing growth, employment development and supporting infrastructure, and could help to deliver the wider A141 road upgrades and supporting sustainable transport infrastructure.

- 5.180** Wyton Airfield benefits from being previously developed land and presents opportunities for comprehensive redevelopment, its delivery is dependent upon significant transport and infrastructure investment, including upgrades to the A141 and supporting sustainable transport infrastructure. Hungary Hall is a greenfield sites would have resulted in the loss of substantial areas of best and most versatile agricultural land and would have introduced development into sensitive countryside locations, potentially contributing to settlement coalescence and adverse impacts on rural character. Questions also remained regarding the ability of proposals to integrate effectively with existing communities and deliver the necessary supporting services and facilities, particularly for Hungary Hall which is located further north away from a min settlement. In comparison, Lodge Farm forms an urban extension to Huntingdon, one of the most sustainable settlements in the district. In sustainability terms, Wyton Airfield and Lodge Farm performed more positively than Hungary Hall and the combination of these sites still enabled a strategic gap between them preventing physical coalescence between strategic development.
- 5.181** **Wyton on the Hill 5 (CfS: 198)** also emerged as a preferred option over Wyton on the Hill 4 (CfS: 263) as it enables a more comprehensive development and integration of green infrastructure. While in Wyton on the Hill parish, the site functionally links to St Ives making it a highly sustainable location in terms of access to services and facilities, shops, employment, public transport and community facilities. It also presents opportunities for development that could be integrated with an existing place. The allocation therefore aligns strongly with the Plan's strategy of directing growth towards the district's most sustainable settlements. The site also forms a logical extension to the town and can be planned comprehensively alongside supporting infrastructure and green infrastructure provision. Whilst

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

landscape, transport and environmental matters require careful consideration, the evidence concludes that these constraints are capable of mitigation and are outweighed by the site's significant sustainability advantages.

Conclusion

5.182 None of the site options in Earith, Hemingford Grey or Hilton have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. From a health, equality and sustainable development perspective, the site options in these settlements generally performed less favourably than the preferred allocations due to a combination of environmental sensitivity, flood risk constraints, impacts on landscape character, loss of agricultural land, infrastructure uncertainties, difficulties integrating development with existing settlement form and reliance on private vehicle travel. Whilst individual sites offered benefits including housing delivery, employment opportunities, biodiversity enhancement and community infrastructure, the cumulative evidence demonstrated that these benefits were outweighed by environmental, sustainability and deliverability concerns. Accordingly, the Council concluded that these sites did not represent the most appropriate or sustainable locations for growth and they have not been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan.

5.183 Sites **Bluntisham 2, Bluntisham 3, Colne 1, Fenstanton 1, Houghton and Wyton 1, Wyton on the Hill 1, 3 and 4** have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. They were selected because they represented the most sustainable and deliverable options within their respective settlements when assessed against the reasonable alternatives through the Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal processes. The evidence demonstrates that, whilst each site is subject to constraints, these are generally capable of mitigation through design, landscaping, infrastructure provision and masterplanning, and are less significant than those affecting competing options. The allocations also support the Plan's

spatial strategy of directing growth towards settlements that provide access to services, employment, schools, community facilities and sustainable transport opportunities.

5.184 Compared with reasonable alternatives, they provide stronger access to schools, employment opportunities, healthcare, public transport and community facilities; better opportunities for integration with existing communities; and fewer or more manageable development constraints. Sites affected by substantial landscape harm, orchard loss, heritage impacts, access difficulties, flood risk constraints or poor settlement integration were either discounted or not progressed through the allocation process.

5.185 Consequently, the preferred allocations provide the most appropriate and justified means of delivering the Local Plan's housing requirements whilst supporting sustainable patterns of growth, maintaining settlement character and contributing positively to Huntingdonshire's wider spatial strategy, sustainability objectives and health and wellbeing outcomes.

Southern Huntingdonshire

5.186 Southern Huntingdonshire consists of the Buckden, Great Paxton and St Neots wards

Relevant Site Options

5.187 In Buckden, the principal residential options were constrained by a combination of ecological, landscape, infrastructure and accessibility concerns, as such none progressed as reasonable alternatives. Buckden 1 (CfS: 294) would have extended development into a sensitive area adjoining the Great Ouse Valley green infrastructure network and the Settling Beds County Wildlife Site, whilst also creating significant pressure on the local highway network, particularly the Buckden roundabout and A1 junction arrangements. Buckden 2 (CfS: 210) raised even greater concerns because development would have affected the County Wildlife Site and wider ecological network of the Ouse Valley, with serious uncertainties regarding the ability to secure a suitable access. Buckden 3 (CfS: 93) is located in

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

close proximity to the sewage treatment works, creating concerns regarding residential amenity and the long-term suitability of housing despite later odour assessment work. Buckden 4 (CfS: 281) was fundamentally constrained. Buckden 5 (CfS: 311) was physically detached from the main built form of the village on the opposite side of the A1, making integration difficult and exposing future residents to significant traffic-related noise, air quality and visual impacts.

5.188 Buckden 6 (CfS: 363), a strategic-scale proposal for a new settlement of approximately 9,200 homes, offered substantial housing and employment potential but would have fundamentally altered the character of the Southern Wolds landscape, required major new infrastructure including a new A1 junction, affected nearby ecological and heritage assets, and lacked evidence that the necessary transport and infrastructure requirements could be delivered. Buckden 4 also failed to progress due to unresolved constraints associated with the adjacent waste management area. Collectively, these factors meant that the Buckden sites did not provide a sufficiently balanced or deliverable pattern of growth.

5.189 In Diddington, the sole promoted site comprised a large solar energy proposal at Cell Energy, Vicarage Lane. The scheme would make a positive contribution towards renewable energy generation and climate change objectives. However, the site occupies a sensitive countryside location adjoining green infrastructure corridors, close to County Wildlife Sites, ancient woodland and Grafham Water-related environmental assets so performed less sustainably than other renewable energy schemes.

5.190 The Southoe and Midloe site options generally involved development of substantial areas of open countryside and agricultural land within a predominantly rural setting. Although some proposals offered opportunities to deliver housing and associated infrastructure, concerns arose regarding their scale relative to the existing settlements, the potential erosion of rural character, impacts on the landscape setting of the villages, and the ability to create well-integrated and sustainable communities. Southoe and Midle 1 (CfS: 331) was potentially suitable for BNG but has since had a

conservation covenant for off site credits designated meaning allocation was unnecessary. Southoe and Midloe 2 (CfS: 227) was discounted due to its likely significant impacts on the character of the landscape and on Southoe as well as designated nature conservation sites and the achievability of the development is unclear.

5.191 Similarly, the Yelling site options were constrained by the relatively small scale of the village, limited access to services, employment opportunities and sustainable transport infrastructure, and the sensitivity of the surrounding countryside setting. Yelling 1 (CfS: 269) was potentially suitable and could have delivered additional housing, the benefits of modest housing growth were not considered sufficient to outweigh concerns relating to sustainability, accessibility and settlement pattern, particularly when compared with more sustainable and better-connected alternatives elsewhere in the district.

5.192 **Abbotsley 5 (CfS: 278)** emerged as the preferred employment allocation within Abbotsley. In comparison with the employment options at Abbotsley 1 (CfS: 21), Abbotsley 2 (CfS: 208) and Abbotsley 3 (CfS: 253), the site provides a focused employment opportunity closely related to St Neots and the strategic road network. Although landscape mitigation, careful treatment of nearby heritage assets and management of impacts from the existing and proposed A428 are required, the site avoids the very large-scale infrastructure requirements, uncertainty associated with East West Rail, and challenges of creating entirely new residential communities that affected the alternatives. The Sustainability Appraisal identified strong employment benefits and reasonable accessibility to St Neots while limiting the scale of growth in open countryside when compared with the major residential alternatives.

5.193 In Great Gransden, **Great Gransden 3 (CfS: 202)** performed strongly when compared with other reasonable alternatives. Unlike Great Gransden 2 (CfS: 249), whose successful integration was dependent on adjacent redevelopment coming forward, and Great Gransden 1 (CfS: 257) which had greater landscape impact and conflicted with the ecological ambitions

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

of the Neighbourhood Plan, Great Gransden 3 benefits from a close relationship with the existing settlement could be integrated as part of an extension to the Sand Road Industrial established employment area. This provides sustainability benefits by supporting job creation in villages.

- 5.194** For Great Paxton, two allocations were selected because they perform complementary roles. **Great Paxton 1 (CfS: 14)** was preferred over the alternative residential sites because it constitutes a logical backland development opportunity that relates well to the existing settlement pattern without projecting development significantly further into the countryside. It benefits from excellent access to the village shop, primary school, recreation facilities and nearby employment opportunities. Although noise mitigation is required due to the East Coast Main Line, the site was considered capable of integrating successfully into the existing community and would diversify housing delivery through self-build and custom-build provision. By contrast, Great Paxton 2 is larger, closer to heritage assets and the railway, while Great Paxton 3 was considered a less efficient use of land.
- 5.195** **Great Paxton 4 (CfS: 302)** was selected as the preferred employment allocation because of its direct relationship with Harley Industrial Park and its ability to reinforce an established employment location. The site offers the opportunity to expand local employment provision while avoiding substantial impacts on residential amenity. Although there are landscape and accessibility constraints, the site performed better for employment purposes than other alternatives due to its adjacency to existing industrial uses and its capacity to support economic growth in a location already associated with employment activity.
- 5.196** In Little Paxton, both **Little Paxton 1 (CfS: 78)** and **Little Paxton 2 (CfS: 203)** were considered the strongest options available within the settlement. Together they provide opportunities for growth that are closely related to the existing urban form and benefit from excellent access to the facilities, services, employment opportunities and public transport available in Little Paxton and nearby St Neots. The Sustainability Appraisal found that these sites offered a stronger balance between housing delivery and accessibility

than alternative opportunities elsewhere in the Southern Huntingdonshire villages. While development would result in some loss of greenfield land, the sites are well located to support active travel and reduce dependence on private vehicles.

- 5.197** Within St Neots, **St Neots 6 (CfS: 317)** and **St Neots 8 (CfS: 16)** were preferred because they make efficient use of locations adjoining the existing built-up area and support the town's role as the principal focus for growth in Southern Huntingdonshire. Compared with several other St Neots options, these sites benefit from strong access to schools, employment areas, public transport, shops, healthcare and active travel routes. They can be integrated with existing and planned neighbourhoods and provide opportunities to support infrastructure delivery at a scale appropriate to a market town. Other options were generally more constrained by flood risk, open space considerations, environmental issues, heritage sensitivities, or weaker integration with the existing settlement pattern. St Neots 8 also forms a logical next phase to the ongoing development at Loves Farm.
- 5.198** **Waresley-cum-Tetworth 1 (CfS: 23-24239)** was the only site potentially suitable. It has sustainability benefits of providing self and custom build housing and could be integrated into the existing place and community and could provide opportunities for enhancement of woodland within the site.

Conclusion

- 5.199** None of the site options in Buckden, Diddington, Southoe and Midloe, and Yelling have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. Whilst a number of sites offered opportunities for housing growth, employment development, renewable energy generation or community benefits, the assessment of reasonable alternatives concluded that these sites did not perform as favourably as the preferred allocations when assessed against the full range of sustainability, environmental, infrastructure and settlement strategy objectives.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.200** From a health, equality and sustainable development perspective, many of the sites across these settlements performed relatively poorly due to their dependence on private vehicle travel, limited access to key services and facilities, infrastructure constraints, and potential impacts on environmental quality, landscape character and biodiversity. Taken together, the evidence indicated that the sites did not provide as strong or balanced a contribution to the environmental, social, economic and health objectives of the Local Plan as the preferred allocations. Accordingly, the site options in Buckden, Diddington, Southoe and Midloe, and Yelling were discounted from further consideration and have not been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan.
- 5.201** Sites **Abbotsley 5, Great Gransden 3, Great Paxton 1, Great Paxton 4, Little Paxton 1, Little Paxton 2, St Neots 6, St Neots 8** and **Waresley-cum-Tetworth 1** have been allocated in the Pre-Submission Plan. They were selected for allocation because they represented the most sustainable and deliverable options within their respective settlements when assessed against the reasonable alternatives through the Sustainability Appraisal and Land Availability Assessment process. The assessments demonstrate that, while each site is subject to some constraints, these are capable of mitigation and are generally less significant than those affecting competing options.
- 5.202** Since the Preferred Options stage, there have been no substantive changes to the role of these sites within the spatial strategy, and the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal remain valid. Overall, the allocated sites were preferred because they achieved the strongest balance between delivering housing and employment needs, maintaining accessibility to services and facilities, supporting sustainable travel patterns, and avoiding many of the more significant environmental, landscape, heritage and infrastructure constraints affecting alternative sites.
- 5.203** From a health and inequalities perspective, the preferred allocations are more likely to support healthy and inclusive communities because they provide good access to employment, education, community facilities, public

transport and active travel networks. These characteristics can help reduce barriers to opportunity, encourage healthier lifestyles and improve access to essential services for a wide range of residents, including older people, younger people and households without access to a private car. Consequently, the allocations make a positive contribution to the Plan's spatial strategy, sustainability objectives and wider wellbeing outcomes and were therefore selected for allocation.

Rationale for Discounting Certain Reasonable Alternatives

- 5.204** The Local Plan considered a large number of reasonable alternative sites across Huntingdonshire. While many offered opportunities for housing, employment or community benefits, some were discounted because the evidence demonstrated that they performed less favourably than the preferred allocations when assessed against sustainability, environmental, infrastructure, deliverability and settlement strategy objectives. The process was informed by the Land Availability Assessment (LAA), Sustainability Appraisal (SA), technical studies and consultation responses.
- 5.205** A common reason for rejecting sites was **significant flood risk**. For example, **Old Weston Manor Farm** was discounted because substantial areas of the site fall within Flood Zones 3a and 3b, severely limiting development potential. Similarly, **Ellington 1** was discounted at an early stage because it lies wholly within Flood Zone 3a, while **Ellington 2** was affected by extensive flood risk and was unable to provide a well-integrated pattern of development.
- 5.206** Some alternatives were discounted because of **heritage impacts**. In **Tilbrook**, land at the junction of High Street and Church Lane was not taken forward due to its location within the conservation area and the setting of the Grade I listed Church of All Saints. In **Abbots Ripton, Home Farm North (Abbots Ripton 2)** was rejected because development would have caused significant harm to the conservation area and nearby listed buildings.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Likewise, **Alwalton 1** was removed following further heritage assessment evidence which identified unacceptable impacts on the conservation area, listed buildings and the rural approach to the village.

5.207 Other sites performed poorly because of **landscape sensitivity and settlement integration concerns**. For example, **Old Hurst 1** was considered highly exposed in the landscape and difficult to integrate with the existing village. **Molesworth Land opposite Jolly Hills Farm** was discounted because it was detached from the settlement, occupied an exposed location within the conservation area and would have extended development into open countryside. In **Warboys**, several large urban extension proposals were rejected because they would have had substantial impacts on the rural character of the village and would not integrate successfully with the existing community.

5.208 A number of sites were discounted because of **poor sustainability credentials and limited accessibility**. Sites promoted in settlements such as **Stow Longa, Pidley-cum-Fenton, Winwick** and **Yelling** were capable of delivering housing but were located in villages with limited services, employment opportunities and public transport. The evidence concluded that development in these locations would result in high levels of car dependency and would not support the Plan's objective of directing growth to the most sustainable locations.

5.209 Several alternatives also faced **deliverability and infrastructure constraints**. **Land West of Brookside, Molesworth** and **Land West of Sheep Street, Leighton Bromswold** were discounted because they fell within water recycling centre consultation zones and insufficient evidence was provided to demonstrate that odour impacts could be satisfactorily mitigated. In **Buckden**, the strategic-scale proposal for approximately 9,200 homes (**Buckden 6**) was not progressed because it would have required major infrastructure investment, including a new A1 junction, and there was insufficient certainty regarding delivery and infrastructure provision.

5.210 Consultation responses also resulted in changes to some proposed allocations. **Bluntisham 1** was removed following concerns about impacts on Bluntisham House, ridge-and-furrow land and cumulative pressure on local infrastructure. Similarly, **Ramsey 3** was removed after objections relating to the loss of community land, while **Somersham 6** was withdrawn due to concerns regarding infrastructure capacity, transport impacts, landscape harm and the overall scale of development.

5.211 Overall, the discounted alternatives often offered some benefits, such as housing delivery, employment opportunities or renewable energy generation. However, when assessed against the full evidence base, these benefits were outweighed by significant flood risk, environmental impacts, heritage harm, poor accessibility, infrastructure limitations, landscape sensitivity or deliverability concerns. Consequently, the Council concluded that other sites represented more sustainable and appropriate options for allocation within the Local Plan.

How evidence shaped the Strategy

5.212 A defining characteristic of the Local Plan process was the manner in which successive pieces of evidence influenced the evolution of alternatives and ultimately shaped the preferred strategy. This section summarises how the evidence base and technical testing have shaped the Strategy.

Local Housing Needs Assessment

5.213 The Housing Needs Assessment established the scale of housing required across the district and demonstrated the need for continued housing delivery throughout the plan period. Evidence relating to affordability pressures reinforced the need to consider options above the minimum standard method requirement.

5.214 This evidence informed consideration of the 5% and 10% uplift scenarios and ultimately supported selection of an uplift in excess of 5% to give some flexibility.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Economic and Employment Needs Assessment

- 5.215** Economic evidence identified demand for approximately 922,000 square metres of employment floorspace and around 15,400 additional jobs by 2046. The assessment highlighted opportunities associated with innovation-led industries, advanced manufacturing, logistics, life sciences and research-based employment sectors.
- 5.216** This evidence demonstrated that low-growth employment scenarios would be insufficient to support forecast business needs and informed the selection of a moderate-to-high growth strategy.

Sustainability of Settlements Assessment

- 5.217** The Sustainability of Settlements Assessment provided a consistent framework for understanding the relative accessibility and service availability of settlements across Huntingdonshire. The findings demonstrated that the market towns and larger settlements generally offered the greatest access to employment, education, healthcare, retail and public transport.
- 5.218** This evidence contributed directly to the rejection of heavily dispersed growth alternatives and informed the settlement hierarchy underpinning the preferred strategy.

Climate Change Evidence

- 5.219** Climate evidence played an increasingly important role as the strategy evolved. As part of a suite of climate change evidence, Document D: Assessment of spatial strategy options assessed several initial spatial strategy options and their carbon impact, recommending the most effective spatial strategy from a climate change perspective for the Local Plan. It identified that the public transport corridor focussed option would in climate terms likely be the least carbon-intensive if the quantity and type of development were held constant across all scenarios. It is important to note that if the spatial strategy with the lowest carbon intensity unlocks a higher quantity of development (particularly industrial / warehousing / logistics), it

would not necessarily be the lowest emitting scenario, and could in fact become one of the higher emitting scenarios. Therefore, it is essential to consider the impacts holistically also taking into wider sustainability objectives and the outcomes of other technical evidence documents.

- 5.220** These findings strongly influenced movement away from dispersed growth models towards more focused patterns of development around existing market towns and public transport options.

Infrastructure, Water and Transport studies

- 5.221** The **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** (SFRA) shaped the development of the site options chosen for testing in the Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment by providing assessment of flood risk and which sites are sequentially preferable. Also, the **Water Cycle Study** identified areas where there are current and potentially future issues to help inform site selection and phasing of sites in the housing trajectory and also inform approaches to Integrated Water Management and policy development. Also, the strategic flood risk assessments of potential sites lead to the elimination of many sites, with the strategy undertaking a sequential approach to flood risk by identifying sites at least risk from all sources of flooding and favouring allocation of those sites where it was sustainable to do so.

- 5.222** The **Infrastructure Delivery Study Stage 1** assessed each of these growth strategy options and provided an overview of the infrastructure requirements, challenges and constraints following engagement with infrastructure providers. The Stage 1 assessment concludes that it is evident from the outputs of the engagement with infrastructure providers that all of the potential strategy growth options would result in the need for significant infrastructure, to mitigate the impacts of growth, although at present, infrastructure costs are estimates and not 'fixed'.

- 5.223** Key conclusions found that strategies which involve development to the north of the district (Strategy 1 and somewhat Strategy 2) will have significant cross boundary impacts with Peterborough City Council including

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

in relation to wastewater. Also, the Highways Authority identified that a focus on dispersed growth (Strategy 3 and to some extent Strategy 4) should be avoided as it makes the provision of public transport and active travel infrastructure much more challenging. These conclusions provide an indication that Strategy 2 and potentially Strategy 4 could be most favourable in infrastructure terms. This is however also dependent on the outcomes of the Strategic Transport Study.

5.224 The **Strategic Transport Study Phase 1 Technical Note** concludes that analysis indicates that Strategy 2 performs most favourably in transport terms. The analysis identifies there is potential to develop a refined 'hybrid' strategy, potentially a hybrid of strategies 2 and 3, combining the strongest-performing elements of multiple strategies to achieve a better balance of housing and employment, maximise internal trip-making, and reduce reliance on external commuting journeys.

5.225 Strategies 1 and 4, which reflect higher growth scenarios, show the largest increases in overall trip volumes, driven by the concentration of growth at strategic sites. While both strategies benefit from more comprehensive mitigation packages—including bus enhancements, junction improvements, and Park & Ride connections—the location and scale of development continue to generate substantial travel demand, particularly by car. Strategies 2 and 3, by contrast, represent more moderate growth options and generally deliver better mode share outcomes. The distribution of development across a wider range of locations, including sites closer to existing settlements, supports a greater share of sustainable travel—especially where mitigation measures have improved bus access and connectivity. That said, the lighter mitigation applied in these scenarios results in smaller absolute gains compared to Strategies 1 and 4. Strategy 2 performs slightly better than Strategy 3, with slightly lower car dependency and stronger gains in public transport use. The Technical Note identified that the introduction of mitigation measures across all four strategies results in modest but consistent improvements in travel outcomes. These include small reductions in car mode share and incremental gains in public transport

and Park & Ride usage. The scale and impact of these changes are shaped both by the level of development proposed and the extent of the mitigation package applied in each strategy.

5.226 The **Strategic Transport Study Phase 2 Technical Note** developed the work undertaken from Phase 1 by developing the composition of the hybrid strategy by combining the strongest performing elements of Strategy 2 with complementary elements from other strategies that align best with strategic objectives. It also refined a tailored mitigation package of transport interventions to improve the transport network which will accommodate the quantum of development identified within the hybrid strategy, through refinement of individual measures proposed at Phase 1 and the introduction of more strategic-level interventions. Phase 2 then tested the transport impacts of the hybrid strategy (with and without mitigation) were assessed using the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority Model (CaPCAM), focusing on network performance, and demand patterns. It concludes that the proposed Local Plan Hybrid Strategy in the Preferred Options Plan and associated mitigation package unlock the required quantum of growth for Huntingdonshire while reducing impact on the highway network and improving the share of journeys taken by means more sustainable than the private car.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

5.227 The **Habitat Regulations Assessment Scoping Report** undertook a high level assessment of these four growth strategy options to determine adverse effects on internationally protected nature sites and provided preliminary recommendations to avoid and minimise adverse effects at European sites. The outputs and recommendations from this process are intended to help inform the preferred options. The high-level assessment concluded that, whilst adverse effects upon European sites are anticipated under each of the four strategy options, Strategies 1 and 2 are the least likely to result in adverse effects from impact pathways associated with air quality and

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

urbanisation effects. No best performing option could be identified for impact pathways associated with water quality and quantity, and recreational pressure, at this stage.

- 5.228** A HRA was undertaken on the Preferred Options Local Plan and then an Appropriate Assessment was undertaken for the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The outcomes of both of these stages have informed policy and site development. More detail on how the HRA has influenced the Local Plan can be found in 'How HRA has influenced the Local Plan'.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.229** The Sustainability Appraisal acted as the principal mechanism for comparing alternatives and understanding their likely effects. Throughout the plan-making process, appraisal findings repeatedly demonstrated that:
- Urban-focused development achieved stronger sustainability outcomes
 - Mixed-use development promoted a mix of uses that can support a healthy community with social, economic and green infrastructure
 - Co-location of homes and jobs improved accessibility and reduced the need to travel promoting greater reduction in carbon emissions
 - Public transport-accessible locations consistently performed well
 - Dispersed rural and highway-led growth performed less favourably against climate and transport objectives but had potential to support social and economic objectives for rural communities
- 5.230** The cumulative effect of these findings was the gradual emergence of a hybrid, infrastructure led strategy focused on sustainable settlements, strategic growth locations and integrated housing and employment development. The appraisal concludes that the preferred strategy of approximately 32,200 homes and 15,400 additional jobs, delivered through a strategy directing growth towards the most sustainable settlements balanced with new communities and some dispersed growth to support rural communities and supported by sustainable employment growth, represents the most balanced and sustainable option. It performs best when

assessed against the economic, social and environmental objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal and provides a robust justification for the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046.

Conclusion

- 5.231** Taken together, the evidence demonstrates a clear and logical evolution of the Local Plan strategy. The process began with a broad exploration of alternative futures for Huntingdonshire. Through consultation, evidence gathering and Sustainability Appraisal, weaker-performing alternatives were progressively discounted and stronger-performing elements were combined.
- 5.232** Across all the technical evidence documents, a strategy focused on sustainable locations served by public transport employment and infrastructure was viewed as being the most favourable. This is because this strategy focuses development in locations that are already sustainable (towns and larger settlements and new communities in here and the balance of them and some dispersed growth to support rural communities) reducing the carbon impact of new development, maximising existing infrastructure, accessibility to transport routes and can facilitate expansions towards infrastructure and sustainable travel options in a more sustainable way. It places some development in villages but this is not the focus. In comparison,
- 5.233** The technical evidence identified potential benefits to all other strategy options lending to the potential for a hybrid strategy with the core being based on a strategy focused on sustainable locations served by public transport, employment and infrastructure with elements of the remaining strategies incorporated. For example, placing slightly more emphasis on some dispersed growth to assist in supporting rural areas and sustainable growth of other settlements across the district in line with NPPF paragraph 83. Solely focusing on the most sustainable locations could result in some social and economic disparity. Placing development along public transport routes that are located within sustainable settlements reinforces this.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.234 Therefore, it is clearly demonstrated that the final strategy did not emerge from a single preferred option but rather from the integration of the most successful components of several alternatives. This explains why the Regulation 19 Plan ultimately adopts a hybrid approach: concentrating most growth in sustainable settlements, delivering strategic growth locations and new communities, supporting approximately 32,200 homes and 15,400 jobs, and aligning development with infrastructure investment, climate objectives and long-term economic growth.

D1: Public participation on the draft plan and the SA report

5.235 The Council is specifically required to consult on the SA process with Historic England, Natural England the Environment Agency.

5.236 Task D1 was completed with public consultation on the Preferred Options Local Plan to 2046 Sustainability Appraisal Report which took place between 5 November and 17 December 2025. The consultation was run through the council's [consultation portal](#), alongside consultation on the first completed raft Local Plan known as the Preferred Options Local Plan.

5.237 A wide range of stakeholders and consultees were also notified about the consultation. As well as the three 'SA Bodies' identified above the Council notified a wide range of 'statutory consultees' - those bodies that the Council is required to consult as part of the preparation of the Local Plan including those public bodies that the Council has a 'Duty to Cooperate' with. Notification was also sent to a large number of land owners and their planning agents, other planning and related professionals, voluntary and interest groups and members of the public that have commented previously on planning policy consultations or otherwise requested to be kept informed.

Statutory consultation undertaken

5.238 The Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken as an iterative process throughout preparation of the Local Plan Update. Rather than acting as a standalone exercise, it has informed decisions on growth strategy options, site selection, policy formulation and mitigation measures.

5.239 Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal occurred at several key stages:

- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2023)
- Land Availability Assessment Methodology and Settlement Hierarchy Methodology (2023)
- Issues Engagement Stage (2023)
- Further Issues and Options Stage (2024)

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- Land Availability Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal consultation (2024)
- Additional Sites Land Availability Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal consultation (2025)
- Preferred Options Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal consultation (2025)
- Preparation of the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Plan (2026)

5.240 Across these stages, comments focused on:

- Climate change and net zero
- Biodiversity and nature recovery
- Flooding and water management
- Heritage and the historic environment
- Transport and infrastructure
- Housing growth and distribution
- Settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy
- Green and blue infrastructure
- Community health and wellbeing
- Deliverability and infrastructure capacity

5.241 The Council repeatedly reviewed and amended policies, evidence studies and Sustainability Appraisal methodologies in response to representations. A summary of the comments received throughout the Local Plan process and how the Council addressed these is available to view in the [Statement of Consultation](#). Those relating to the SA are also provided in the next section.

5.242 To reflect the principle of SA being an iterative process updates and changes to outputs from Stage A (Scoping Report) and B (Preferred Options SA Report) tasks have come about through the work on Stage D and E tasks. These updates and modifications are as follows:

Summary of comments on Sustainability Appraisal and how they were addressed

5.243 This section summarises the principal Sustainability Appraisal consultation comments received during preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 and explains how those comments were considered and addressed. It covers the key stages of plan preparation from the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2023), through the Issues Engagement (2023), Further Issues and Options consultations (including LAA and SA) (2024), the Preferred Options Local Plan (2025), and preparation of the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan.

5.244 Summaries of comments received to all consultations and how we have responded to these can be found in the [Statement of Consultation](#).

5.245 This section just draws out the key comments regarding the SA and is structured around the main themes of the Local Plan and is intended to assist the Examination in Public by demonstrating how consultation responses informed plan-making, site selection, policy formulation and the Sustainability Appraisal process. The evidence demonstrates an iterative approach to plan preparation, where consultation findings helped shape both the evolving Local Plan and the supporting Sustainability Appraisal.

5.246 The Sustainability Appraisal was carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and was used throughout plan preparation to test alternative options, assess the likely social, economic and environmental impacts of growth, and identify mitigation measures. Consultation responses consistently influenced revisions to the Sustainability Appraisal framework, evidence base and policy approach. Key themes emerging from consultation

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

included climate change, biodiversity and nature recovery, water resources and flood risk, housing growth, transport and infrastructure, health and wellbeing, and protection of the historic environment.

Climate Change and Net Zero

- 5.247** Climate change was a significant theme raised throughout the Local Plan process. At the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping stage, respondents sought greater emphasis on climate mitigation and adaptation, improved baseline information on carbon emissions, and stronger assessment of climate impacts within the Sustainability Appraisal framework. Consultees supported the Council's use of the term "climate emergency" and requested a more explicit focus on carbon reduction, renewable energy, resilience and green infrastructure. The Sustainability Appraisal framework was subsequently amended to improve decision-aiding questions associated with climate change and environmental resilience. A suite of climate change evidence was prepared to support plan options for carbon emissions, climate friendly design policies and for renewable energy.
- 5.248** During the Issues and Options stages, climate change emerged as a priority for residents and stakeholders. Strong support was expressed for renewable energy generation, low-carbon development, electric vehicle infrastructure, higher energy and water efficiency standards and reducing dependence on private vehicles. Many respondents argued that the Sustainability Appraisal should place greater weight on climate considerations when evaluating growth options and site allocations.
- 5.249** At Further issues and Options stage, consultation responses sought stronger policy measures relating to net zero delivery, renewable energy, embodied carbon, operational energy efficiency and water efficiency. Some respondents considered proposed measures insufficiently ambitious, while others cautioned against requirements that could threaten viability. The Sustainability Appraisal examined these competing considerations and informed refinements to climate-related policies. In response, the Preferred Options Local Plan provided policies addressing operational and embodied carbon, renewable energy, water efficiency requirements and carbon

reduction measures. These climate change actions were tested through viability assessment before being incorporated into the Preferred Options Local Plan.

Nature Recovery, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

- 5.250** Protection and enhancement of biodiversity attracted substantial consultation interest throughout plan preparation. Early Sustainability Appraisal consultation responses emphasised the importance of ecological networks, habitat connectivity and landscape-scale conservation. Consultees sought stronger treatment of biodiversity issues within the Sustainability Appraisal framework and requested that ecological objectives be integrated into site assessment methodologies. We responded by refining the Sustainability Appraisal framework and introducing additional ecological considerations into decision-making criteria.
- 5.251** Responses during the Issues and Options consultations consistently highlighted the importance of protecting wildlife habitats, enhancing green spaces and supporting nature recovery. Residents strongly supported safeguarding the Great Ouse Valley, the Great Fen and other strategic environmental assets. There was widespread support for Biodiversity Net Gain and green infrastructure policies, while concerns were raised about cumulative ecological impacts from strategic development sites.
- 5.252** At Further Issues and Options, respondents questioned whether strategic growth proposals could be delivered without significant biodiversity impacts. Concerns focused on protected habitats, ecological networks, recreational pressure on designated sites and cumulative environmental effects. The Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment were used alongside ecological evidence to evaluate these impacts. For Preferred Options, we set out Green and Blue Infrastructure policies, undertook ecological assessment work and Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas were identified aligning with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Network and Nature Recovery Network. Following

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

consultation, we incorporated mitigation requirements into proposed allocations and policy wording was amended to better support nature recovery and ecological connectivity.

Water Resources, Flood Risk and Climate Resilience

- 5.253** Flood risk, water management and infrastructure capacity generated some of the most extensive consultation responses throughout plan preparation. The Sustainability Appraisal process repeatedly identified the need to consider flooding, water quality, wastewater treatment capacity and long-term resilience to climate change. Consultees questioned whether proposed growth levels could be accommodated without adverse impacts on river systems, floodplains and water infrastructure.
- 5.254** At Issues and Options stages, stakeholders sought stronger recognition of flood risk, sustainable drainage and water resource constraints. This theme became increasingly important during the Further Issues and Options, Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal and Preferred Options consultations, where concerns were raised about wastewater treatment capacity, Water Recycling Centre performance, cumulative impacts on catchments and the adequacy of evidence supporting growth proposals.
- 5.255** In response, the Council undertook successive updates to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Water Cycle Studies and Integrated Water Management evidence. Site allocations were reassessed using a sequential approach to minimise exposure to flood risk. Sustainability Appraisal findings were updated as evidence evolved and mitigation measures were embedded into allocation requirements. The Council strengthened policies relating to wastewater management, surface water drainage, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), water efficiency and climate adaptation as well as site specific criteria for allocation policies. We worked extensively with Anglian Water and the Environment Agency on the development of these policies.

Housing Growth, Spatial Strategy and Sustainable Development

- 5.256** Consultation responses consistently focused on the scale, distribution and sustainability of development. Many respondents questioned the level of housing growth proposed, while others argued that further housing was necessary to address affordability and support economic growth. The Sustainability Appraisal played a central role in testing alternative growth strategies and evaluating the relative sustainability of development options.
- 5.257** The Scoping and Issues consultations highlighted the need for a revised settlement hierarchy, greater alignment between growth and infrastructure capacity and careful consideration of environmental constraints. Significant work was undertaken to update the Sustainability of Settlements methodology and Land Availability Assessment methodology in response to consultation comments. These revisions improved transparency and strengthened the evidence base underpinning future decisions regarding site selection and settlement hierarchy and eventual spatial distribution of development.
- 5.258** The Sustainability Appraisal assessed multiple growth strategies and considered their implications for accessibility, infrastructure, environmental protection, social, economic and climate objectives. Through this process, a growth strategy focused sustainable locations served by public transport, employment and infrastructure with freestanding strategic developments and limited dispersed growth to provide sustainability benefits across the district was developed. This preferred approach, reflected a concentration of development in the most sustainable locations while recognising infrastructure constraints, flood risk considerations and environmental sensitivities. Consultation responses helped refine the strategy by highlighting delivery risks, cumulative impacts and the need for infrastructure-led growth.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

- 5.259** Transport and infrastructure issues featured prominently in Sustainability Appraisal consultation responses. Stakeholders repeatedly raised concerns regarding highway capacity, congestion on the A14 and A141 corridors, public transport provision, active travel opportunities and infrastructure delivery. Many respondents argued that the Sustainability Appraisal underestimated cumulative transport impacts and that further assessment was required. The Sustainability Appraisal consistently tested whether proposed development would support sustainable travel patterns, reduce reliance on private vehicles and improve connectivity between communities and services. These considerations influenced the final form of transport, infrastructure and place-making policies within the Local Plan.
- 5.260** During plan preparation, the Council commissioned a Strategic Transport Study, Infrastructure Delivery Study and Water Cycle Study. These documents were developed in consultation with statutory bodies and infrastructure partners and used alongside the Sustainability Appraisal to assess alternative growth options and site allocations. Consultation comments contributed to policy refinements supporting active travel, sustainable transport and strategic infrastructure provision. Infrastructure delivery requirements were linked to strategic allocations, and additional policy mechanisms were incorporated to support transport improvements, healthcare provision, education infrastructure and utility upgrades.

Health, Wellbeing and Community Sustainability

- 5.261** The Sustainability Appraisal consultation process demonstrated strong support for policies promoting healthy and sustainable communities. Residents emphasised access to green spaces, recreational opportunities, healthcare facilities, community infrastructure and active lifestyles. Consultation responses also highlighted concerns regarding the capacity of existing services and the need to align growth with health infrastructure provision.

- 5.262** The Council responded by strengthening policies relating to health and wellbeing, open space, community facilities and active travel. Health Impact Assessment requirements were refined and expanded to also apply to commercial developments. Green and blue infrastructure was recognised not only for environmental benefits but also for its contribution to physical and mental wellbeing. Infrastructure delivery policies highlight social and community facilities that development could help to deliver. Site allocation requirements, particularly for mixed-use schemes, were updated where appropriate to provide community infrastructure, health facilities and open space alongside new development.

Historic Environment and Heritage

- 5.263** The Sustainability Appraisal process revealed significant concern regarding the impact of growth on heritage assets and historic landscapes. Consultees sought stronger treatment of heritage issues within the Sustainability Appraisal and questioned whether potential impacts were always fully reflected within site assessments. Concerns focused on listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological assets and local distinctiveness.
- 5.264** In response, the Council commissioned Heritage Impact Assessments, reviewed site allocations and strengthened policy requirements concerning heritage protection. Sustainability Appraisal methodologies were refined to better capture heritage impacts and additional evidence was prepared to support decision-making. Heritage considerations were integrated into allocations where sensitive assets could be affected, helping to ensure development proposals could be accommodated without causing unacceptable harm to the district's historic environment.

Comments from Statutory Consultees

- 5.265** The Council is specifically required to consult on the SA process with Historic England, Natural England the Environment Agency. The following provides a summary of how each organisation has shaped the SA and Local Plan. Further details on how each body has engaged throughout the Local Plan can be found in the [Duty to Cooperate Compliance Statement](#).

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Natural England

- 5.266** Natural England was a key contributor throughout the Sustainability Appraisal process. Its representations focused on ecological connectivity, biodiversity protection, designated sites, water quality, air quality and nature recovery. Natural England raised concerns regarding impacts on the Ouse Washes, cumulative ecological effects, adequacy of water infrastructure assumptions and the need for stronger strategic environmental planning. It also questioned aspects of the Sustainability Appraisal scoring and site assessment process where designated nature conservation interests were involved.
- 5.267** The Council responded by commissioning additional ecological assessments to assess impact of draft allocations on sites of national significance, strengthening Habitats Regulations Assessment work supported by a recreational use baseline report and air and water quality modelling, refining Sustainability Appraisal methodologies, improving biodiversity policies and expanding Green and Blue Infrastructure provisions in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Site-specific requirements were introduced where necessary and ecological evidence was used to reconsider allocations and mitigation measures. Natural England's comments were therefore directly reflected in policy wording, evidence gathering and environmental assessment methodologies.

Historic England

- 5.268** Historic England consistently supported a plan-led approach to sustainable development but emphasised the need for stronger consideration of heritage assets. Its representations sought additional heritage evidence, Heritage Impact Assessments and clearer integration of heritage issues into the Sustainability Appraisal and Local Plan policies. Historic England also called for greater consideration of the relationship between heritage, green infrastructure and renewable energy development.

- 5.269** The Council undertook further heritage impact assessments, strengthened policy wording and incorporated site-specific mitigation where necessary into policies. References to heritage considerations were expanded within environmental, design and infrastructure policies. Historic England's comments informed revisions to both the Sustainability Appraisal and the Local Plan itself.

Environment Agency

- 5.270** The Environment Agency focused primarily on flood risk, water resources, water quality, wastewater treatment capacity, climate resilience and Water Framework Directive compliance. It repeatedly highlighted the need for robust evidence, integrated catchment management and stronger mitigation to address flood risks and environmental impacts associated with development.
- 5.271** The Council responded by updating water and flood risk evidence, refining Sustainability Appraisal assessments, strengthening wastewater and drainage policies and incorporating water management requirements within site allocations. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment updates, Water Cycle Studies and Integrated Water Management evidence directly informed the strategy for growth in the Local Plan, policy changes and site selection decisions. The Environment Agency's recommendations have been incorporated throughout the policy framework and evidence base.

Conclusion

- 5.272** This section demonstrates that the Sustainability Appraisal was not a standalone technical exercise but a central component of plan-making. Consultation responses from communities, developers, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees were used to refine Sustainability Appraisal methodologies, strengthen evidence studies, shape policy content and influence allocation decisions. Throughout preparation of the Local Plan Update, the Council repeatedly reviewed evidence, commissioned

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

additional technical work and amended proposals in response to consultation findings. These are evidenced in the [Statement of Consultation and Duty to Cooperate Compliance Statement](#).

- 5.273** In particular, comments from Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency led to significant changes relating to biodiversity, nature recovery, water management, flood risk, heritage protection and environmental mitigation. Additional assessments, revised Sustainability Appraisal methodologies, strengthened policy requirements and updated allocation criteria demonstrate that consultation responses were fully integrated into plan preparation. The audit trail provided by the consultation process shows a clear relationship between comments received, Sustainability Appraisal conclusions and resulting changes. This demonstrates that the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Update has been prepared through an iterative, evidence-led process and supports the view that the Plan is justified, positively prepared, effective and consistent with national planning policy for the purposes of Examination in Public.

Main changes to SA arising following consultee comments

- 5.274** The Sustainability Appraisal for the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 evolved significantly in response to consultation feedback received throughout the Scoping (2023), Further Issues and Options (2024), Preferred Options (2025), and Pre-Submission stages. Rather than remaining a fixed assessment framework, the SA was continually refined to address concerns raised by statutory consultees, stakeholders, infrastructure providers, developers and local communities. The consultation process resulted in substantial changes to the appraisal methodology, supporting evidence base, site assessment procedures and the integration of sustainability considerations into plan-making.
- 5.275** One of the most important changes was the strengthening of the SA framework itself. During the Scoping consultation, respondents requested clearer sustainability objectives, more transparent scoring systems, better differentiation between assessment outcomes and stronger consideration

of ecological connectivity, climate change and health issues. In response, the Council revised assessment criteria, refined decision-aiding questions, expanded site assessment methodologies and strengthened references to habitat connectivity and biodiversity protection. This improved the transparency and robustness of the appraisal process and ensured that sustainability objectives could be applied more consistently across policies, growth options and site assessments.

- 5.276** Climate change emerged as an important theme throughout consultation. Consultees sought stronger carbon reduction ambitions, greater emphasis on renewable energy, clearer climate evidence and more rigorous assessment of both mitigation and adaptation measures. As a result, the Council updated climate-related SA objectives, prepared a dedicated Climate Change evidence base and ensured that alternative growth strategies were tested against net zero and climate resilience objectives. Climate considerations were embedded throughout the appraisal process, influencing assessments of housing growth, transport patterns, energy use and resource efficiency.
- 5.277** Feedback also led to major enhancements in the treatment of biodiversity and nature recovery. Natural England and environmental organisations highlighted the need for stronger assessment of designated sites, ecological networks, habitat connectivity and cumulative impacts. The Council responded by refining SA criteria, commissioning additional ecological assessments, expanding Habitats Regulations Assessment work and incorporating Local Nature Recovery Strategy objectives. The appraisal process moved beyond a site-by-site assessment approach and increasingly considered strategic ecological impacts, helping to inform both site selection and policy development.
- 5.278** Flood risk and water management comments generated some of the most significant procedural changes. Consultees questioned whether sufficient evidence existed regarding wastewater treatment capacity, river catchments, flood risk and water resources. In response, we commissioned Strategic Flood Risk Assessments, Water Cycle Studies and Integrated Water

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Management evidence. The SA was revised to reflect this new evidence and site assessments increasingly applied a flood-risk-led and sequential approach.

- 5.279** Consultation feedback also strengthened heritage assessment within the SA. Historic England requested greater visibility of heritage issues, improved assessment criteria and additional evidence. Consequently, Heritage Impact Assessments, site-specific heritage reviews and revised appraisal criteria were incorporated into the process. Heritage considerations became a more prominent factor in evaluating growth options, site allocations and mitigation measures.
- 5.280** Finally, comments concerning housing growth, settlement hierarchy, infrastructure and transport led to more comprehensive testing of alternative growth strategies. The Council revised the Sustainability of Settlements methodology, updated infrastructure and transport evidence, reassessed strategic growth options and strengthened links between the SA and infrastructure planning. As a result, the Sustainability Appraisal became a more evidence-led and iterative tool that directly influenced the selection of growth strategies, site allocations and mitigation requirements. Overall, consultation feedback transformed the SA from an initial assessment framework into a more robust, transparent and influential component of Local Plan preparation.

D2: Appraising significant effects of the Local Plan

- 5.281** The way that this task was completed was tailored to the type of local plan content being appraised, reflecting the differences in the appraisal in Stage B and has been broken down into the following three sections:

- Assessment of the Local Plan vision and objectives
- Assessment of strategic and development management policies
- Assessment of site allocations

Assessment of Vision and Plan Objectives

- 5.282** The Preferred Options Local Plan vision consisted of several paragraphs, one relating to each of the themes identified in Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy:

- Pride in Place
- Inclusive Economy
- Health Embedded
- Environmental Innovation
- Travel Transformed

- 5.283** The Pre-Submission Local Plan vision has been shortened and streamlined into a single sentence with the five paragraphs moved into the relevant themed objectives box as an overarching strategic aim the objectives seek to achieve: *'Our vision is for Huntingdonshire by 2046 and beyond to be a place which people have pride in, where the economy is inclusive, health is embedded in our systems and lifestyles, innovative approaches are transforming our relationships with the natural environmental and travel is transformed to promote choices and accessibility for all.'*

- 5.284** As such, the changes made are not considered to be significant as the underlying ambitions of the vision are retained but are now clearer.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.285 The following table sets the proposed Local Plan objectives in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and how these have evolved in the Regulation 19 Local Plan. It identifies where objectives have been altered, whether any have been removed or added. A brief reason for these changes is also given in the table below.

Table 4

Plan Objective at Preferred Options (Stage B)	Plan Objective at Pre-Submission (Stage D)	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary
Pride In Place				
1. All new development will be built to a high standard of sustainable design and construction to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and reduce energy use through improving energy efficiency and ensuring a 'fabric first' approach to reducing carbon emissions.	1. All new development will be built to a high standard of sustainable design and construction to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and reduce energy use through improving energy efficiency and ensuring a 'fabric first' approach to reducing carbon emissions.	No	N/A	No changes made.
2. Strategic and local infrastructure is facilitated that supports new sustainable and resilient growth and thriving communities through adequate water supply, waste water and flood management, energy infrastructure, social infrastructure such as health and education and green infrastructure to provide open space.	2. Built forms of strategic and local infrastructure are facilitated that support new sustainable and resilient growth and thriving communities through adequate water supply, waste water and flood management, energy infrastructure, transport and travel infrastructure and social infrastructure such as that for healthcare, education, and places of worship.	Yes	Yes	The Objective has been amended to clarify that it relates to built forms of infrastructure. Transport and travel infrastructure added. Places of worship added as examples of social infrastructure. Green infrastructure removed from the objective. These changes are considered to be significant.
	3. Green infrastructure is facilitated to provide open space, sport and leisure facilities and opportunities for nature to flourish.	Yes	Yes	This is a new objective so is considered to be a significant change.
	4. High quality homes are delivered offering diverse tenures to meet national and local growth aspiration and provide homes that meet needs across all of Huntingdonshire's communities.	Yes	Yes	This is a new objective so is considered to be a significant change.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Plan Objective at Preferred Options (Stage B)	Plan Objective at Pre-Submission (Stage D)	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary
3. Our communities are actively involved in supporting each other with physical and digital infrastructure available to help them achieve this.	5. Members of our communities are actively involved in supporting each other with physical and digital infrastructure available to help them achieve this.	Yes	No	Objective number has changed. The Objective amends 'our communities' to 'members of our communities'. This change is not considered to be significant.
Inclusive Economy				
4. Promote the diversification of our rural and urban local economy to be competitive, resilient and create high value, inspiring job opportunities to contribute positively to the wider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.	6. Promote the diversification of our rural and urban local economy to be competitive, resilient and create high value, inclusive, inspiring and accessible job and investment opportunities to contribute positively to the wider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.	Yes	Yes	Objective number has changed. The words 'inclusive', 'accessible' and 'investment' added to objective. These changes are considered to be significant.
5. The advantages offered by Huntingdonshire's strategic location are maximised to develop sector specialisms and supply chains that complement local growth sectors.	7. The advantages offered by Huntingdonshire's strategic location are maximised to develop investment in sector specialisms and supply chains that complement local growth sectors.	Yes	No	Objective number has changed. The word 'investment' added to objective.
6. Our high streets are vibrant, diverse places that can rapidly evolve to meet changing expectations so they attract and retain locals and visitors throughout the daytime and evenings.	8. Our high streets are vibrant, diverse places that can rapidly evolve to meet changing expectations so they attract and retain locals and visitors throughout the daytime and evenings.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
Health Embedded				
7. New development works towards creating sustainable, well-designed, distinctive places which facilitate improving health, wellbeing, and social interaction to reduce inequalities, promote inclusivity and support a sense of community.	9. New development works towards creating sustainable, well-designed, distinctive places which facilitate improving health, wellbeing, and social interaction to reduce inequalities, promote inclusivity and support a sense of community.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
8. Support is given to establish enough high quality new homes that meet their needs of all sectors of our community. They will enhance the well-being of residents through a choice of homes that are affordable to rent or buy, and different kinds of homes to meet the needs of our communities, including older people, those with care needs and younger people getting their first home.	10. Support is given to establish enough high quality new homes that meet their needs of all sectors of our community. They will enhance the well-being of residents through a choice of homes that are affordable to rent or buy, and different kinds of homes to meet the needs of our communities, including older people, those with care needs and younger people getting their first home.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Plan Objective at Preferred Options (Stage B)	Plan Objective at Pre-Submission (Stage D)	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary
9. Investment in new or improved healthcare, public open spaces, community buildings and active travel infrastructure makes healthier lifestyles achievable by all residents.	11. Investment in new or improved healthcare, public open spaces, community buildings and active travel infrastructure makes healthier lifestyles achievable by all residents.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
Environmental Innovation				
10. The natural, built and historic environment will be protected and enhanced, including biodiversity, landscape, green Infrastructure, waterways and heritage assets and their settings, by ensuring new development contributes to biodiversity and reflects local character and distinctiveness.	12. The natural, built and historic environment will be protected and enhanced, including biodiversity, landscape, green Infrastructure, waterways and heritage assets and their settings, by ensuring new development contributes to biodiversity and reflects local character and distinctiveness.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
11. An extensive network of green infrastructure, green corridors, wildlife habitats and open spaces will exist, contributing to resilient towns, villages and countryside areas with enhanced biodiversity and improved connectivity to increase their value for people and wildlife.	13. An extensive network of green infrastructure, green corridors, wildlife habitats and open spaces will exist, contributing to resilient towns, villages and countryside areas with enhanced biodiversity and improved connectivity to increase their value for people and wildlife.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
12. Renewable energy generation is embedded through all new developments, and innovative community and wider renewable energy production schemes are supported where they are complementary to agricultural practices.	14. Renewable energy generation is embedded through all new developments, and innovative community and wider renewable energy production schemes are supported where they are complementary to agricultural practices.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
Travel Transformed				
13. Provision of high quality digital infrastructure and co-locating homes, jobs, and local services will reduce the need to travel.	15. Provision of high quality digital infrastructure and co-locating homes, jobs, and local services will reduce the need to travel.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
14. Realistic alternatives to private car use will exist to encourage walking, cycling, wheeling and use of public transport.	16. Realistic alternatives to private car use will exist to encourage walking, cycling, wheeling and use of public transport.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.
	17. Enhanced infrastructure to be available to support the shift to electric and low emission vehicles to accelerate reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from transport.	Yes	Yes	This is a new objective so is considered to be a significant change.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Plan Objective at Preferred Options (Stage B)	Plan Objective at Pre-Submission (Stage D)	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary
15. Any essential highway improvement schemes will support safe, reliable journeys and be accompanied by sustainable drainage and green infrastructure which supports biodiversity.	18. Any essential highway improvement schemes will support safe, reliable journeys and be accompanied by sustainable drainage and green infrastructure which supports biodiversity.	No	N/A	No changes made but objective number has changed.

5.286 Plan objective 2 has been amended to clarify that it relates to built forms of infrastructure and now includes transport and travel infrastructure. Places of worship added as examples of social infrastructure. Green infrastructure removed from the objective and addressed in a separate new objective. These changes provide clarity on what infrastructure is being addressed and provides further detail on a range of community facilities that development can seek to deliver. It therefore performs very positively against SA1, SA12 and reinforces a very positive score against SA10.

5.287 Plan objective 3 is a new objective but has evolved from an plan objective 2. By splitting it into its own objective provides greater emphasis on the importance of green infrastructure for nature and people as well as an important balance to development. This supports positive scoring against SA objectives SA1, 2, 7, 8, 10 and 15.

5.288 Plan objective 4 is a new objective that further positively performs against SA10 which directly relates to housing. It is recognised that seeking the delivery of more housing can result in conflict with other objectives due the pressures development can place on landscape and townscape features, infrastructure and community facilities, however the other objectives balance this out. Additionally, such conflicts can be overcome with careful wording of policies dealing with such impacts.

5.289 Changes to plan objective 6 (formerly 4) sees the words 'inclusive', 'accessible' and 'investment' added to the objective. This further supports positive outcomes against SA13. It is recognised that seeking the delivery of more economic development can result in conflict with other objectives due the pressures development can place on landscape and townscape

features, infrastructure and community facilities, however the other objectives balance this out. Additionally, such conflicts can be overcome with careful wording of policies dealing with such impacts.

5.290 The addition of plan objective 17 builds upon existing aspirations to reduce carbon emissions and support growth that is climate resilient. It therefore performs very positively against SA1 objectives 1, 2 and 12 which directly relate to climate change and sustainable modes of transport.

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	++	+	+	+	+	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	+	++
SA Reg 19	++	++	++	+	+	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	+

Plan Vision and Objectives reasonable alternatives

5.291 Not setting out our Vision and Objectives is not a reasonable alternative as the NPPF (December 2024) paragraph 15 requires plans to provide a positive vision for the future of the area.

5.292 The Further Issues and Options document consulted on four options for the Vision plus offering the option for people to suggest their own alternatives.

- A. Have a Vision based strongly on the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy and the Corporate Plan to 2028

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- B. Have a Vision of a better future achieved through ambitious climate action and a just transition towards more social and economic equity
- C. Retain the current Vision with minor amendments
- D. Have a Vision describing how Huntingdonshire intends to evolve focused on the three strands of economic, social and environmental sustainability

5.293 Similarly, four options for the Objectives aligning with each suggested Vision were put forward as alternatives plus offering the option for people to suggest their own alternatives:

- A. Objectives shaped by the key 'pathways' that support the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy journeys
- B. Objectives that aim to help achieve a better future through a just transition towards ambitious climate action
- C. Minor amendments to the 25 objectives set out in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036
- D. Objectives that are focused on the three strands of economic, social and environmental sustainability

5.294 Responses to the Further Issues and Options questions on the Vision indicated strong preferences for basing it on Huntingdonshire Futures and the Corporate Plan 2023-2028. Support was also expressed for a vision focused on achieving ambitious climate action. Retaining the vision from Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 with some amendments was also supported. Overall, priorities expressed for the vision were to support sustainable growth of both homes and the local economy, promote action to respond to climate change, support and enhance the environment and green infrastructure, be realistic about transport and travel options especially in the more rural parts of the district and to support sustainable choices to give a high quality of life. Suggestions were also made for additions for the Vision and for it to be more explicit.

5.295 For the objectives the responses clearly indicated people's preferences for these to flow strongly from their preferred choice of vision. The greatest level of support was expressed for the suggested objectives that aligned with the vision based on Huntingdonshire Futures. Suggested objectives relating to climate change and modification of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036's objectives also gained support. Many of these also align with objectives that would support a vision based on Huntingdonshire Futures.

5.296 Therefore, option A was preferred as this creates a vision based on Huntingdonshire Futures and the Corporate Strategy and informed by comments received from the Further Issues and Options Consultation.

Net zero aspiration by 2050

5.297 Alongside the vision and objectives is the strategic ambition to reduce climate emissions and plan for climate resilient development.

5.298 The Preferred Options Local Plan set a net zero carbon aspiration of: *'Huntingdonshire will have net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This will follow the national Climate Change Commission's 'Balanced pathway' approach. To achieve net zero by 2050, emissions will have decreased by approximately 76% with the remaining emissions being removed through the use of carbon capture/ removal technologies.'*

5.299 This aspiration has been carried forward into the Pre-Submission Local Plan and has not been changed: *'Huntingdonshire will have net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This will follow the national Climate Change Committee's 'Balanced pathway' approach. To achieve net zero by 2050, emissions will have decreased by approximately 76% with the remaining emissions being removed through the use of carbon capture/ removal technologies.'*

5.300 No changes have been made to this aspiration from Stage B and therefore, the SA at Regulation 18 stands at Regulation 19:

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4		SA 5	SA 6			SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	+	++	+	N	++	N	N	+	+	+	N	++	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	N	N
SA Reg 19	+	++	+	N	++	N	N	+	+	+	N	++	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	N	N

should be balanced with economic and social strands of sustainability, should be available and achievable, and should also be flexible to ensure measures can adapt to changing or developing technologies. This resulted in option C being the preferred approach.

Net zero aspirations by 2050 reasonable alternatives

5.301 The Further Issues and Options document consulted on three options for decarbonisation plus offering the option for people to suggest their own alternatives. These options used the 2021 emissions as a starting point and projected them forward and are set out in Document B of the climate change evidence base:

- A. Business as usual with electric vehicle uptake reflecting recent trends - this would result in emissions decreasing by approximately 28%
- B. Maximise reductions by 2040 using current technologies - this would result in emissions decreasing by approximately 53%
- C. Follow the national Climate Change Commission's 'Balanced pathway' approach - this would result in emissions decreasing by approximately 76% by 2050 but a net zero is achieved through the use of carbon capture/ removal technologies

5.302 Not setting out our approach to climate change or planning for a reduction in carbon emissions is not a reasonable alternative as Local Plans are required by the Planning Act (2008), Planning and Energy Act (2008) and Climate Change Act 2008 as well as national policy to respond to climate change and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

5.303 Consultation throughout the Local Plan update has shown clear support for climate change action. Responses to the options showed support for reducing carbon emissions at a pace beyond current levels. People also commented that our responses to climate change and reaching net zero

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Assessment of Strategic and Development Management Policies

5.304 The Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements and established good practice to ensure that the Plan's strategic and development management policies are assessed transparently and consistently. The methodology applies a structured appraisal framework based on the SA objectives, enabling a clear comparison of policy options, reasonable alternatives, and any changes arising through successive stages of Plan preparation. Each appraisal draws on proportionate evidence, considers likely significant effects, and identifies mitigation where relevant. This section outlines the approach used, the treatment of alternatives, and the process for re-appraising policies that have evolved since Regulation 18, ensuring the assessment remains robust, up-to-date and fit for examination.

5.305 This section summarises the appraisal of the Plan's strategic and development management policies against the SA objectives. 'Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission' sets out all the proposed policies in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and whether these have progressed into the Regulation 19 Local Plan. It identifies where policies have been removed and the new policies that have been added. A brief reason for the exclusion and inclusion of policies is also given in the table below. The table also identifies where policy references have been updated for ease of comparing policies between versions of the Local Plan.

5.306 The information below provides a consolidated list of all Regulation 19 policies that require **new** or **updated** Sustainability Appraisal. These requirements arise where policies have been **introduced, significantly amended, expanded, merged, or relocated**, resulting in material changes to their sustainability performance.

5.307 In summary key changes are:

- Regulation 18 contained 54 development management and strategic policies (LP 1 - LP 54)
- Regulation 19 contains 57 policies (LP 1 - LP 57)
- Two new standalone policies were introduced so require an SA and shown in the below table
- No policies were deleted outright. Instead, some were split, expanded or relocated and merged with other policies
- 16 policies require an updated SA that materially affect their sustainability implications and are summarised in the below table
- Regulation 18 contained 54 development management and strategic policies (LP 1 - LP 54)

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Table 5

Pre-Submission policy reference	Preferred Options policy reference	Nature of change
LP 14	N/A	Supporting and Enabling Strategic Infrastructure. This is a new strategic policy so is considered to be a significant change.
LP 44	N/A	Services and Facilities Outside Designated Centres. This is a new policy so is considered to be a significant change.
LP 11	LP 21	Placemaking for larger scale developments. Policy moved to the strategy section of the Local Plan. The SA at Regulation 18 had been undertaken using the policies SA questions, it will need to be reappraised using the Strategy SA questions.
LP 16	LP 17	Approach to renewable energy schemes. Policy shortened to provide clarity for ease of implementation and links to supporting evidence documents moved to supporting text. Reference to critical utilities infrastructure added.
LP17	LP 11	Health and well-being. Threshold for criteria amended to 50 from 100 homes and includes commercial development. Additional thresholds added for 50-199 homes and for 200 or more homes
LP 18	LP41	Providing affordable homes. Policy moved to the strategy section of the Local Plan. The SA at Regulation 18 had been undertaken using the policies SA questions, it will need to be reappraised using the Strategy SA questions. Requirement for affordable housing within specialist older persons housing schemes removed. Reference to the nationally described space standards and M4(2)/M4(3) standards removed. Additional policy wording on overage clauses, exception for military housing and clustering guidance
LP 20	LP 26	Supporting carbon capture through nature. Policy moved to the strategy section of the Local Plan.
LP 28	LP 23 and LP 24	Minimising embodied and operational carbon in new buildings. Embodied and operational carbon merged into a single policy.
LP 41	LP 38	Defining our Retail Hierarchy. Local Service Villages element removed. Criteria regarding floorspace size removed from policy to supporting text. Use classes removed to provide flexibility on appropriate uses.
LP 42	LP 39	Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability. Policy expanded to include viability considerations and C1 Hotels to policy. Removal of requirement of hot food takeaways will only be supported within defined Local Centre of a market town.
LP 43	LP 40	Supporting Local Services. The loss of facilities outside designated areas is now addressed as a separate element in the policy to distinguish between the loss of facilities in areas with no defined town or local centre. Hot food takeaway policy expanded to include market towns.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Pre-Submission policy reference	Preferred Options policy reference	Nature of change
LP 46	LP 43	Ensuring accessible and adaptable homes. The policy has been simplified and amended to set out requirements for scales of development: 50 or more homes, 20-49 homes and less than 20 homes to reflect what may be more viable at these scales of development. The revised policy clearly sets out requirements for M4(3)(2)(a) and M43(2)(b) for market and affordable homes with remaining homes being built to M4(2).
LP 47	LP 44	Facilitating self and custom build homes. Removal of requirement of 5% of homes on sites of 100 or more homes to provide self and custom build homes. Inclusion of criteria for respecting local character and reference to neighbourhood plans. Marketing criteria simplified. Plot passports added to policy.
LP 48	LP 45	Supporting specialist housing. Threshold for provision of affordable housing on specialist housing increased from 10 homes to 50 homes.
LP 50	LP 47	Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing. Policy criteria amended to apply to sites on land well related to an existing settlement, rather than within. Criterion added to require sensitive development to surrounding landscape and townscape. Text added regarding gypsy and traveller provision on rural exceptions sites.
LP 53	LP 50	The policy no longer encourages a minimum of 20%BNG but now aligns with national policy and legislation on BNG and encourages in excess of 10% where possible.
LP 54	LP 51	Protecting our trees, orchards, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows. Inclusion of orchards to the policy.
LP 55	LP 52	Protection extended to outdoor sport and recreation facilities. Inclusion of outdoor sport and recreational facilities to the policy. Policy simplified regarding loss of such facilities and compensatory measures.

5.308 In the following sections, a proportionate comparative assessment of each policy at Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 and any reasonable alternatives considered is made. The previous SA provides in a summary table alongside a narrative summary beneath the scoring table to explain the sustainability implications of each option, the relative benefits identified, and the reasons for selecting or rejecting alternatives. It also records changes to policy numbering since Regulation 18, the rationale for alternative options considered, and the justification for taking forward the Local Plan policy.

5.309 Where the final version of a policy has materially changed from its Preferred Options iteration, the policy has been re-appraised to ensure the assessment reflects the current wording and effects. Where new policies have been introduced at the Pre-Submission stage, these have been assessed at an equivalent level of detail to those considered at Regulation 18.

Implications for SA Requirements

5.310 The evolution of the Local Plan between Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 introduces a series of new and substantively amended policies that require Sustainability Appraisal to ensure their environmental, social and economic

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

implications are fully understood. Two new strategic policies—covering strategic infrastructure and community facilities—introduce fresh policy directions that must be appraised to assess their alignment with sustainability objectives.

- 5.311** A further 16 policies have undergone material changes, including expanded climate-related requirements, merged carbon policies, broadened retrofitting provisions, revised biodiversity expectations and strengthened town centre strategies. These changes reflect updated evidence, statutory requirements and refined policy intent. As a result, updated SA is essential to evaluate the effects of these modifications, ensure consistency with the SA framework and demonstrate that reasonable alternatives have been considered.
- 5.312** Together, these 16 policies represent the core areas where the Regulation 19 Plan diverges from Regulation 18 in ways that may influence sustainability outcomes. The following sections provide a clear audit trail for examination, demonstrating how policy evolution has been systematically assessed through the SA process.

LP 1 How much development do we expect?

Policy numbering

- 5.313** Draft Policy LP 1 has been retained as Policy LP 1. The policy continues to set out how much development the Local Plan is planning for identifying provision for at least 32,200 new homes and 15,400 additional jobs within employment uses.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.314** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	N	N	N	N	-	+	N	+	N	N	N	++	++	+	+	++	N	++	+	N	N

- 5.315** The policy is expected to achieve the same sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version. The policy has not materially changed but has been updated. An addendum to the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment has increased the Local Plan's jobs total to 15,400 from 14,400 in the Preferred Options policy. This is a minor increase and no additional site allocations are needed to meet this number. The policy has also been amended to incorporate a stepped trajectory approach. A stepped housing trajectory is included in this plan reflecting the need to allow an adequate lead-in time for achieving planning permission for three new communities along with planning, funding and construction of infrastructure necessary to support their initial delivery. This will also allow additional time for planning, funding and construction of improvements to water recycling centres where these are a constraint to growth. The overall housing requirement for the Plan is unchanged so is not considered to be a significant change. This approach should enable more positive sustainability outcomes regarding infrastructure provision to support growth.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Policy LP 1 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.316** Not having a policy that clear sets out the growth targets for the Plan Period is not a reasonable alternative and would conflict with national policy.
- 5.317** National policy specifies that the housing number calculated by the standard method must form the baseline of any housing target set in a local plan. Alternatives considered included only seeking the minimum number that this would give rise to which is rejected for lack of flexibility and not providing sufficient resilience against non-delivery or delayed delivery of anticipated development sites. The Local Plan provides an uplift greater than 5%, this is considered to provide sufficient flexibility against non-delivery of any allocated sites where the landowners circumstances or intentions change and a reduced response to the government's aspirations to rapidly boost housebuilding.
- 5.318** National policy asks that an evidence based approach to determining employment and economic need is undertaken. A number of scenarios were tested ranging from low to high growth options. These included accounting for labour demand, labour supply, past trends, and the impact of potential adjustments on these. Rather than relying on a single approach, the preferred scenario combined elements of the aspirational labour demand scenario (high growth) and the future residence-based labour supply scenario (medium demand). This hybrid approach reflects not only the sentiment put forward in consultation responses but also the Council's economic ambitions and the scale of housing-led population growth anticipated in the district, aligning it with labour supply as a result of population growth.

LP 2 Our Strategy for Change

Policy numbering

- 5.319** Draft Policy LP 2 has been retained as Policy LP 2. The policy continues to set out the the overall strategic approach to growth and its distribution to support our towns, villages and countryside in having long term sustainable futures.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.320** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	N	N	++	+	++	+	++	+

- 5.321** The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and environmental safeguards, particularly the inclusion of protection of grade 1 agricultural land. More emphasis on defence sector made to policy.
- 5.322** The policy has been split into two policies with the sections on 'Distribution of Growth' and 'Neighbourhood Plans' forming a new separate policy. The wording of these sections have been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.
- 5.323** The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Policy LP 2 Reasonable alternatives

5.324 Several strategy options were considered and tested, these are explored in detail in 'Growth Strategy Options Testing and Strategic Reasonable Alternatives Considered'.

LP 3 Distribution of Growth

Policy numbering

5.325 Policy LP 3 is a new policy but the text was formerly within draft Policy LP 2. The policy continues to set out the the overall strategic approach to growth and its distribution to support our towns, villages and countryside in having long term sustainable futures.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.326 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	N	N	++	+	++	+	++	+	++	+	+	

5.327 By moving the sections on 'Distribution of Growth' and 'Neighbourhood Plans' from draft policy LP 2 to a standalone policy, makes the purpose and implementation of both policies clearer. The wording of these sections have been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.328 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 3 Reasonable alternatives

5.329 Several strategy options were considered and tested, these are explored in detail in 'Growth Strategy Options Testing and Strategic Reasonable Alternatives Considered'.

LP 4 Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas

Policy numbering

5.330 Policy LP 4 is a new policy but the text was formerly within draft Policy LP 12. The policy continues to set out the the overall strategic approach to growth and its distribution to support our towns, villages and countryside in having long term sustainable futures.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.331 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

	SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4	SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16		
	SA	++	++	++	+	+	+	N	++	+	+	+	++	N	N	+	N	+	+	+	N	+	+

5.332 By moving the section that designated green and blue infrastructure priority areas from draft policy LP 12 to a standalone policy, makes the purpose and implementation of both policies clearer. The wording of the designating of these areas has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.333 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Policy LP 4 Reasonable alternatives

5.334 Not setting out our approach to green and blue infrastructure was not a reasonable alternative as Local Plans are required by national policy to set out a strategic approach for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. Responses to consultations showed a clear support for enhancing them for biodiversity and expanding the green and blue infrastructure network.

5.335 The Further Issues and Options document consulted on three options for green and blue infrastructure plus offering the option for people to suggest their own alternatives:

- A. Retain the existing four Green Infrastructure Priority Areas
- B. Retain the existing Green Infrastructure Priority Areas and also designate additional areas identified within the Interim Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network
- C. Allocate sites for new green and blue infrastructure and/or additional land for existing green and blue infrastructure to expand

5.336 Comments raised that green and blue infrastructure need to be aligned with the NPPF, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network. The policy aligns with the LRNS and NRN by designating the priority areas identified in these reports and supports their conservation objectives.

LP 5 Settlement Hierarchy

Policy numbering

5.337 Draft Policy LP 5 has been retained as Policy LP 5. The policy continues to set out settlement hierarchy for the district reflecting the sustainability of different places in terms of their long-established roles, availability of services and community facilities, access to public transport and communications infrastructure, and the accessibility of local employment opportunities. The categories reflect both the sustainability of each place

and its context and whether the services and facilities available there would draw people from other places in to use them. It is based on settlements not parish boundaries.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.338 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	N	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	N	N	++	+	+	++	+	++	+	+	+	N

5.339 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been some minor layout changes and also the addition of new community proposals into the hierarchy to reflect where they will sit once they are built. Great Gransden was reclassified as a Village rather than Local Service Village and Wennington was added to the Hamlets and Countryside category. The wording of policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.340 The amendments improve clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 5 Reasonable alternatives

5.341 Not setting out our approach to a settlement hierarchy was not considered to be a reasonable alternative as it helps to direct growth towards more sustainable settlements, without one could result in unsustainable patterns of growth.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.342 The Further issues and options document considered alternative approaches which could be taken both to the settlement hierarchy as a whole in Options A to D and to specific elements of the hierarchy in Options E to I along with seeking suggestions for other approaches. The options were:

- A. Keep the existing settlement hierarchy of Spatial Planning Areas (SPA), Key Service Centres, Small Settlements and Countryside with the same list of settlements in each
- B. Keep the current categories in the existing settlement hierarchy but update the settlements included in the categories based on their current sustainability (informed by the Sustainability of Settlements outcomes)
- C. Strictly reflect the Sustainability of Settlements scoring outcomes of individual settlements and apply a categorisation based on a preferred number of groupings
- D. Remove the category of Spatial Planning Areas and group each settlement based on its individual merits
- E. Put Huntingdon and St Neots in a higher category on their own, reflecting their higher level of services (with or without their associated other SPA settlements)
- F. Have the four market towns of Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey as the highest category in the settlement hierarchy so as to direct most growth to these areas
- G. Replace the Key Service Centres and Small Settlements categories with 3 categories to reflect the significant variation in levels of services and facilities (informed by the Sustainability of Settlements outcomes)
- H. Recognise clusters of villages which benefit from shared services or facilities and group them together as one 'settlement'
- I. Move less or unsustainable small settlements into a hamlets and/ or countryside category In preparing the preferred policy option extensive consideration was given to the options for different categories that could be used going forwards and which settlements could then sit within them accordingly.

5.343 The changes made in reaching the preferred approach reflect responses received regarding the diversity of our villages and the level of services that they offer.

How will we decide where a settlement boundary is

5.344 This is not a policy but a set of principles and guidance on how to define and apply the settlement boundary approach in the Local Plan. It was appraised at the preferred Options stage for completeness.

5.345 The fundamental purpose of defining the settlement boundaries is to help answer the question 'does a specific parcel of land on the edge of a town or village relate more to the built form of that place in its use, form, character and connectivity or does it relate more to the surrounding countryside? The 'settlement boundaries' definition below should be used to apply the 'Market towns', 'Service centres', 'Local service villages', 'Villages', and 'Hamlets and the countryside' policies.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.346 The guidance retains its original purpose and has not been significantly changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	+	+	N	N	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

5.347 The guidance has not fundamentally changed and the wording has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.348 The amendments improve clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Reasonable alternatives

5.349 Not setting out our approach and providing guidance on how to define a settlement boundary was not considered to be a reasonable alternative as it helps in the application of policies in the Local Plan.

LP 6 Market Towns

Policy numbering

5.350 Draft Policy LP 6 has been retained as Policy LP 6. The policy continues to set out our approach for development proposals on sites in addition to those allocated in this plan where they are within or adjacent to the designated Market Towns.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.351 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	++	++	++	N	N	+	-	++	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	N	

5.352 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been addition of text supporting development on land directly adjoining Established Employment Areas within a market town and also regarding learning and non-residential uses. This strengthens the performance of the policy regarding SA10 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities), SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and

accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities) and SA13 (Strengthen, modernise and diversify the local economy and promote opportunities for growth of indigenous companies as well as encouraging sustainable inward investment). Apart from these, the wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.353 The Preferred Options SA suggested that the policy could be enhanced by referring to agricultural land classifications to direct land outside of market towns away from the highest quality agricultural land. This has not been added to LP 6 as if a development is located on land outside of the built-up area and not on land well-related to it, then LP 10 Hamlets and Countryside policy would apply which makes specific reference to the avoidance of using grade 1 agricultural land and minimise the use of other best and most versatile agricultural land (grade 2 to 3a).

5.354 The amendments improve clarity and provide additional employment and social benefits while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 6 Reasonable alternatives

5.355 An alternative approach we considered was to have a single policy for the settlement hierarchy and the respective levels of growth acceptable within them. This was rejected as the policy would be very long and overly complex reducing its accessibility to people trying to interpret it.

5.356 Retention of the current Key Service Centres policy and the reduced list of settlements to which it applied was considered. This was rejected due to strong preferences being expressed for separating the market towns out which meant that the remaining settlements within the spatial planning areas needed to be accommodated elsewhere in the hierarchy.

LP 7 Service Centres

Policy numbering

5.357 Draft Policy LP 7 has been retained as Policy LP 7. The policy continues to set out our approach for development proposals on sites in addition to those allocated in this plan where they are within or adjacent to the designated Service Centres.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.358 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4	SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	+	+	N	N	+	-	++	N	N	+	+	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	N

5.359 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been amendments to text regarding learning and non-residential uses. This strengthens the performance of the policy regarding SA10 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities). The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.360 The Preferred Options SA suggested that the policy could be enhanced by referring to agricultural land classifications to direct land outside of service centres away from the highest quality agricultural land. This has not been added to LP 6 as if a development is located on land outside of the built-up area and not on land well-related to it, then LP 10 Hamlets and Countryside policy would apply which makes specific reference to the avoidance of using grade 1 agricultural land and minimise the use of other best and most versatile agricultural land (grade 2 to 3a).

5.361 The amendments improve clarity and provide additional social benefits while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 7 Reasonable alternatives

5.362 An alternative approach we considered was to have a single policy for the settlement hierarchy and the respective levels of growth acceptable within them. This was rejected as the policy would be very long and overly complex reducing its accessibility to people trying to interpret it.

5.363 Retention of the current Key Service Centres policy and the reduced list of settlements to which it applied was considered. This was rejected due to strong preferences being expressed for separating the market towns out which meant that the remaining settlements within the spatial planning areas needed to be accommodated elsewhere in the hierarchy.

LP 8 Local Services Villages

Policy numbering

5.364 Draft Policy LP 8 has been retained as Policy LP 8. The policy continues to set out our approach for development proposals on sites in addition to those allocated in this plan where they are within or adjacent to the designated Local Service Village.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.365 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA	+	+	N	+	N	+	-	+	N	N	+	+	++	++	++	+	+	N	+	N	+	+

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.366 The policy has been clarified to provide distinct policy wording for residential development and commercial, business and service uses within the built up area of a Local Service Village. Criteria require proportionality to the settlement and also that development does not have a detrimental impact on the character of the immediate locality. These strengthen the performance of the policy regarding SA7 (Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local distinctiveness of settlements.) and SA10 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities). The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.367 The Preferred Options SA suggested that the policy could be enhanced by referring to agricultural land classifications to direct land outside of local service villages away from the highest quality agricultural land. This has not been added to LP 6 as if a development is located on land outside of the built-up area and not on land well-related to it, then LP 10 Hamlets and Countryside policy would apply which makes specific reference to the avoidance of using grade 1 agricultural land and minimise the use of other best and most versatile agricultural land (grade 2 to 3a).

5.368 The amendments improve clarity and provide additional social benefits while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 8 Reasonable alternatives

5.369 An alternative approach we considered was to have a single policy for the settlement hierarchy and the respective levels of growth acceptable within them. This was rejected as the policy would be very long and overly complex reducing its accessibility to people trying to interpret it.

5.370 Retention of the current Small Settlements policy and enhanced list of settlements to which it applied was considered. This was rejected due to recognition of the very variable level of sustainability between the larger, more well served settlements and those with very limited or no services to support their communities.

LP 9 Villages

Policy numbering

5.371 Draft Policy LP 9 has been retained as Policy LP 9. The policy continues to set out our approach for development proposals on sites in addition to those allocated in this plan where they are within or adjacent to the designated Village.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.372 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	+	N	+	N	+	-	+	N	N	+	+	++	++	++	+	+	N	+	N	+	+	

5.373 The policy been refined regarding wording supporting rural exceptions housing. The amendments improve clarity and provide additional social benefits while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

5.374 The Preferred Options SA suggested that the policy could be enhanced by referring to agricultural land classifications to direct land outside of villages away from the highest quality agricultural land. This has not been added to LP 6 as if a development is located on land outside of the built-up area

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

and not on land well-related to it, then LP 10 Hamlets and Countryside policy would apply which makes specific reference to the avoidance of using grade 1 agricultural land and minimise the use of other best and most versatile agricultural land (grade 2 to 3a).

Policy LP 9 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.375** An alternative approach we considered was to have a single policy for the settlement hierarchy and the respective levels of growth acceptable within them. This was rejected as the policy would be very long and overly complex reducing its accessibility to people trying to interpret it.
- 5.376** Retention of the current Small Settlements policy and enhanced list of settlements to which it applied was considered. This was rejected due to recognition of the very variable level of sustainability between the larger, more well served settlements and those with very limited or no services to support their communities.

LP 10 Hamlets and the Countryside

Policy numbering

- 5.377** Draft Policy LP 10 has been retained as Policy LP 10. The policy continues to set out our approach for development proposals on unallocated sites within hamlets and the countryside.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.378** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA	+	+	N	+	N	+	++	-	N	N	+	+	+	+	N	+	+	-	+	N	+	+

- 5.379** Horsiculture has been added to the list of agricultural and rural practices that are present across Huntingdonshire and to which the policy applies. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

- 5.380** The amendment refines the policy while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 10 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.381** An alternative approach we considered was to have a single policy for the settlement hierarchy and the respective levels of growth acceptable within them. This was rejected as the policy would be very long and overly complex reducing its accessibility to people trying to interpret it.
- 5.382** Retention of the current Small Settlements policy and enhanced list of settlements to which it applied was considered. This was rejected due to recognition of the very variable level of sustainability between the larger, more well served settlements and those with very limited or no services to support their communities.

LP 11 Placemaking for larger scale developments

Policy numbering change

- 5.383** LP 21 LP 11: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 21 Placemaking for Larger Scale Developments. Following the reorganisation of the Development Management section in the Pre-Submission Local Plan, the policy has been renumbered as Policy LP 11 Placemaking for Larger Scale Developments and moved into the strategic policies section. The policy

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

has also been strengthened to provide a more comprehensive framework for masterplanning, design coding, infrastructure delivery, community engagement and sustainable placemaking.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.384 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 21 established the overarching placemaking framework for major developments and new communities. The policy recognised that larger-scale developments require coordinated planning to ensure that housing, employment, infrastructure, open space, community facilities and movement networks are delivered in a coherent and integrated manner. The policy promoted comprehensive masterplanning and sought to avoid piecemeal development that could undermine community cohesion or infrastructure delivery.

5.385 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 11, retains these core principles but expands the policy's scope and strengthens implementation requirements. The revised policy places greater emphasis on comprehensive masterplans, design codes, parameter plans, infrastructure phasing, active travel, public engagement and the delivery of complete communities. It also more clearly embeds climate resilience, biodiversity enhancement, green infrastructure, sustainable transport and long-term stewardship within the placemaking process.

5.386 Whilst the Regulation 18 policy focused on securing coordinated development, the Regulation 19 version adopts a broader placemaking approach that more fully integrates environmental, social and economic sustainability objectives. As a result, the policy makes a stronger contribution to delivering complete, healthy and resilient communities.

5.387 The changes to Policy LP 11 and it being recategorised as a strategic policy are material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP 11 Placemaking for Larger Scale Developments is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA5, SA7, SA8, SA9, SA10, SA12 and SA15, positive effects in relation to SA1, SA2, SA3

and SA6, and negligible effects across all remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	+	+	+	N	N	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	N
SA Reg 19	+	+	+	N	N	++	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	N

5.388 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects through the delivery of well-planned, sustainable communities.

5.389 SA15 (Quality Places and Communities) receives a significant positive effect because the policy requires comprehensive masterplanning, infrastructure coordination and place-led design to create high-quality, integrated communities.

5.390 SA5 (Health and Wellbeing) receives a significant positive effect through the provision of green spaces, community facilities, recreation opportunities and active travel networks that support healthy lifestyles.

5.391 SA12 (Sustainable Transport) receives a significant positive effect as larger developments are planned around walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, reducing reliance on private vehicles.

5.392 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA10 (Equality and Reducing Inequalities)** through stronger requirements for accessibility, inclusive design, infrastructure delivery and community engagement.

5.393 The Pre-Submission policy also aligns more closely with the National Design Guide, national placemaking principles and the Local Plan's wider strategy for infrastructure-led growth. The introduction of stronger expectations

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

regarding design codes, parameter plans and stewardship arrangements improves certainty for developers, communities and decision-makers and enhances the policy's effectiveness and deliverability.

- 5.394** Importantly, the revised policy provides a stronger framework for delivering strategic allocations and new communities identified within the Local Plan. By integrating environmental, social and economic considerations into a single placemaking framework, it achieves a more balanced and sustainable pattern of development.
- 5.395** Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 11 delivers the strongest overall performance against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework and is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option.

Policy LP 11 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.396** The option of not including a dedicated placemaking policy for larger-scale developments was not considered a reasonable alternative because the Local Plan includes several strategic growth locations and new communities that require coordinated planning, infrastructure provision and place-led design. Without a dedicated policy, there would be a greater risk of piecemeal development, inadequate infrastructure coordination and poorer long-term community outcomes.
- 5.397** Alternative approaches relying solely on general design policies would not provide sufficient guidance for managing complex strategic developments. Such approaches would be less effective in securing integrated transport networks, community infrastructure, green infrastructure, climate resilience measures and long-term stewardship arrangements, and would therefore perform less favourably against SA5, SA10, SA12 and SA15.

LP 12 How will infrastructure be provided

Policy numbering change

- 5.398** Draft Policy LP 3 has been retained as Policy LP 12. The policy continues to set out how appropriate infrastructure to support new development is provided without adversely impacting quality of life through new growth.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.399** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	++	++	N	N	++	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	+	+	N

- 5.400** The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead it has been refined to refer to the Infrastructure Delivery Study. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.
- 5.401** The amendments improve clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 12 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.402** Not setting out how infrastructure will be provided was not considered a reasonable alternative as national policy states that plans should set out the contributions expected from development.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

LP 13 Securing infrastructure provision

Policy numbering change

- 5.403** Draft Policy LP 4 has been retained as Policy LP 13. The policy continues to set out how appropriate infrastructure to support new development is provided without adversely impacting quality of life through new growth.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.404** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

- 5.405** The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead it has been refined to add links to the Develop Contributions Appendix that has been prepared to set out and support the delivery of infrastructure projects alongside the Local Plan. The policy has also provided examples of community facilities may require contributions. This strengthens the performance of the policy regarding SA10 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities). The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

- 5.406** The amendments improve clarity and provide additional social benefits while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 13 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.407** Not setting out how infrastructure will be secured was not considered a reasonable alternative as this would not provide sufficient clarity regarding the requirement of developers to mitigate the impacts of their developments, what infrastructure was needed and when, and how it would be secured.

LP 14 Supporting and enabling strategic infrastructure

Policy numbering change

- 5.408** This is a new strategic policy. The proposed wording for Policy LP 14 was not included within the Regulation 18 consultation draft. Sustainability Appraisal therefore assesses the submission version of the policy against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework objectives. The assessment draws on the policy wording and supporting text within the Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046 and the decision-aiding questions set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

- 5.409** The following table shows the performance of this new policy against the SA framework using the strategic decision aiding questions:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	+	+	++	++	N	N	+	+	+	N	+	N	+	+	+

- 5.410** Policy LP 14 seeks to support and enable the delivery of strategic infrastructure, including strategic transport improvements, East West Rail, water infrastructure, utilities, active travel networks and public transport improvements. The policy also safeguards land and corridors required for strategic infrastructure and ensures that development proposals do not prejudice the delivery of planned infrastructure projects.

- 5.411** The policy delivers its strongest effects through support for strategic infrastructure needed to accommodate sustainable growth.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.412 SA3 (Water Resources and Flood Risk)** receives a significant positive effect due to support for strategic water supply, wastewater and water resilience infrastructure.
- 5.413 SA11 (Employment and Economic Opportunities) and SA13 (Economic Growth and Resilience)** receive significant positive effects because strategic infrastructure underpins investment, business growth, productivity and economic competitiveness.
- 5.414 SA12 (Sustainable Transport)** receives a significant positive effect through support for East West Rail, public transport improvements and active travel infrastructure that improve sustainable connectivity.
- 5.415** Overall, Policy LP 14 is assessed as making a strong positive contribution to the sustainability objectives relating to infrastructure delivery, economic growth, water resources and sustainable transport. Significant positive effects are identified for SA3, SA11, SA12 and SA13 due to the policy's direct support for strategic water infrastructure, economic development and sustainable connectivity. The policy supports the delivery of the Local Plan strategy by ensuring that infrastructure requirements are planned proactively and that future growth is aligned with infrastructure investment, thereby helping to deliver sustainable and resilient communities across Huntingdonshire.

Policy LP 14 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.416** No other reasonable alternatives were identified. The policy reflects the need to support and safeguard strategic infrastructure projects that are promoted through national programmes, infrastructure providers, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Local Growth Plan, and other delivery bodies. It responds to consultation feedback regarding concerns over delivery of infrastructure by seeking to ensure that development and infrastructure are planned in a coordinated way, recognising infrastructure as an enabler of sustainable growth rather than a constraint. It reflects national policy expectations that Local Plans should plan positively for infrastructure delivery and safeguard land required for

strategic schemes. An approach that did not support or safeguard strategic infrastructure would risk undermining the delivery of sustainable growth and the wider Local Plan strategy.

LP 15 Transport, Travel and Connectivity

Policy numbering change

- 5.417** Draft Policy LP 18 has been retained as Policy LP 15. The policy continues to focus on the strategic approach to transport, travel and connectivity with detailed design aspects addressed within "How will we create well designed places?"

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.418** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA	++	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	+	N	+	+	++	+	+	N	N

- 5.419** The policy has not fundamentally changed, but instead refines policy criteria to include inclusive and accessible transport and address cross boundary impacts with neighbouring authorities. This strengthens the performance of the policy regarding SA12 (Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure). The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- 5.420** The amendments improve clarity and provide additional benefits and communities and also appropriate reference to cross boundary impacts while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 15 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.421** In the Further Issues and Options document were questions on transport and connectivity. There were three options related to how transport should be approached within individual developments were:
- A. Change transport provision within new developments to focus on high quality and plentiful infrastructure for active travel and public transport rather than prioritising road users. To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on active travel and public transport infrastructure.
 - B. Continue with the current approach of encouraging active travel and public transport through some provision of infrastructure within new developments but carry on trying to limit the impact of cars and lorries from them by building roads and upgrading junctions. To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on road and junction upgrades.
- 5.422** The Further Issues and Options Paper also set out options for East West Rail:
- A. Rely on the prospect of East West Rail coming forward and plan for new growth nearby to be delivered in the late 2030s and 2040s that could connect well with this.
 - B. Wait until there is greater certainty about the timing of delivery for East West Rail before planning for growth that might benefit from being nearby even if this means the growth is delivered some years after the railway.

- 5.423** Responses showed support for ensuring that new settlements are integrated into the rights of way network and offer improvements, the need for high-quality infrastructure that supports walking, cycling, and public transport and reducing the reliance on cars and encouraging more climate friendly options. In terms of digital connectivity, some stated support for infrastructure to facilitate the latest technologies / broadband and mobile provision. Other responses also wished to see linkages with other plans across Cambridgeshire such as the Local transport Plan and ways of addressing transport in more rural areas of the district. The policy addresses these aspects.

LP 16 Approach to renewable energy schemes

Policy numbering change

- 5.424** LP 17 LP 16: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 17 Approach to Renewable Energy Schemes. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 16 Approach to Renewable Energy Schemes in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy remains a key component of the Local Plan's climate change strategy and has been refined to provide a more robust framework for supporting renewable energy generation whilst balancing environmental, landscape and community considerations.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.425** At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 17 established the Council's approach to renewable energy development and recognised the importance of renewable and low-carbon energy infrastructure in responding to climate emergency and becoming more climate resilient. The policy supported appropriately located renewable energy schemes and sought to balance the need for energy generation against potential impacts on landscape character, biodiversity, heritage assets, agricultural land and residential amenity. The policy reflected national policy support for renewable energy

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

and recognised that increasing renewable energy generation would be essential if Huntingdonshire was to contribute towards net zero carbon objectives.

- 5.426** The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 16, retains the overall direction of travel but strengthens the strategic emphasis on renewable energy delivery. The revised policy is more clearly integrated within the Local Plan's wider climate change framework, including policies relating to operational carbon, carbon sequestration and climate adaptation. It acknowledges the increasing urgency of climate emergency and provides a clearer framework for assessing renewable energy proposals.
- 5.427** Whilst the Regulation 18 version primarily focused on facilitating renewable energy development, the Regulation 19 policy places greater emphasis on the role renewable energy must play in achieving climate objectives, improving resilience and supporting sustainable economic growth. The policy therefore contributes to a broader range of sustainability objectives than the earlier version.
- 5.428** The change to Policy LP16 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP 16 Approach to Renewable Energy Schemes is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA1, SA2, SA6, SA11, SA15 and SA16 positive effects in relation to SA5, SA7 and SA8, and negligible effects across all remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	++	N	++	N N	- -	+	++	+	+	N	N N	N	N	N	++	++
SA Reg 19	++	N	++	N N	- -	+	++	+	+	N	N N	++	++	N	N	++

- 5.429** Both policy versions generate significant positive effects through support for renewable energy generation and the transition to a low-carbon economy.
- 5.430** **SA1 (Climate Change Mitigation)** receives a significant positive effect because the policy supports renewable energy infrastructure that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels.
- 5.431** **SA2 (Climate Adaptation and Resilience)** receives a significant positive effect by supporting a more secure and resilient energy system.
- 5.432** **SA11 (Employment and Economic Wellbeing)** receives a significant positive effect through investment, employment and growth in renewable energy and low-carbon industries.
- 5.433** The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA13** and **SA15** by embedding renewable energy more clearly within the wider climate and sustainable development strategy.
- 5.434** Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 16 is the preferred option.
- 5.435** Both versions perform strongly against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and both support delivery of renewable energy infrastructure that is essential to achieving Huntingdonshire's climate ambitions. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a clearer and more effective framework for balancing renewable energy deployment with environmental protection and sustainable development objectives.
- 5.436** The Regulation 19 policy more clearly recognises the urgency of delivering renewable energy infrastructure and better reflects the role renewable energy must play in achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It also integrates renewable energy more effectively with the Local Plan's wider climate change strategy, including carbon reduction, climate adaptation and natural carbon sequestration policies.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- 5.437** Importantly, the policy aligns closely with national planning policy support for renewable energy schemes and is supported by the Local Plan evidence base relating to climate change and net zero delivery. Consequently, the Regulation 19 version is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option.

Policy LP 16 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.438** The Further Issues and options document consulted on two options for renewable energy plus offering the option for people to suggest their own alternatives. The options were:
- A. Business as usual with renewable and low carbon energy meeting 39% of expected demand by 2046 and 41% by 2050
 - B. Ambitious approach meeting national targets with renewable and low carbon energy meeting 79% of expected demand by 2046 and 80% by 2050
 - C. Consider an alternative option
- 5.439** The option of not including a policy supporting renewable energy development was not considered a reasonable alternative because renewable energy generation is fundamental to achieving national and local carbon reduction targets. Without a dedicated policy, there would be significantly less certainty regarding how renewable energy proposals should be assessed and supported.,
- 5.440** Alternative approaches that relied entirely upon national policy would not provide the locally specific framework necessary to balance renewable energy development with Huntingdonshire's environmental, landscape and community objectives. Similarly, a more restrictive approach would risk undermining delivery of renewable energy infrastructure required to support net zero ambitions.

LP 17 Health and well-being

Policy numbering change

- 5.441** LP 11 LP 17: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 11 Health and Well-Being. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 17 Health and Well-Being in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy has also been amended to strengthen the consideration of health impacts within the planning process, most notably through changes to the threshold for Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) and a stronger healthy placemaking framework.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.442** At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 11 established a framework for ensuring that development proposals supported health and wellbeing outcomes. The policy recognised the role of planning in influencing physical activity, mental wellbeing, access to services, healthy lifestyles and social cohesion. The policy promoted healthy place-making principles and sought to ensure that health considerations formed part of the planning process.
- 5.443** The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 17, retains these principles but introduces a more robust and proactive approach. The most significant change is the revision to the Health Impact Assessment threshold, broadening the scope of development proposals required to consider and demonstrate health impacts. The Pre-Submission policy requires Health Impact Assessments for developments exceeding specified thresholds, strengthening the evidence base used to assess the health implications of major development proposals. The policy also places greater emphasis on active travel, access to services, healthy communities, social interaction and reducing health inequalities.
- 5.444** Whilst the Regulation 18 policy promoted healthy development, the Regulation 19 version moves further towards a preventative health model by requiring health outcomes to be considered more systematically as part

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

of development proposals. The policy therefore makes a stronger contribution towards achieving long-term health improvements and reducing health inequalities.

- 5.445** The change to Policy LP 17 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP 17 Health and Well-Being is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA5, SA10 and SA15, positive effects in relation to SA9 and SA12 and negligible effects in all remaining areas. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	-	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	+	+	N	N	N
SA Reg 19	N	N	-	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	+	++	N	N	N

- 5.446** Both policy versions generate significant positive effects in relation to health, inclusion and placemaking.
- 5.447 SA5 (Health and Wellbeing)** receives a significant positive effect because improving health outcomes is the primary purpose of the policy. The policy promotes healthy environments, active travel, green space and access to community facilities.
- 5.448** The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA10 (Equality and Reducing Inequalities)** by requiring a wider range of developments to assess health impacts and consider the needs of different groups.
- 5.449** The Regulation 19 version also generates a significant positive effect against **SA15 (Quality Places and Communities)** through stronger healthy placemaking requirements and wider application of Health Impact Assessments.

- 5.450** Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 17 is the preferred option.

- 5.451** Both versions support healthy communities and achieve major positive effects against SA5. However, the key policy refinement is the strengthened role of Health Impact Assessments, which broadens the policy's ability to influence decision-making and secure healthier development outcomes. By requiring health impacts to be assessed for a wider range of development proposals, the Regulation 19 policy ensures that health considerations are incorporated earlier and more consistently throughout the planning process.

- 5.452** The Pre-Submission version also better aligns with national planning policy expectations regarding healthy, inclusive and safe communities and reflects growing recognition of the links between planning, public health and long-term wellbeing. The stronger evidence-based approach improves effectiveness, consistency and deliverability and provides greater certainty for applicants, communities and decision-makers.

- 5.453** Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 17 delivers stronger overall sustainability outcomes whilst maintaining the benefits of the Regulation 18 approach. It is therefore considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option.

Policy LP 17 Reasonable Alternatives

- 5.454** The option of not including a specific health and wellbeing policy was not considered a reasonable alternative because health has become a core component of sustainable development and national planning policy requires planning authorities to support healthy, inclusive and safe communities. Without a dedicated policy, opportunities to improve health outcomes through development would be significantly reduced.
- 5.455** Alternative approaches relying solely on design policies, transport policies or open space policies would not provide the same comprehensive framework for assessing the health implications of development. In particular, they would not secure the systematic consideration of health impacts achieved through the Health Impact Assessment process.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

LP 18 Providing affordable homes

Policy numbering change

5.456 LP 41 LP 18: The proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 41 Providing Affordable Homes. Following restructuring of the housing chapter and wider Local Plan, the policy has been renumbered as Policy LP 18 Providing Affordable Homes in the Pre-Submission Local Plan and moved into the strategy section of the Local Plan. The policy remains a key mechanism for meeting identified affordable housing needs across Huntingdonshire but has been updated to reflect the latest evidence on housing affordability, viability and housing need.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.457 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 41 sought to secure the delivery of affordable housing as part of new residential development and to address the significant affordability pressures experienced across Huntingdonshire. The policy responded to evidence contained within the Local Housing Needs Assessment and recognised the need to provide a range of affordable housing tenures, including affordable rented housing and affordable routes to home ownership. The policy established affordable housing requirements for qualifying residential developments and sought to maximise delivery through the planning system whilst maintaining viability.

5.458 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 18, retains the fundamental objective of increasing affordable housing delivery but introduces a more robust and evidence-led framework informed by updated housing needs and viability evidence. The policy is more clearly integrated with the wider housing strategy, including policies on housing mix, accessible and adaptable homes, specialist housing and rural exceptions housing. This ensures that affordable housing is viewed as part of a coordinated response to housing need rather than a standalone requirement.

5.459 While the Regulation 18 policy focused primarily on securing affordable housing numbers, the Regulation 19 version places greater emphasis on delivering affordable housing that contributes to inclusive communities, housing choice and long-term social sustainability.

5.460 The changes to Policy LP 18 and it being recategorised as a strategic policy are material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP18: Providing Affordable Homes is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA9 and SA10, positive effects in relation to SA5, SA11 and SA15, and negligible effects across all remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	+	N	N	N	N
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	++	++	N	N	N	N

5.461 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects by increasing affordable housing supply and supporting social inclusion.

5.462 **SA9 (Meeting Housing Needs)** receives a significant positive effect because affordable housing delivery is the principal purpose of the policy.

5.463 **SA10 (Reducing Inequalities and Promoting Social Inclusion)** receives a significant positive effect through improved access to housing for lower-income households and key workers.

5.464 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA15 (Quality Places and Communities)** by linking affordable housing more closely with wider objectives relating to inclusive and sustainable communities.

5.465 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 18 is the preferred option.

5.466 Both versions deliver substantial sustainability benefits and make a strong contribution towards addressing housing affordability across Huntingdonshire. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a more comprehensive and evidence-based framework for delivery. It is informed by updated housing need and viability evidence and is more closely integrated with the broader housing strategy contained within the Local Plan.

5.467 The revised policy is also more closely aligned with national planning policy requirements relating to meeting identified affordable housing needs and delivering mixed and balanced communities. The policy provides greater certainty for applicants, decision-makers and communities whilst retaining flexibility to respond to viability evidence where justified. This improves effectiveness, consistency and deliverability.

5.468 Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 18 is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option.

Policy LP 18 Reasonable alternatives

5.469 The option of not including an affordable housing policy was not considered a reasonable alternative because significant affordable housing needs have been identified across Huntingdonshire. Without a dedicated policy, the Local Plan would have limited ability to secure affordable housing through development proposals and would be less effective at addressing housing affordability challenges.

5.470 Alternatives considered through the Viability Assessment included whether a lower percentage of affordable housing should be sought in schemes which have exceptional infrastructure costs and whether a variable affordable housing rate should be set across different parts of the district. The former was rejected due to the site specific variability likely to arise and hence there still be a likely need for a site specific viability assessment.

The latter was rejected as need for affordable homes is high across the district because parts with lower house values often have lower average incomes.

5.471 Alternative approaches involving lower affordable housing requirements or reliance solely on market-led housing delivery would be less likely to meet identified needs and would therefore perform less favourably against SA9 and SA10. Equally, an inflexible approach that failed to account for viability considerations could undermine deliverability and reduce overall housing supply.

Heritage Strategy

5.472 This is not a policy but a sets a strategic approach to the conservation and enhancement of heritage across the district. It was appraised at the preferred Options stage for completeness.

5.473 Draft Policy LP 53 has been retained as Policy LP 56. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that development proposals protect and conserve the district's heritage assets and where possible enhance them and their settings.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.474 The strategy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	+	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	++
SA Reg 19	+	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	++

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.475 The strategy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been refinement by adding reference to Heritage at Risk and refinement of wording. The updated strategy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and heritage safeguards.

5.476 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. As the strategy has moved into the strategy section of the Local Plan, it has been re-appraised using the strategy set of decision aiding questions in the framework.

Reasonable alternatives

5.477 The Further Issues and Options document set out options for the Vision and Objectives based on the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy which recognises the importance of conserving and enhancing the historic environment which underpin the Vision and Objectives in this Preferred Options Local Plan.

5.478 There is an existing statutory protection for designated heritage assets. Not setting out our approach to heritage and the historic environment is not a reasonable alternative as Local Plans are required in the NPPF to conserve and enhance them and comply with the legislative framework around the historic environment.

LP 19 Green and Blue Infrastructure

Policy numbering change

5.479 Draft Policy LP 12 has been retained as Policy LP 19. The policy continues to set out the role that provision and enhancement of strategic green and blue infrastructure has in achieving the strategy and balancing built development.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.480 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA	++	++	++	+	+	+	N	++	++	+	+	++	N	N	+	N	+	+	+	N	+	+

5.481 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and environmental safeguards, particularly the inclusion of the updated Developer Contributions Appendix.

5.482 The policy has been split into two policies with the sections on designation green and blue infrastructure priority areas forming a new separate policy. This is to streamline the policy and make LP 12 more clearly about how developments should plan and integrate and green and blue infrastructure. The wording of these sections have been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.483 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 19 Reasonable alternatives

5.484 Not setting out our approach to green and blue infrastructure is not a reasonable alternative as Local Plans are required by national policy to set out a strategic approach for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- 5.494** The Regulation 19 version performs more strongly through greater integration with biodiversity, green infrastructure and nature recovery objectives.
- 5.495** Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 20 is the preferred option.
- 5.496** Both versions perform strongly against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework and both make an important contribution towards Huntingdonshire's net zero ambitions. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a more comprehensive and integrated approach that better reflects emerging national policy, local evidence and climate science.
- 5.497** The Regulation 19 policy strengthens protection for existing carbon stores, particularly peat soils and woodland habitats, whilst also supporting new opportunities for carbon sequestration through habitat creation and ecosystem restoration. It recognises that carbon capture cannot be addressed in isolation and therefore integrates climate mitigation with biodiversity recovery, landscape enhancement, flood management and green infrastructure objectives.
- 5.498** The revised policy also aligns more closely with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Huntingdonshire Nature Recovery Network and wider environmental objectives of the Local Plan. This broader ecosystem approach generates more enduring sustainability benefits and improves performance against SA6 and SA7 while maintaining the major positive climate outcomes already identified for SA1 and SA2.
- 5.499** Importantly, the policy is supported by robust local evidence on carbon sequestration and natural carbon stores and provides a clear framework for balancing development pressures with long-term climate objectives. This improves policy effectiveness, justification and deliverability.
- 5.500** Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 20 is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable approach.

Policy LP 20 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.501** The option of not including a policy supporting carbon capture through nature was not considered a reasonable alternative because natural carbon sequestration forms a critical component of the district's pathway towards net zero emissions and Huntingdonshire has various carbon stores, particularly in the Fens where there is extensive peat soil. Evidence demonstrates that woodland, peatland and other habitats provide significant carbon storage benefits and contribute to wider environmental resilience.
- 5.502** Alternative approaches focusing solely on technological carbon reduction measures or operational energy efficiency would not address the important role played by natural ecosystems in carbon capture, biodiversity recovery and flood management. Similarly, reliance solely on national policy would not provide the locally specific framework needed to protect Huntingdonshire's significant natural carbon assets, particularly its extensive peatland resource.

LP 21 Managing Flood Risk

Policy numbering change

- 5.503** Draft Policy LP 13 has been renumbered as Policy LP 21. The policy continues to set out our approach to managing flood risk from all sources, ensuring that the users and residents of new development are not put at any unnecessary risk of flooding or new development does not contribute to flooding risk elsewhere.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.504** The policy retains its original purpose but strengthens delivery through updated evidence, engagement with Anglian Water and the Environment Agency. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	++	N	++	+	N	+	+	+		N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	N

5.505 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and environmental safeguards. Policy wording has been refined to provide additional clarity and detail particularly regarding Site Specific Flood Risk Assessments, land in defended areas and managing of flood water. The policy already performed very strongly against SA3 Manage water resources and reduce flood risk (++).

5.506 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 21 Reasonable alternatives

5.507 An alternative approach considered related to the requirements to be imposed on larger and higher risk sites, however this was rejected due to the complexity flood risk within the district. While the SFRA provides the primary evidence of flood risk within the district it does not take fully into account the local information on flood risk that can be captured through site specific assessment and consultation.

LP 22 Managing Waste Water

Policy numbering change

5.508 Draft Policy LP 14 has been renumbered as Policy LP 22. The policy continues to ensure development is supported by adequate wastewater infrastructure, protects water quality and does not exceed environmental capacity.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.509 The policy retains its original purpose but strengthens delivery through updated evidence, engagement with Anglian Water and the Stage 2 Water Cycle Study. Key changes include stronger capacity requirements, revised references to network constraints, agreed infrastructure upgrades before occupation, a dedicated non mains drainage section and expanded supporting evidence.

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	+	++	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

5.510 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and environmental safeguards. The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

5.511 SA3 Manage water resources and reduce flood risk (++): strongest positive effect through wastewater capacity planning, infrastructure upgrades and water quality protection.

Policy LP 22 Reasonable alternatives

5.512 Excluding a wastewater management policy was not considered a reasonable alternative because sustainable growth depends on adequate wastewater infrastructure, network capacity and protection of the water environment.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

LP 23 Managing Surface Water

Policy numbering change

5.513 Draft Policy LP 15 has been renumbered as Policy LP 23. The policy continues to outline our approach to managing surface water flooding associated with future development, ensuring that users and residents are not exposed to undue risk from surface water flooding and that new developments do not increase flood risk elsewhere. This policy ensures that new developments consider surface water flood impacts and implement adequate measures for water management to proactively support sustainable growth.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.514 The policy retains its original purpose but strengthens delivery through the addition of criteria regarding application of the surface water hierarchy set out in National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and criteria for proposals within Critical Drainage Areas. It requires consultation with Local Lead Flood Authority and Anglian Water on these. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	+	+	++	N	N	+	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	

5.515 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and environmental safeguards. The policy already performed very strongly against SA3 Manage water resources and reduce flood risk (++), it is expected the revised policy will have a stronger positive effect through its approach to managing surface water. The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 23 Reasonable alternatives

5.516 An alternative approach we considered was to create polices around only high and medium risk sites seeking a betterment of existing surface water management. This was rejected due to complexity of surface water flooding within the district and the anticipated impacts that climate change will have on it. Therefore it was decided that surface water flooding was a requirement to be addressed at all levels of development.

LP 24 Water Efficiency

Policy numbering change

5.517 Draft Policy LP 16 has been renumbered as Policy LP 24. The policy continues to outline our approach to managing water efficiency and Integrated Water Management.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.518 The policy retains its original purpose but has been refined to clarify water efficiency standards for non-domestic uses, including schools and hospitals. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	++	N	++	+	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

5.519 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and environmental safeguards. The policy already performed very strongly against SA3 Manage water resources and reduce flood risk (++), it is expected the revised policy will have a stronger positive effect through its approach to water efficiency. The amendments improve clarity

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

for non-domestic proposals, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 24 Reasonable alternatives

5.520 The Further Issues and Options consultation put forward three approaches to water efficiency in residential developments including meeting future Building Regulations, Building Regulations optional standards or equivalent or 80l/p/d. For non-household development options included a no policy option, asking that all 'non-household' development be required to achieve 'outstanding' for category Wat 01, or 'excellent' for category Wat 01 and for larger employment developments to achieve 'excellent' or 'very good' for WAT 03 on water leak detection and prevention.

5.521 The less stringent measures were rejected due to the evidence provided within the water cycle study detailing the level of water stress that Huntingdonshire is under which indicates that a greater level of water use management is required through policy. Stage 1 viability testing is indicating that 90l/p/d can be achieved.

LP 25 Design context and character

Policy numbering change

5.522 Draft Policy LP 19 has been retained as Policy LP 25. The policy continues to set out the mechanisms for achieving high standards of design for all developments.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.523 The policy retains its original purpose and has not been significantly changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	++	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	++

5.524 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead neighbourhood plan design guides have been added to the list of sources of design guidance in the district. This strengthens the performance of the policy regarding SA7 (Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local distinctiveness of settlements) and SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.525 The amendments improve clarity and provide recognition of the design guidance produced to support neighbourhood plans. The policy maintains the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 25 Reasonable alternatives

5.526 Not setting out an approach to design context is not a reasonable alternative as these are key to achieving sustainable development which is the fundamental purpose of the national planning system in policy and law.

LP 26 Creating high quality places and spaces

Policy numbering change

5.527 Draft Policy LP 20 has been retained as Policy LP 26. The policy continues to set out our approach to achieving high standards of design.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.528 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed but has been restructured introducing headings to group together linked criteria. This is to support the application of the policy. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4	SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11	SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16		
SA	++	++	++	N	+	N	N	++	N	N	++	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	+	+	N	N	++	++

5.529 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead it has been restructured to group together linked criteria. Refinements have been made to wording referencing local vernacular, parking storage and climate resilience measures. The policy already performed very strongly against SA2 (Improve adaptability and resilience to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency), SA7 (Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local distinctiveness of settlements) and SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these very positive outcomes. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.530 The amendments improve clarity and supports the implementation of the policy while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 26 Reasonable alternatives

5.531 Not setting out a detailed policy on how sustainable and high quality design will be achieved is not a reasonable alternative as these are key to achieving sustainable development which is the fundamental purpose of the national planning system in policy and law.

LP 27 Ensuring amenity for new buildings and neighbours

Policy numbering change

5.532 Draft Policy LP 22 has been retained as Policy LP 27. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the physical environment created by new development protects and promotes a standard of amenity for future occupiers and users, and surrounding uses.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.533 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The list of sources of impact has been expanded to include vibration and reference to ultra fast broadband is made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	+	+	N	N	+	++	++	N	N	++	N

5.534 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead vibrational impacts have been added and replacement of super-fast broadband with ultra-fast. The policy already performed very strongly against SA8 (Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution) and SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these very positive outcomes. The Regulation 8 policy performed positively against SA 11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities) regarding digital connectivity, the amendment in the Regulation 19 policy is expected to enhance this to a strong positive impact. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.535 The amendments improve supports the consideration of further impacts while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 27 Reasonable alternatives

5.536 Not setting out a detailed policy on how sustainable and high quality design will be achieved is not a reasonable alternative as these are key to achieving sustainable development which is the fundamental purpose of the national planning system in policy and law.

LP 28 Minimising embodied and operational carbon in new buildings

Policy numbering change

5.537 LP 23 and LP 24 LP 28: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 23 Minimising Embodied Carbon in New Buildings and LP 24 Minimising Operational Energy Consumption in new buildings. The policies have subsequently been merged into one policy and renumbered as Policy LP 28 Minimising Embodied and Operational Carbon in New Buildings in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy has been refined to reflect changes in national building standards, climate policy and the Council's objective of supporting the transition towards net zero carbon development.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.538 At Regulation 18 stage, Policies LP 23 and LP 24 established a comprehensive approach to reducing carbon emissions arising from new development both as part of its construction and its use. The policies sought to minimise both embodied carbon associated with construction materials and operational carbon resulting from building use. It promoted a fabric-first approach, sustainable construction techniques, reuse of materials, low-carbon energy technologies and development that responded positively

to climate change mitigation objectives. The policy also established a presumption against unnecessary demolition and encouraged the retention and reuse of existing buildings where feasible in order to avoid embodied carbon emissions associated with reconstruction.

5.539 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 28, retains these core principles but has been updated to reflect evolving national policy requirements, including the Future Homes Standard and emerging best practice in whole-life carbon reduction. The revised policy provides a clearer framework for demonstrating how development proposals will minimise embodied and operational carbon emissions throughout the lifecycle of buildings. It also strengthens the relationship between carbon reduction, resource efficiency and sustainable design.

5.540 Whilst the Regulation 18 policy focused strongly on carbon reduction in new development, the Regulation 19 policy embeds carbon reduction more clearly within a wider net zero strategy and responds to updated evidence and legislative changes. The Pre-Submission version therefore provides a more robust and deliverable framework for achieving long-term emissions reductions.

5.541 The change to Policy LP 28 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP 28: Minimising Embodied and Operational Carbon in New Buildings is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA1, SA2, SA8 and SA15, positive effects in relation to SA5 and SA11, and negligible effects across the remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11			SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA Reg 18 LP 23	+	N	+	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	+	++	N	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
SA Reg 18 LP 24	+	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	
SA Reg 19	++	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	++	N	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	

the Pre-Submission version provides a more comprehensive and future-proof framework by integrating embodied carbon reduction, operational energy efficiency and whole-life carbon considerations into a single policy approach.

The SA of both policies at Preferred Options stage highlighted the potential to enhance the policies by requiring development to provide embodied carbon or whole life carbon assessment to assess in detail the carbon content of development. This has not been taken forward considering national changes regarding setting standards above national standards and the impact that these measures could have on viability.

The Regulation 19 policy better reflects current national policy and building standards, including the Future Homes Standard framework and updated expectations regarding sustainable construction and reuse of existing buildings. By strengthening the presumption in favour of retrofit and adaptation before demolition, the policy also delivers greater resource efficiency and avoids unnecessary embodied carbon emissions.

The revised approach performs particularly strongly against SA15 because carbon reduction is embedded within wider placemaking and design quality objectives. This ensures that climate mitigation is not treated as a standalone issue but forms part of delivering high-quality, durable and resilient development. In practice, this improves effectiveness, policy integration and long-term deliverability.

Importantly, the Regulation 19 policy strikes an appropriate balance between ambition and deliverability. It supports the Local Plan's net zero aspirations while remaining consistent with national policy and emerging regulatory requirements.

Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 28 is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable approach. It maintains the strong climate benefits identified within the Regulation 18 version while providing a clearer, more comprehensive and evidence-based framework for reducing embodied and operational carbon emissions across Huntingdonshire.

5.542 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects through whole-life carbon reduction and sustainable construction.

5.543 SA1 (Climate Change Mitigation) receives a significant positive effect because the policy directly seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from construction and occupation of buildings.

5.544 SA2 (Climate Adaptation and Resilience) receives a significant positive effect through energy-efficient and resilient building design.

5.545 SA8 (Pollution and Environmental Quality) receives a significant positive effect through reduced energy demand, resource efficiency and waste reduction.

5.546 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA15 (Quality Places and Communities)** by integrating carbon reduction with design quality and placemaking objectives.

5.547 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 28 is the preferred option.

5.548 Both versions represent ambitious responses to the climate emergency and both perform strongly against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives relating to climate change, resilience and environmental quality. However,

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Policy LP 28 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.554** The option of not including a policy on embodied and operational carbon reduction was not considered a reasonable alternative because addressing climate change and supporting the transition to net zero are fundamental objectives of the Local Plan. Without a dedicated policy, there would be reduced certainty regarding how development proposals should minimise carbon emissions and contribute towards climate commitments at a local and national level.
- 5.555** Alternative approaches focused solely on operational emissions or solely on building energy efficiency were considered less effective because they would fail to address the substantial emissions associated with construction materials, demolition and the wider lifecycle of buildings.
- 5.556** Alternatives considered through the Viability Assessment included whether to go beyond national standards for net zero carbon development, the Assessment showed that there could be impacts on viability. Considering that there is a move nationally to increase carbon standard within new development through the Future Homes Standard, it was considered appropriate to align with the emerging national standards. This was reinforced through the most recent changes to the NPPF. The policy encourages design that reduces the operational carbon of development through five key principles, these are encouraged and reflect good design principles referencing local design guidance on sustainable design.

LP 29 Making existing buildings more energy efficient

Policy numbering change

- 5.557** Draft Policy LP 25 has been retained as Policy LP 29. The purpose of the policy is set out our approach to supporting retrofitting and making existing buildings more energy efficient.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.558** The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	++	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	++	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	++

- 5.559** The policy has not fundamentally changed, but text refined to clarify that proposals that involve change of use, conversions or extension to an existing building must demonstrate how they have considered energy efficiency in their proposals and inclusion of reference to our Environmentally Sustainable Design and Construction Technical Advice Note has been made following its adoption. The policy already performed very strongly against SA2 (Improve adaptability and resilience to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency), SA8 (Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these very positive outcomes. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.
- 5.560** The amendments refines the policy providing additional support for retrofitting while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Policy LP 29 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.561** Support for retrofit is an important part of climate resilience. Therefore not setting out an approach to it was not considered a reasonable alternative. The climate change evidence base explored ways the Local Plan could support retrofit, this policy provides a proportionate response.

LP 30 Supporting active and sustainable travel

Policy numbering change

- 5.562** Draft Policy LP 27 has been retained as Policy LP 30. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that developers fully consider how the opportunities and impacts of the range of travel and transport modes are addressed in their proposals.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.563** The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	+	N	N	N	++	N	++	++	+	+	N	++	++	+	+	N	N

- 5.564** The policy has not fundamentally changed, but text refined to include equestrian users and support travel needs of those with reduced mobility. Heritage impacts have been added to the list of criteria that the design of proposals must address. The policy had performed very positively towards SA12 (Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure), the updates are expected to reinforce this. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

- 5.565** The amendments refines the policy while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 30 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.566** The Further Issues and Options set out questions on transport and connectivity. There were three options related to how transport should be approached within individual developments were:

- Change transport provision within new developments to focus on high quality and plentiful infrastructure for active travel and public transport rather than prioritising road users. To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on active travel and public transport infrastructure.
- Continue with the current approach of encouraging active travel and public transport through some provision of infrastructure within new developments but carry on trying to limit the impact of cars and lorries from them by building roads and upgrading junctions. To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on road and junction upgrades.

- 5.567** Responses showed support for ensuring that new settlements are integrated into the rights of way network and offer improvements, the need for high-quality infrastructure that supports walking, cycling, and public transport and reducing the reliance on cars and encouraging more climate friendly options. Other responses also wished to see linkages with other plans across Cambridgeshire such as the Local transport Plan and ways of addressing transport in more rural areas of the district. This policy provides an approach to achieving these ambitions.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

LP 31 Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement

Policy numbering change

- 5.568** Draft Policy LP 28 has been retained as Policy LP 31. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that new development provides sufficient space and parking provision to meet the needs of the users and residents and minimise impacts on neighbouring uses.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.569** The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	+	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	N	N	++	++	N	+	N	N

- 5.570** The policy has not fundamentally changed, but a criterion added to address communal cycle storage. The policy had performed very positively towards SA12 (Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure), the updates are expected to reinforce this. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.
- 5.571** The amendments refines the policy while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 31 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.572** An option was specify minimum parking standards. It was considered that setting minimum parking standards would not best respond to the site specific considerations of development sites as the need for parking varies

across the district ranging from market towns to very rural. It was considered that setting minimum parking standards were not the most appropriate way of addressing parking provision as applications can be assessed on their own merits in terms of safety and street clutter.

LP 32 Providing electric vehicle charging points

Policy numbering change

- 5.573** Draft Policy LP 29 has been retained as Policy LP 32. The purpose of the policy is set out our approach approach to electric vehicle charging points.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.574** The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10				SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N

- 5.575** The policy has not fundamentally changed, but text refined. Heritage impacts have been added to the list of criteria that the design of proposals must address. The policy had performed neutrally towards SA6 (Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting(s)), however the inclusion of this criterion now means the SA performs positively (+). The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.
- 5.576** The amendments refines the policy providing additional support for electric vehicle charging while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Policy LP 32 Reasonable alternatives

5.577 Electric vehicle charging points are required through Building Regulations, this policy seeks to ensure they are suitably located as part of high quality design supporting their deliverability and take up. Therefore not setting out an approach to it was not considered a reasonable alternative. The climate change evidence base explored ways the Local Plan could support electric vehicle charging infrastructure and design, this policy provides a proportionate response.

LP 33 Preventing and reducing air pollution

Policy numbering change

5.578 Draft Policy LP 30 has been retained as Policy LP 33. This policy sets out our approach in relation to how development proposals affect and are affected by air quality.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.579 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	+	+	N	N	+	+	N

5.580 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been refinement to the opening sentence of the policy and addition of a criterion addressing traffic and air quality impacts on roads within 200m of internationally and nationally protected nature sites. The policy already performed very strongly against SA8 (Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution) and SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these very positive

outcomes. The Regulation 8 policy performed positively against SA 6 (Promote conservation, enhancement, recovery and connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance) , the amendment in the Regulation 19 policy is expected to enhance this to a strong positive impact. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.581 The amendments supports the consideration of further impacts while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 33 Reasonable alternatives

5.582 The Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy sets out the aspiration in journey 3 'Health embedded' that by 2050 Huntingdonshire will value happiness and health above all else, supporting good quality of life for all people at all stages of life. Having good levels of air quality is key to delivering this. Therefore, a policy addressing this was required.

5.583 The Further Issues and Options document did not set out options specifically for air quality but considered it as part of options relating to decarbonisation and the role of decarbonisation buildings in reaching net carbon zero by 2050. It had questions on transport and connectivity which also directly relate to air quality as well as those asking for views on how net zero transport can be achieved. There were three options related to how transport should be approached within individual developments were:

- A. Change transport provision within new developments to focus on high quality and plentiful infrastructure for active travel and public transport rather than prioritising road users. To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on active travel and public transport infrastructure.
- B. Continue with the current approach of encouraging active travel and public transport through some provision of infrastructure within new

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

developments but carry on trying to limit the impact of cars and lorries from them by building roads and upgrading junctions. To help deliver this, a high proportion of developer contributions to transport and travel issues would be spent on road and junction upgrades.

LP 34 Preventing and reducing ground contamination and groundwater pollution

Policy numbering change

5.584 Draft Policy LP 31 has been retained as Policy LP 34. This policy sets out our approach in relation to how development proposals affect and are affected by air quality.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.585 The policy retains its original purpose and has not undergone changes. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	+	+	+	N	N	+	+	+	+	N	N	N	N

5.586 The policy is expected to achieve the same sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version as no changes have been made to it.

Policy LP 34 Reasonable alternatives

5.587 The Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy sets out the aspiration in journey 3 'Health embedded' that by 2050 Huntingdonshire will value happiness and health above all else, supporting good quality of life for all people at all stages of life. Ensuring land is adequately decontaminated before being reused or redeveloped is an important element of this as it ensuring that groundwater is not polluted.

LP 35 Protecting and enhancing Established Employment Areas

Policy numbering change

5.588 Draft Policy LP 32 has been renumbered as Policy LP 35. The purpose of this policy is to protect our established employment areas which can be subject to pressure from higher value uses such as retail or housing development, whilst also creating conditions where businesses can invest, expand and adapt not only to changing market conditions, but also to requirements for increased energy performance requirements.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.589 The policy retains its original purpose with only minor policy refinements made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

5.590 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through refined policy wording and cross reference to other related policies. It specifically includes 'land well related' rather than 'immediately adjoining', this provides consistently across the Local Plan. The policy already performed very positively against SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities) and SA14 (Support the successful response of town, local and village retail centres to changing shopping and social trends).

5.591 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Policy LP 35 Reasonable alternatives

5.592 Alternative approaches that were considered were included within the Further Issues and Options consultation these included focussing growth within and adjacent to EEAs, along strategic highways, within large scale housing sites, allocating new sites in sustainable centres and focusing in existing centres. A number of employment allocations were identified to meet the growing need for employment and employment opportunities identified within large scale housing sites. This policy as informed by the consultations and the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment addresses the options to focus growth within and adjacent to EEAs including those and focussed in existing centres.

5.593 Alternatives considered included the removal of EEA designations which was considered inappropriate due to evidence pointing towards the need to support our existing local businesses and allow opportunities for expansion, redevelopment and adaption so that local businesses continue to thrive whilst also providing opportunity for growth.

LP 36 Expansion and diversification of rural businesses

Policy numbering change

5.594 Draft Policy LP 33 has been renumbered as Policy LP 36. The purpose of this policy is to enable the sustainable development, diversification and expansion of rural businesses and farms, both through conversion of existing buildings and new buildings (where necessary) which are appropriately located and respond to their countryside location.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.595 The policy retains its original purpose with only minor policy refinements made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

5.596 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through refined policy wording. The policy already performed very strongly against SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities). The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 36 Reasonable alternatives

5.597 To help inform an approach to the rural economy the Economic Employment Needs Assessment was produced. This looked at the current rural economy, what it is influenced by and strengths and weaknesses and provided insights into farm diversification over time.

5.598 A do nothing alternative, i.e. no policy on the rural economy, was considered inappropriate due to not only the requirement in the NPPF to 'support a prosperous rural economy', but also the fact that Huntingdonshire is classified as a mainly rural local authority with half of all employment and two thirds of businesses located in rural areas. Allowing greater flexibility of uses for rural development was considered, however It was considered important that countryside impact, accessibility and not drawing employment away from sustainable locations could have a detrimental impact on the countryside and detract from more sustainable locations.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

LP 37 Shaping new businesses in the countryside

Policy numbering change

5.599 Draft Policy LP 34 has been renumbered as Policy LP 37. The purpose of this policy is to enable the sustainable development of business with a genuine need to be located in the countryside (with the exception of tourism and recreation with is addressed in the helping tourism and recreation policy), both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings, whilst ensuring that they are appropriately located and respond to their countryside location.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.600 The policy retains its original purpose with only minor policy refinements made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	N	N	N	N	N

5.601 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through refined policy wording. Amendments include an additional criterion avoiding the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land. The policy already performed very strongly against SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities) and strongly against SA4 (Make efficient use of land by maximising development on previously developed land). The SA of the policy at Preferred Options highlighted that the policy could be enhanced by stating a preference for the use of lowest quality agricultural land over higher quality, such changes have been made to the policy. The amendments result in a more positive outcome against SA4 (++).

5.602 The amendments provide greater environmental safeguards while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 37 Reasonable alternatives

5.603 To help inform an approach to the rural economy the Economic Employment Needs Assessment was produced. This looked at the current rural economy, what it is influenced by and strengths and weaknesses and provided insights into farm diversification over time.

5.604 A 'do nothing' alternative, i.e. no policy on the rural economy, was considered inappropriate due to not only the requirement in the NPPF to 'support a prosperous rural economy', but also the fact that Huntingdonshire is classified as a mainly rural local authority with half of all employment and two thirds of businesses located in rural areas. Allowing greater flexibility of uses for new rural development was considered, however, it was considered important that countryside impact, accessibility and not drawing employment away from sustainable locations could have a detrimental impact on the countryside and detract from more sustainable locations. Alternative policies were provided for innovation led growth and logistics and distribution, which have the potential to impact on the countryside. The policies have been introduced to address the wider national and regional strategy direction and to ensure that a proposal for such uses can be effectively assessed and appropriately mitigated if approved.

LP 38 Enabling key clusters and innovation-led growth

Policy numbering change

5.605 Draft Policy LP 35 has been renumbered as Policy LP 38. The purpose of this policy is to enable the potential for new business clusters of the right type to support regional and national sectoral needs, whilst ensuring that they are sustainably and appropriately located, accessible to a local work force and contribute towards the net zero ambition. New business clusters are those as specifically named and identified within the Cambridgeshire

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

and Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan or future Spatial Development Strategy. The inclusion of a employment and skills strategy enables businesses to retain and access talent to support the emerging sectors and improve local opportunities for residents.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.606 The policy retains its original purpose with only minor policy refinements made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	N	+	N	+	+	++	++	++	N	+	N

5.607 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through refined policy wording and enhanced environmental safeguards. Additions include reference to defence and identifies potential support for strategic new business clusters if they are identified in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan. The policy already performed very strongly against SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities), SA12 (Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure) and SA13 (Strengthen, modernise and diversify the local economy and promote opportunities for growth of indigenous companies as well as encouraging sustainable inward investment).

5.608 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 38 Reasonable alternatives

5.609 Alternative approaches that were considered were included within the Further Issues and Options consultation these included focussing growth within and adjacent to EEAs, along strategic highways, within large scale housing sites, allocating new sites in sustainable centres and focussing in existing centres. A number of employment allocations were identified to meet the growing need for employment and employment opportunities identified within large scale housing sites. This policy as informed by the consultations and the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment addresses the options to focus growth within and adjacent to EEAs including those and focussed in existing centres.

5.610 Alternatives considered included not including a policy on the potential for new business clusters and concentrating on the expansion, redevelopment and adaption of EEAs and the rural economy. It was considered that a policy should be included taking into account the wider appetite for growth along the Ox-Cam Arc at both National and Combined Authority Level whilst ensuring that any additional growth as a result of the policy was sustainably located, achievable and of a quality that facilitates cluster development.

LP 39 Enabling logistics and distribution

Policy numbering change

5.611 Draft Policy LP 36 has been renumbered as Policy LP 39. The purpose of this policy is to address the need for strategic logistics and distribution ensuring a sequential approach to its location and to set expectations for development based around location, design and sustainability.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.612 The policy retains its original purpose with only minor policy refinements made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10				SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	+	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	-	-	+	-	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	+	+	N	+	N	

to allow for some business expansion and investment and to provide a flexible approach to changing market conditions and planning for ambitious (high) growth capitalising on key priority sectors of the wider economy and creating business clusters.

5.613 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through refined policy wording and cross reference to other related policies. The policy requires no adverse impact on highway safety regarding last mile logistics and promotes sustainable modes of transport to be integrated into proposals. It specifically includes 'land well related' rather than 'immediately adjoining', this provides consistently across the Local Plan. The policy already performed positively against SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities), SA12 (Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure) and SA13 (Strengthen, modernise and diversify the local economy and promote opportunities for growth of indigenous companies as well as encouraging sustainable inward investment). It is anticipated to now perform very positively regarding SA12 and maintain positive scoring for SA11 and SA13.

5.614 The policy had performed negatively against SA8 (Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution) but the amendments provide greater sustainability benefit.

5.615 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 38 Reasonable alternatives

5.616 The Further Issues and Options consultation document considered alternative approaches concerning economic strategy ambitions. The options looked at planning for limited (low) employment growth to support Huntingdonshire's existing businesses, planning for sustainable (medium) growth by supplying a sufficient amount of employment land/ allocations

5.617 The Economic and Employment Needs Assessment tested a number of employment scenarios including a labour demand, labour supply, aspirational and past take up scenarios resulting in low, medium and high growth scenarios. A hybrid scenario was recommended creating a moderate-high growth scenario which reflects a reasonable target in the context of what has previously been achieved. The Assessment recommended a strategic approach to logistics and distribution which takes into account past under delivery, identifying allocations for strategic scale logistics and focussing last-mile logistics in smaller towns and villages, whilst recognising the importance of existing industrial estates, carbon reduction, and high design standards to mitigate visual impact and maximise community benefits. Planning positively for logistics by setting expectations for warehouse development recognising commitments to skills was also recommended.

LP 40 Helping tourism and recreation in the countryside

Policy numbering change

5.618 Draft Policy LP 37 has been renumbered as Policy LP 40. The purpose of this policy is to support opportunities to improve and enhance the visitor economy by promoting supporting sustainably located smaller scale tourism opportunities in rural areas to sustain the rural economy.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.619 The policy retains its original purpose with only minor policy refinements made. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	N	N	+	N	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+

policy has been updated to reflect the evolving role of retail and service centres and to provide a clearer spatial framework for directing town centre uses to the most appropriate locations across Huntingdonshire.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.620 The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through refined policy wording. The policy already performed positively against SA11 (Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities) and SA5 (Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible natural green space and enhance the strategic green and blue infrastructure network and links to it). The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 37 Reasonable alternatives

5.621 Alternatives included expanding the scope of the current Tourism policy in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 to more large scale tourism opportunities. This was rejected as national policy requires planning policies to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland. The approach chosen enables appropriately scaled tourism and recreation proposals whilst balancing this against need and impact on the countryside, ecology, designated sites and the opportunity to increase accessibility.

LP 41 - Defining our Retail Hierarchy

Policy numbering change

5.622 LP 38 LP 41: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 38 Defining our Retail Hierarchy. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 41 Defining our Retail Hierarchy within the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The

5.623 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 38 defined Huntingdonshire's retail hierarchy and identified the role and function of the District's town centres, local centres and other service locations. The policy established the framework for applying the town centre first approach and directing retail, leisure, commercial, cultural and community uses towards the most sustainable and accessible locations. It recognised Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey as the principal centres within the hierarchy and sought to maintain their vitality and viability through an appropriate distribution of development.

5.624 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 41, retains the fundamental hierarchy but provides a more comprehensive and up-to-date framework reflecting changes in retail patterns, consumer behaviour and the evolving role of centres. The policy is now more closely integrated with the wider economic growth strategy and the supporting town centre policies relating to vitality, viability and service provision. It also recognises the importance of local centres within new communities and growth locations, ensuring that retail and service provision is planned alongside population growth.

5.625 While the Regulation 18 policy primarily established the hierarchy itself, the Regulation 19 version places greater emphasis on how the hierarchy supports sustainable growth, accessibility and community infrastructure planning. The policy therefore plays a more strategic role in guiding future investment and development decisions.

5.626 The change to Policy LP 41 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP41: Defining our Retail Hierarchy is expected to have significant positive effects in relation

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

to SA12 and SA14, positive effects in relation to SA10, SA11 and SA15, and negligible effects across all remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	++	+	N	++	++	+
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	++	+	N	++	++	+

5.633 The revised policy reflects current retail and economic conditions, aligns more effectively with national planning policy and provides greater certainty for developers, investors and decision-makers. The clear hierarchy supports successful implementation of the town centre first approach whilst retaining flexibility to respond to changing consumer behaviour and service needs.

5.634 Consequently, the Regulation 19 version achieves stronger sustainability outcomes whilst maintaining the benefits of the Regulation 18 approach. It provides a justified, effective and deliverable framework for managing retail and service development.

Policy LP 41 Reasonable alternatives

5.627 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects through support for accessible and vibrant centres.

5.628 SA14 (Town Centres and Local Centres) receives a significant positive effect because the policy provides the framework for supporting the vitality and viability of centres.

5.629 SA12 (Sustainable Transport) receives a significant positive effect by directing development and services to accessible locations that can be reached by walking, cycling and public transport.

5.630 The Regulation 19 version performs more strongly against **SA15 (Quality Places and Communities)** by linking local centres and retail provision more directly with strategic growth and new communities.

5.631 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 41 is the preferred option.

5.632 Both versions establish a clear retail hierarchy and support the role of centres across Huntingdonshire. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a more comprehensive and strategically integrated approach. The policy not only defines the hierarchy but also links it more directly to planned growth, local centre provision and wider place-making objectives. This strengthens its contribution to sustainable development and improves consistency across the Local Plan.

5.635 The option of not defining a retail hierarchy was not considered a reasonable alternative because national planning policy requires local planning authorities to identify a network and hierarchy of centres and apply the town centre first approach. Without a clearly defined hierarchy, there would be less certainty regarding the appropriate location of retail and service development, potentially leading to fragmented growth and weakening the role of established centres.

5.636 Alternative approaches, such as applying a single district-wide approach to all centres or removing distinctions between town centres and local centres, would fail to recognise their differing functions and catchments. Such approaches would be less effective in directing investment, supporting accessibility and maintaining centre vitality and viability.

LP 42 Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability

Policy numbering change

5.637 LP 39 LP 42: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 39 Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 42 Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability in the

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Pre-Submission Local Plan and refined to respond to evolving retail trends, changing consumer behaviour and the increasing importance of flexibility within town centres.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.638 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 39 sought to protect and strengthen Huntingdonshire's network of town centres by directing retail, leisure, commercial and community uses towards established centres. The policy recognised the role of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey as the district's principal centres and aimed to maintain their vitality and viability through an appropriate mix of uses. The policy largely reflected the traditional town centre first approach set out in national policy and focused on safeguarding retail function whilst supporting complementary commercial and community activities.

5.639 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 42, retains the objective of supporting vibrant and successful town centres but adopts a broader and more flexible approach. The updated policy recognises the significant structural changes affecting town centres, including the growth of online retailing, changing consumer habits and the increasing importance of leisure, food and beverage, community and service uses in maintaining vibrant centres. The policy therefore places greater emphasis on diversification, flexibility and adaptability.

5.640 While the Regulation 18 policy focused primarily on retail-led vitality, the Regulation 19 version recognises that successful town centres increasingly depend on a broader mix of economic, social, cultural and residential activities. As a result, the policy better reflects current market conditions while maintaining consistency with national planning policy.

5.641 The change to Policy LP 42 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP42: Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA11, SA14 and SA15, positive effects in relation to SA5,

SA10 and SA12, and negligible effects across the remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	++	+	N	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	N	++	+	+
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	++	+	N	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	N	++	++	+

5.642 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects for town centres, economic activity and community life.

5.643 **SA14 (Town Centres and Local Centres)** receives a significant positive effect because the policy directly supports the vitality and viability of centres.

5.644 **SA11 (Employment and Economic Wellbeing)** receives a significant positive effect through support for retail, leisure, service and commercial activity.

5.645 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA15 (Quality Places and Communities)** by promoting a broader mix of uses and greater flexibility, helping centres adapt to changing circumstances.

5.646 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 42 is the preferred option.

5.647 Both versions support the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres and generate strong positive sustainability outcomes. However, the Pre-Submission version better reflects the realities facing modern town centres and provides a more flexible and resilient framework for their long-term success.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.648** The revised approach is also more closely aligned with national planning policy, which supports town centre diversification and encourages local planning authorities to respond positively to changing economic circumstances. The policy therefore provides a more realistic and deliverable framework for decision-making whilst maintaining the town centre first approach.
- 5.649** Importantly, the Regulation 19 policy balances economic development, community wellbeing and place-making objectives. It supports investment and regeneration whilst ensuring that centres continue to serve residents, businesses and visitors throughout the plan period. As a result, it represents the most justified, effective and deliverable approach.

Policy LP 42 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.650** The option of not including a policy promoting town centre vitality and viability was not considered a reasonable alternative because national planning policy requires local planning authorities to support the role of town centres and apply a town centre first approach. Without a dedicated policy there would be increased risk of fragmented retail and service provision, declining centre performance and reduced investment confidence.
- 5.651** Alternative approaches that focused solely on retail protection were considered less appropriate because they would not adequately reflect changing patterns of consumer behaviour, increasing levels of online shopping or the growing importance of leisure, community and service uses within town centres. Equally, a highly flexible approach without policy safeguards could undermine the retail and service functions that continue to play an important role in centre performance.
- 5.652** With regard to hot food takeaways alternatives to either not address this at all or to have a policy strictly in accord with the NPPF were considered. The former was rejected as not maximising the opportunity of the Local Plan to contribute to the health and well-being of local residents and the later rejected for not reflecting the scale of some villages and avoiding disadvantaging some communities.

LP 43 Supporting Local Centres

Policy numbering change

- 5.653** LP 40 LP 43: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 40 Supporting Local Services. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 43 Supporting Local Services in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy has been refined to strengthen the protection, retention and delivery of local services and community facilities across Huntingdonshire's settlements and to better support sustainable communities throughout the plan period.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.654** At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 40 sought to support the retention and provision of local services and community facilities that contribute to the sustainability and vitality of settlements. The policy recognised the important role played by local shops, healthcare facilities, community halls, education facilities, recreation facilities and other services in supporting community wellbeing and reducing the need to travel. The policy generally supported the retention of existing services and resisted their loss unless there was sufficient evidence that the facility was no longer needed or viable.
- 5.655** The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 43, retains these fundamental objectives but introduces a more comprehensive approach to maintaining and enhancing community infrastructure. The revised policy is more closely aligned with the Local Plan's growth strategy, settlement hierarchy and healthy place-making objectives. It places greater emphasis on ensuring that local services remain accessible and continue to meet community needs as Huntingdonshire grows.
- 5.656** While the Regulation 18 policy focused primarily on protecting existing facilities, the Regulation 19 version places greater emphasis on the wider role local services play in supporting healthy communities, reducing

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

inequalities and improving accessibility. Consequently, the policy contributes more comprehensively to the Local Plan's sustainable development objectives.

5.657 The change to Policy LP 43 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP43: Supporting Local Services is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA5, SA10 and SA15, positive effects in relation to SA11, SA12 and SA14, and negligible effects in all remaining areas. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	+	+	N	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	N	++	+	+
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	N	+	+	+	+	N	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	N	++	++	+

5.658 The policy generates significant positive effects through the retention and enhancement of local services and facilities.

5.659 SA10 (Equality and Reducing Inequalities) receives a significant positive effect by maintaining access to essential services, particularly for vulnerable groups and households without private transport.

5.660 SA15 (Quality Places and Communities) receives a significant positive effect because local services are fundamental to resilient, sustainable and cohesive communities.

5.661 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 43 is the preferred option.

5.662 Both versions support the retention and provision of local services and both contribute positively to the sustainability of communities across Huntingdonshire. However, the Pre-Submission policy provides a more

comprehensive and effective framework by linking service provision more closely with planned growth, infrastructure delivery and community wellbeing objectives.

5.663 The revised policy also provides greater consistency with national planning policy, which seeks to support thriving communities, retain valued facilities and promote sustainable access to services. The stronger evidence-based approach improves clarity for decision-makers and increases confidence that community infrastructure will keep pace with population growth.

5.664 Consequently, the Regulation 19 version achieves stronger social sustainability outcomes whilst maintaining the benefits of the Regulation 18 approach. It is therefore considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option.

Policy LP 43 Reasonable alternatives

5.665 The option of not including a policy supporting local services was not considered a reasonable alternative because local services and community facilities are fundamental to sustainable communities. Without a policy framework, there would be a greater risk of facility loss, reduced accessibility and declining community resilience, particularly in rural settlements.

5.666 Alternative approaches that relied solely on market forces or generic development management policies would be unlikely to provide the same level of protection and support for valued local services. Such approaches would be less effective in delivering health, wellbeing, equality and community cohesion benefits and would therefore perform less favourably against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework.

5.667 With regard to hot food takeaways alternatives to either not address this at all or to have a policy strictly in accord with the NPPF were considered. The former was rejected as not maximising the opportunity of the Local Plan to contribute to the health and well-being of local residents and the later rejected for not reflecting the scale of some villages and avoiding disadvantaging some communities.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

LP 44 Services and facilities outside designated centres

Policy numbering change

- 5.668** This is a new policy within the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy supports the provision, retention and enhancement of shops, services, community facilities and other local facilities outside designated Town Centres and Local Centres. It applies a sequential approach to new proposals whilst protecting existing facilities that contribute to the sustainability of settlements and local communities.
- 5.669** The following table shows the performance of this new policy against the SA framework using the policy decision aiding questions:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	+	++	N	+	+	+	+	N	++	++	++	+	+	+	++	N	++	+	+

- 5.670** The Sustainability Appraisal finds that Policy LP 44 delivers positive social and economic outcomes by supporting the provision, protection and enhancement of services and facilities outside designated centres whilst maintaining the vitality and viability of existing centres through the application of a sequential approach. The policy supports sustainable communities by improving access to local shops, services, community facilities and educational uses, particularly in smaller settlements where such facilities can be limited.
- 5.671** The policy generates significant positive effects through protection of community facilities and support for accessible local services.
- 5.672** **SA10 (Social Inclusion and Access to Services)** receives a significant positive effect because the policy supports and safeguards important local services and facilities.

- 5.673** **SA14 (Town Centres and Local Centres)** receives a significant positive effect through the application of a sequential approach that protects the vitality and viability of designated centres while allowing appropriate local provision.

- 5.674** Overall, Policy LP 44 is assessed as making a positive contribution to sustainable communities across Huntingdonshire. Significant positive effects are identified for SA10 (Social Inclusion and Access to Services) and SA14 (Town Centres and Local Centres) due to the policy's strong emphasis on retaining and supporting local facilities while reinforcing the role of designated centres. The policy contributes positively to accessibility, community cohesion, local economic resilience and the long-term sustainability of settlements throughout the district.

Policy LP 44 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.675** No other reasonable alternatives were identified. A policy approach that failed to protect existing services and facilities or apply a sequential approach to new provision could undermine the viability of local communities, reduce accessibility to services, increase travel demand and weaken the settlement hierarchy established by the Local Plan. The submitted policy therefore represents the most sustainable approach consistent with the overall strategy.

LP 45 Promoting a mix of housing

Policy numbering change

- 5.676** Draft Policy LP 42 has been retained as Policy LP 45. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that proposals for housing provide a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to help support mixed and inclusive communities and encourage diversity in the supply of new homes.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.677 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	+	N	N	+	++	N	+	N	N

5.678 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead wording has been added to policy to clarify that some of the documents listed in the policy may only apply based on the location of a development site and any local assessment of housing need demand within a relevant town or parish council to the proposed scheme. The policy already performed very strongly against SA9 (All people have access to high quality affordable homes that meet their needs across their lifetime). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these very positive outcomes. The remaining wording of the policy has been largely unchanged between Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan and SA and the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission.

5.679 The amendments provide clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 45 Reasonable alternatives

5.680 The NPPF requires that housing mix is supported by a local housing needs assessment. Alternative approaches considered include specifying a particular range of housing sizes and tenures within the policy. This was rejected as providing insufficient flexibility for a scheme to respond to its local context and to changing market conditions over time. The NPPF also requires inclusion of a policy to support efficient use of land in town centres and areas well served by public transport. A minimum density figure has not been put forward within the policy to allow for a design informed response.

LP 46 Ensuring accessible and adaptable homes

Policy numbering change

5.681 LP 43 LP 46: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 43 Ensuring Accessible and Adaptable Homes. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 46 Ensuring Accessible and Adaptable Homes within the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy has been reviewed in light of updated demographic evidence, the Local Housing Needs Assessment and the increasing need to provide homes capable of meeting changing lifetime needs across Huntingdonshire.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.682 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 43 sought to improve the accessibility and adaptability of new housing across Huntingdonshire. The policy recognised that population ageing, increasing life expectancy, changing household circumstances and the needs of people with disabilities would require a greater proportion of homes capable of accommodating changing mobility and health requirements over time. The policy promoted the delivery of homes that could support independent living and reduce the need for expensive future adaptations.

5.683 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 46, retains these objectives but provides a stronger and more clearly evidenced framework for delivering accessible and adaptable homes throughout the district. The updated policy reflects evidence from the Local Housing Needs Assessment demonstrating growing demand for homes suitable for older people and those with mobility limitations. It places greater emphasis on ensuring that new housing contributes to inclusive communities and reduces barriers to independent living.

5.684 Whereas the Regulation 18 policy principally recognised the importance of accessible housing, the Regulation 19 version embeds accessibility more firmly within the overall housing delivery strategy and strengthens the link

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

between housing provision, health outcomes and social inclusion. The policy therefore contributes more directly to the wider sustainability objectives of the Local Plan.

5.685 The change to Policy LP 46 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP46: Ensuring Accessible and Adaptable Homes is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA5, SA9 and SA10. Positive effects are expected in relation to SA11 and SA15. In all other areas the policy is anticipated to have negligible effects. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	+	N	N	N
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	++	++	+	N	N	N

5.686 The policy generates significant positive effects by improving housing accessibility and supporting independent living.

5.687 SA9 (Housing) receives a significant positive effect because accessible and adaptable homes increase housing choice and long-term suitability of housing stock.

5.688 SA10 (Reducing Inequalities) receives a significant positive effect by improving accessibility for older people and people with disabilities.

5.689 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 46 is the preferred option.

5.690 Both versions support the provision of accessible and adaptable homes and make an important contribution towards creating housing that meets the needs of Huntingdonshire's changing population. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a more robust, evidence-led and

future-focused approach. It responds more directly to identified demographic trends and strengthens the relationship between housing delivery, independent living, accessibility and community wellbeing.

5.691 The policy also aligns closely with national planning policy requirements to address the housing needs of older people and disabled people and supports wider Local Plan objectives relating to inclusive growth, sustainable communities and housing choice. It provides a clear framework for decision-making whilst retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to changing evidence over the plan period.

5.692 Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 46 is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option. It secures stronger social sustainability outcomes, better responds to identified housing needs.

Policy LP 46 Reasonable alternatives

5.693 The option of not including a policy on accessible and adaptable homes was not considered a reasonable alternative because evidence indicates increasing demand for housing that can accommodate ageing populations, changing mobility needs and disability requirements. Reliance solely on building regulations or general housing policies would provide less certainty that sufficient accessible housing would be delivered across the district.

5.694 Alternative approaches, such as relying exclusively on specialist housing provision or requiring accessibility standards only in limited circumstances, would not provide the same district-wide benefits. Such approaches would be less effective in promoting inclusive communities, supporting independent living and reducing inequalities and would therefore perform less favourably against SA5, SA9 and SA10.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

LP 47 Facilitating self and custom build homes

Policy numbering change

5.695 LP 44 LP 47: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 44 Facilitating Self and Custom Build Homes. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 47 Facilitating Self and Custom Build Homes in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. Importantly, a specific delivery requirement included in the Regulation 18 version was removed from the Regulation 19 policy, representing the most significant policy change between the two stages.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.696 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 44 sought to facilitate self-build and custom-build housing as a means of diversifying housing delivery, increasing consumer choice and supporting smaller builders. The policy recognised evidence from the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register and actively sought to increase the supply of self-build opportunities across the district.

5.697 A particularly important requirement within the Regulation 18 policy stated that: *"A proposal including 100 or more new homes must include at least 5% of the total number of plots as serviced plots for self and custom build homes."*

5.698 This criterion established a direct delivery mechanism and ensured that larger residential developments would make a quantifiable contribution towards meeting demand for self-build and custom-build housing. The requirement moved beyond supporting self-build housing in principle and imposed a specific expectation on major developments to provide serviced plots.

5.699 In the Pre-Submission Local Plan, Policy LP 47 continues to support self-build and custom-build housing but the mandatory 5% serviced plot requirement has been removed. Instead, the policy adopts a more flexible approach which supports self-build and custom-build housing opportunities without prescribing a specific percentage requirement for larger schemes. The revised policy focuses on facilitating delivery through the planning framework and wider housing strategy rather than imposing a fixed allocation requirement on major development sites.

5.700 The change to Policy LP 47 is material and has therefore been reassessed against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10		SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	++	++	-	+	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	N	++	++	-	+	+	+	N	N	N	+	N	N

5.701 The Sustainability Appraisal finds that both the Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 versions of the policy generate positive sustainability effects through supporting housing choice, housing market diversification and opportunities for individual households to secure homes tailored to their own needs. However, the removal of the mandatory 5% serviced plot requirement results in a measurable reduction in certainty regarding delivery outcomes.

5.702 Both policy versions support a wider range of housing delivery routes and therefore generate positive effects against SA9 (Housing). However, the Regulation 18 version is assessed as having a significant positive effect because the requirement for major developments to provide at least 5% serviced plots established a direct mechanism for increasing self-build housing supply. The policy provided certainty that self-build opportunities would be delivered on larger sites throughout the district.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.703 The removal of this requirement in the Regulation 19 version reduces certainty that serviced plots will actually come forward. Although the policy continues to support self-build housing, delivery is dependent on market choices and individual development proposals rather than a mandatory provision requirement. Consequently, the Regulation 19 version is assessed as positive rather than significant positive against SA9.

5.704 For SA15 (Quality Places and Communities) the Regulation 18 version is also considered to perform more strongly. Self-build plots can contribute to more diverse housing types, greater architectural variety and stronger community identity within large developments. The mandatory 5% requirement ensured that self-build housing was embedded within strategic developments and contributed directly to creating mixed and varied neighbourhoods.

5.705 The Regulation 19 version continues to support these outcomes but without guaranteeing provision. As a consequence, the likely contribution to housing diversity and local distinctiveness is reduced, resulting in a positive rather than significant positive effect.

5.706 For SA10 (Equality and Reducing Inequalities) both policy versions generate positive effects because they provide alternative pathways into home ownership and allow households to develop homes tailored to accessibility needs, family circumstances and long-term requirements. However, neither policy directly targets disadvantaged groups and therefore the effects remain positive rather than significant.

5.707 Both versions also generate positive effects against SA11 (Employment and Economy) because self-build housing supports smaller builders, local contractors and specialist construction trades. The effect remains unchanged because both versions continue to support self-build activity, albeit through different delivery mechanisms.

Sustainability consequences of removing the 5% serviced plot requirement

5.708 The removal of the mandatory requirement has both positive and negative sustainability implications.

5.709 Positive consequences:

- Greater flexibility for developers and site promoters
- Reduced viability risks on complex or constrained sites
- Greater responsiveness to changing market demand for serviced plots over the plan period
- Reduced risk that serviced plots remain undeveloped if local demand does not materialise in particular locations

5.710 Negative consequences:

- Reduced certainty that serviced plots will be delivered
- Potential reduction in the total number of self-build opportunities available
- Weaker direct response to evidence from the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register
- Reduced opportunity for diversification of large residential developments
- Less certainty that housing market diversity objectives will be achieved

5.711 Although the Regulation 18 version arguably performs more strongly against SA9 and SA15 because of the mandatory 5% serviced plot requirement, the Pre-Submission version remains the preferred option from a plan-making perspective.

5.712 The principal reason is deliverability. The 5% requirement introduced a prescriptive obligation on major developments regardless of local market conditions. Evidence gathered through consultation, viability testing and plan preparation indicated that a more flexible approach was likely to be more effective and deliverable across a diverse range of development sites.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.713 The Regulation 19 policy continues to support self-build and custom-build housing but allows opportunities to come forward in response to demonstrated demand, local circumstances and site-specific considerations. This reduces the risk that development is delayed or constrained by requirements that may not be suitable for every strategic site.

5.714 The Pre-Submission version is also better integrated with the wider housing strategy and works alongside policies relating to affordable housing, accessible homes, specialist housing and rural exception housing. This creates a more coherent and flexible policy framework overall.

5.715 Consequently, although the Regulation 18 policy delivers stronger theoretical sustainability benefits in relation to housing choice and place-making, the Regulation 19 version is considered more realistic, justified and effective when assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework tests of soundness. It achieves positive sustainability outcomes while improving flexibility, viability and deliverability.

Policy LP 47 Reasonable alternatives

5.716 Two realistic alternatives were considered:

1. Retain the mandatory 5% serviced plot requirement on developments of 100 or more homes (Regulation 18 approach)
2. Support self-build and custom-build housing without a mandatory serviced plot requirement (Regulation 19 approach)

5.717 The Regulation 18 option performs more strongly against housing choice and place-making objectives because it guarantees a supply of serviced plots. However, it may be more difficult to implement consistently and could create viability and delivery challenges on some sites.

LP 48 Supporting specialist housing

Policy numbering change

5.718 LP 45 LP 48: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 45 Supporting Specialist Housing. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 48 Supporting Specialist Housing in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The policy has also been amended to strengthen delivery of specialist accommodation whilst responding to updated evidence on ageing populations, supported living needs, extra-care housing and housing affordability.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.719 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 45 sought to support the delivery of specialist housing to meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities, people requiring support and care, and other groups whose needs are unlikely to be fully met through general market housing. The policy recognised demographic changes within Huntingdonshire and sought to facilitate specialist accommodation in sustainable locations with access to services and facilities.

5.720 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 48, retains these objectives but introduces several important refinements intended to improve deliverability and better align the policy with viability evidence and the wider housing strategy. The most significant policy change is the revision to the affordable housing requirement applicable to specialist housing schemes.

Key policy change

5.721 Under the Preferred Options version, specialist housing developments were generally expected to provide affordable housing where proposals met the relevant affordable housing thresholds. The policy framework applied affordable housing requirements to specialist housing developments above 10 dwellings.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.722 In the Pre-Submission version, the Council increased the threshold at which affordable housing requirements apply to specialist housing developments from: 10 homes 50 homes

5.723 This represents a significant policy change intended to respond to viability evidence and the operational characteristics of specialist accommodation schemes such as extra-care housing, supported living accommodation and care-related developments. The amendment acknowledges that specialist housing schemes often have higher development and operational costs than conventional housing and may face greater viability challenges if standard affordable housing requirements are applied at lower thresholds.

5.724 Whilst the Regulation 18 policy focused on supporting specialist housing provision and securing affordable housing contributions on a wider range of schemes, the Regulation 19 policy places greater emphasis on deliverability and viability to maximise overall specialist housing delivery.

5.725 The change to Policy LP 48 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

5.726 The Sustainability Appraisal finds that both the Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 versions of the policy deliver substantial positive sustainability outcomes, particularly in relation to housing provision, health and wellbeing and supporting an ageing population. Both policies help ensure that specialist accommodation is available for groups whose needs may not be adequately met through mainstream housing delivery.

5.727 Both policy versions are assessed as having major positive effects against SA9 (Housing) because they support delivery of specialist accommodation needed to address identified housing requirements. The policies increase housing choice and help ensure that older people, disabled people and those requiring support or care can access appropriate accommodation. The Regulation 19 policy maintains these significant housing benefits whilst improving the likelihood that specialist schemes will be delivered.

5.728 The most significant difference between the two versions arises in relation to SA10 (Reducing Inequalities and Social Inclusion). Specialist housing can support independent living, improve quality of life, reduce social isolation and provide accommodation better suited to people's care and support needs. The policy therefore makes a direct contribution to healthier communities and improved wellbeing outcomes.

5.729 The Regulation 18 version is assessed as having a significant positive effect because affordable housing requirements applied to a broader range of specialist housing developments through the lower 10-home threshold. This increased the potential for affordable specialist accommodation to be delivered and therefore improved opportunities for lower-income households requiring specialist housing.

5.730 Following the increase in threshold from 10 homes to 50 homes, fewer specialist housing schemes will be required to provide affordable housing contributions. This may reduce the direct delivery of affordable specialist accommodation on some sites. Consequently, the Regulation 19 version is assessed as having a positive rather than significant positive effect against SA10.

5.731 However, the Regulation 19 policy performs more strongly against SA15 (Quality Places and Communities). By reducing viability pressures on specialist housing schemes and making delivery more achievable, the revised policy is likely to increase the overall supply of specialist accommodation across the district. This supports the creation of more

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

inclusive communities where residents can remain within their local areas as their housing needs change. As a result, the Regulation 19 version is assessed as having a significant positive effect against SA15.

5.732 The policy also generates positive effects against SA11 (Employment and Economy) because specialist housing supports employment within health, care and support sectors and contributes towards the wider care economy.

5.733 Sustainability consequences of increasing the affordable housing threshold from 10 homes to 50 homes

5.734 Positive sustainability consequences:

- Greater viability for specialist housing developments
- Increased likelihood that specialist housing schemes will be delivered
- Improved ability to attract investment into extra-care and supported living development
- Greater overall provision of specialist accommodation to meet demographic needs
- Stronger support for ageing in place and independent living outcomes

5.735 Negative sustainability consequences:

- Reduced affordable housing contributions from specialist housing developments between 10 and 49 dwellings
- Potential reduction in affordable specialist accommodation opportunities
- Slightly weaker performance against equality and social inclusion objectives

5.736 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 48 is the preferred option.

5.737 The Regulation 18 version performs more strongly in relation to affordable specialist housing provision because the lower threshold secured affordable housing contributions from a greater number of schemes. This generates stronger outcomes against SA10 and social inclusion objectives.

5.738 However, evidence gathered through plan preparation indicated that applying affordable housing requirements to specialist housing schemes at relatively low thresholds could affect viability and therefore reduce implementation of specialist housing proposals. Specialist accommodation often carries higher build costs, management costs and operational requirements than conventional housing.

5.739 The Regulation 19 version addresses this issue by increasing the threshold to 50 homes. Although this reduces the likelihood of affordable housing contributions on some specialist schemes, it significantly improves deliverability and increases confidence that much-needed specialist accommodation will come forward during the plan period.

5.740 The revised policy therefore achieves a better balance between housing need, viability and delivery. It supports the Local Housing Needs Assessment evidence, aligns with demographic projections and responds more effectively to the challenges associated with delivering specialist housing. The policy remains strongly positive against SA5 and SA9 whilst generating improved outcomes in relation to long-term community sustainability and deliverability.

5.741 Consequently, although the Regulation 18 version performs slightly better against SA10, the Regulation 19 version is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option when assessed against the tests of soundness.

Policy LP 48 Reasonable alternatives

5.742 Two realistic alternatives were identified:

1. Retain the lower affordable housing threshold of 10 homes for specialist housing developments (Regulation 18 approach)
2. Increase the threshold to 50 homes in recognition of specialist housing viability considerations (Regulation 19 approach)

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.743** The Regulation 18 option performs more strongly against equality and affordable housing objectives because it secures affordable housing contributions from a larger number of schemes. However, it creates greater viability pressures and may reduce delivery of specialist housing.
- 5.744** The Regulation 19 option performs more strongly against deliverability, housing provision and long-term community sustainability because it supports the viability of specialist accommodation schemes and is more likely to secure overall delivery of specialist housing needed to support Huntingdonshire's ageing population.

LP 49 Supporting houses in multiple occupation

Policy numbering change

- 5.745** Draft Policy LP 46 has been retained as Policy LP 49. The policy continues to set out how applications for houses in multiple occupation should be considered.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.746** The policy retains its original purpose and has not been changed between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Local Plan. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	+	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+

- 5.747** The policy is expected to achieve the same sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version as no changes have been made to it.

Policy LP 49 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.748** The alternative was considered of continuing to not have a policy specifically on houses in multiple occupation like in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. This was rejected as it provides no support for this sector of the housing market that can provide lower cost accommodation, particularly for single people, who may have lower priority for other affordable housing options.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

LP 50 Promoting rural exceptions housing

Policy numbering change

5.749 LP 47 LP 50: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 47 Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing. The policy has subsequently been renumbered as Policy LP 50 Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing in the Pre-Submission Local Plan and has been refined to provide a clearer delivery framework for affordable housing in rural communities.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.750 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 47 sought to support the delivery of affordable housing for local people on sites that would not normally be released for residential development. The policy promoted rural exception schemes to help address identified local housing needs, support village sustainability and maintain rural communities. Affordable housing was required to remain affordable in perpetuity, with limited market housing permitted only where necessary to enable delivery. The policy was generally aligned with national policy and provided a mechanism for delivering affordable homes in villages where opportunities through allocated housing sites may be limited.

5.751 The Regulation 19 version also strengthens links to wider housing objectives by incorporating opportunities for self-build and custom-build housing where these contribute to meeting local needs and ensuring scheme viability. Greater emphasis is placed on community engagement, local evidence and long-term affordability, creating a more robust and deliverable policy framework.

5.752 While the Regulation 18 policy focused principally on enabling affordable housing, the Regulation 19 version broadens the policy's contribution to sustainable rural communities by ensuring that housing delivery remains closely aligned with local needs, settlement character and the long-term resilience of villages.

5.753 The change to Policy LP 50 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP 50 Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA9 and SA10, positive effects in relation to SA2, SA11 and SA15, and negligible effects across the remaining sustainability objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	N	N	N
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	N	N	N

5.754 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects by delivering affordable housing to meet local rural needs.

5.755 **SA9 (Housing)** receives a significant positive effect because the policy directly supports affordable housing provision in rural communities.

5.756 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA10 (Reducing Inequalities and Promoting Social Inclusion)** through local connection requirements and evidence-based delivery targeted at households with local needs.

5.757 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 50 is the preferred option.

5.758 Both versions support affordable housing delivery in rural areas and contribute positively to housing affordability and community sustainability. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a more comprehensive, justified and deliverable framework for implementation. By establishing a minimum affordable housing proportion, a local connection requirement, a clear viability mechanism and a local needs evidence requirement, the Regulation 19 policy provides greater certainty for decision-makers, communities and developers.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.759** The revised policy also improves consistency with national planning policy on rural exception sites by ensuring that market housing remains subordinate to affordable housing delivery and is only permitted where necessary to secure viability. The requirement for affordable homes to remain affordable in perpetuity further strengthens the policy's effectiveness in addressing long-term rural housing needs.
- 5.760** Importantly, the Regulation 19 policy balances affordability objectives with protection of settlement character through scale controls and community-focused criteria. This creates a framework that is more likely to secure community support and provide certainty at planning application stage. The policy therefore delivers stronger outcomes against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives relating to housing and social inclusion whilst remaining practical and deliverable.
- 5.761** Consequently, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 50 is considered the most effective, justified and deliverable approach.

Policy LP 50 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.762** The option of not including a rural exceptions housing policy was not considered a reasonable alternative because affordable housing needs continue to exist across Huntingdonshire's rural communities. Without a specific policy mechanism, opportunities to deliver affordable homes for households with local connections would be significantly reduced and many villages would struggle to address local housing affordability issues.
- 5.763** Alternatives considered through the plan-making process included restricting rural exception schemes to higher-order settlements, allowing only affordable housing with no market housing component, or relying solely on national policy guidance. These approaches were not preferred because they would either reduce flexibility, undermine viability or limit the ability of communities to respond to local circumstances.

LP 51 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Policy numbering change

- 5.764** Draft Policy LP 48 has been retained as Policy LP 51. The purpose of the policy is to enable the appropriate provision of sites to meet the specific needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

- 5.765** The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	N	+	+	-	-	N	N	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	N

- 5.766** The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead wording has refined for clarity when referencing the built-up area, a criterion has been added requiring an site for pitches will not adversely impact the safe and effective operation of existing infrastructure. The amendments provide clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 51 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.767** We considered directly allocating land for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches. However, only a small number of sites were put forward as possible locations all of which were within flood zone 3 and so could not be preferred in flood risk terms. It is also recognised that the allocation process may be slower than the planning application process so we have continued to work with Gypsies and Travellers and their representatives to progress planning applications on land for which members of the community have already expressed a preference.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.768 Not having a policy is not a reasonable alternative due to requirements established in the NPPE.

LP 52 Protecting our nature conservation sites

Policy numbering change

5.769 Draft Policy LP 50 has been retained as Policy LP 52. The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's approach to protecting sites that are protected under international, national and local conservation designations.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.770 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

[illegible]

5.771 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been refinement by adding reference to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and inclusion of Local Nature Reserves. Refinement has also been made for clarity and to more closely align the wording with the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulation 2017 (as amended). The Regulation 18 policy performed very positively against SA 6 (Promote conservation, enhancement, recovery and connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance), the amendment in the Regulation 19 policy is expected to enhance this to a strong positive impact.

5.772 The policy also performed very strongly against SA1 (Contribute to achieving the district's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040) and positively against SA7 (Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local

distinctiveness of settlements) and SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these positive outcomes.

5.773 The amendments supports the consideration of further impacts while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 53 Reasonable alternatives

5.774 Not setting out an approach to protecting nature conservation sites is not a reasonable alternative as it would be contrary to national planning policy and legislation. This approach aligns with the wider framework for nature site conservation and provides localised detail by also including locally important nature sites and reference to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

LP 53 Enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity

Policy numbering change

5.775 LP 50 LP 53: Proposed wording was included within the Reg 18 consultation draft and subject to an SA under policy LP 50 Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.776 An alteration to Policy LP 53: The policy no longer encourages a “minimum of 20%” BNG but now encourages “in excess of 10%”. At Regulation 18 stage, LP 50 primarily focused on enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity, delivering biodiversity net gain, supporting nature recovery, promoting green infrastructure and securing climate-related benefits through sustainable design, carbon reduction and nature-based solutions. The policy established ambitious environmental outcomes, most notably a requirement for 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), exceeding the statutory national requirement of 10%. It also promoted habitat creation, ecological connectivity, carbon

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

sequestration, sustainable drainage, protection of green and blue infrastructure, and wider climate resilience objectives. While LP 50 provided a strong environmental ambition, it was largely focused on ecological enhancement and biodiversity outcomes. The policy's environmental benefits were substantial but were primarily centred on delivering measurable ecological gains and addressing climate change mitigation through carbon reduction measures. In contrast, Policy LP 53 in the Regulation 19 Plan broadens the sustainability agenda and embeds environmental benefits within a much wider framework of sustainable development.

5.777 The change to Policy LP53 is material, and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP53: Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity is expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to SA1, SA5, and SA6. In all other areas, the policy is anticipated to have a negligible effect. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10				SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA Reg 18	N	++	+	+	N	N	N	+	++	++	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+
SA Reg 19	N	++	+	+	N	N	N	++	++	++	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+

5.778 The Sustainability Appraisal finds that both the Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 versions of the policy deliver positive sustainability outcomes, particularly for biodiversity, environmental quality, and health and wellbeing. Both policy versions seek to protect, restore and enhance biodiversity through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The principal distinction is that the Regulation 18 policy sought a minimum 20% BNG, whereas the Regulation 19 policy supports biodiversity gains above the statutory 10% requirement where feasible, thereby aligning with national legislation and avoiding duplication.

5.779 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects for biodiversity and environmental quality.

5.780 **SA6 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)** receives a significant positive effect through biodiversity net gain, habitat creation and ecological connectivity.

5.781 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA5 (Health and Wellbeing)** through closer integration with green and blue infrastructure priorities and nature recovery networks.

5.782 **SA1 (Climate Change Mitigation)** also receives a significant positive effect through nature-based solutions and habitat enhancement.

5.783 For equality and inequalities (SA10), both options are assessed as neutral because they do not directly influence social inclusion or access to services. Nevertheless, improvements to green infrastructure may deliver indirect benefits across communities and contribute to reducing environmental and health inequalities.

5.784 The Regulation 18 policy is assessed as having positive effects in relation to climate adaptation and resilience because the higher BNG requirement could potentially deliver additional ecosystem services and resilience benefits. The Regulation 19 policy is assessed as neutral in this regard because it aligns with the statutory national requirement. However, this difference does not materially affect the overall sustainability performance of the policy.

5.785 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 53 is the preferred option. It delivers significant positive effects against the relevant sustainability objectives, including major positive biodiversity outcomes and enhanced health and wellbeing benefits. It achieves comparable sustainability outcomes to the Regulation 18 version while aligning with national policy and legislation, avoiding duplication, and providing greater flexibility and deliverability.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Policy LP 53 Reasonable alternatives

5.786 No other reasonable alternatives were identified. The option of not including the Biodiversity Net Gain policy was not considered a reasonable alternative for Sustainability Appraisal purposes because the delivery of a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain is already secured through the statutory framework established by the Environment Act 2021 and Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Local Plan cannot disapply this national requirement. Consequently, the relevant policy choices relate to how the Plan supports, guides or enhances the implementation of mandatory BNG rather than whether BNG is required.

LP 54 Protecting our trees, orchards, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows

Policy numbering change

5.787 LP 51 LP 54: Proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 51 Protecting our Trees, Woodlands, Hedges and Hedgerows. In the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan the policy has been renumbered as Policy LP 54 Protecting our Trees, Orchards, Woodlands, Hedges and Hedgerows and its scope expanded to explicitly include orchards alongside other important arboricultural and landscape features.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.788 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 51 focused on the protection and enhancement of trees, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows and sought to halt the loss of important landscape features across Huntingdonshire. The policy required development proposals to investigate potential impacts on such features and demonstrate that conservation and enhancement had been prioritised. It required a detailed site survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan prepared in accordance with BS5837:2012. Loss or damage was only supported where the public benefits of development clearly outweighed the

harm, and mitigation, replacement planting and compensation measures were secured. Major developments were also expected to provide additional tree planting.

5.789 The Pre-Submission version, Policy LP 54, retains all of these core requirements but extends the policy to explicitly recognise and protect orchards, together with trees, ancient and veteran trees, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows. The revised policy also sits within a broader environmental strategy that is more strongly integrated with the Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas, Local Nature Recovery Strategy, biodiversity enhancement policies and climate resilience objectives. The Regulation 19 policy therefore places greater emphasis on ecological connectivity, landscape character, biodiversity recovery and multifunctional green infrastructure. It also provides stronger consistency with the Local Plan's wider environmental innovation objectives and site allocation requirements, many of which specifically require the retention and enhancement of existing tree belts, hedgerows and orchards.

5.790 The principal change is therefore not a fundamental shift in direction but a broadening and strengthening of the policy's environmental role. Whereas the Regulation 18 version focused primarily on arboricultural protection and mitigation, the Regulation 19 version embeds these assets more clearly within climate adaptation, biodiversity recovery, green infrastructure delivery and landscape-scale environmental enhancement.

5.791 The change to Policy LP 54 is material and the policy has therefore been re-assessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP54: Protecting our Trees, Orchards, Woodlands, Hedges and Hedgerows is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA1, SA5, SA6 and SA7. In all other areas the policy is anticipated to have negligible or minor positive effects. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16		
SA Reg 18	N	+	+	N	+	N	N	+	+	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	+	+
SA Reg 19	N	+	+	N	+	N	N	++	++	++	+	N	N	N	N	N	+	+

diversity of Huntingdonshire's natural environment and strengthens consistency with biodiversity, green infrastructure and climate resilience policies elsewhere in the Plan.

5.792 Both policy versions generate significant positive effects through protection of key environmental assets.

5.793 SA6 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) receives a significant positive effect because trees, orchards, woodlands and hedgerows support habitats and ecological networks.

5.794 SA7 (Landscape and Townscape Character) receives a significant positive effect because these features are important components of local character and distinctiveness. The addition of orchards to the policy provides greater policy protection for these landscape features which are becoming increasingly scarce across Huntingdonshire. This incorporates suggested amendments made in the SA of the policy at Preferred Options stage.

5.795 The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA1 (Climate Change Mitigation)** and **SA5 (Health and Wellbeing)** through stronger links to carbon sequestration, green infrastructure and nature recovery objectives.

5.796 Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 54 is the preferred option.

5.797 Both versions provide strong protection for trees, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows and both perform well against the sustainability objectives. However, the Pre-Submission version provides a broader and more comprehensive approach by explicitly including orchards alongside other valuable landscape and ecological features. This change better reflects the

5.798 The Regulation 19 version also aligns more effectively with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas, carbon sequestration objectives and wider environmental enhancement policies. It therefore delivers stronger outcomes against SA1 and SA5 while maintaining the significant positive effects already identified for biodiversity and landscape objectives.

5.799 Importantly, the policy remains aligned with national policy requirements, provides clear and enforceable development management criteria, is supported by the Huntingdonshire Tree Strategy 2020-2030, and requires recognised arboricultural standards including BS5837:2012. These factors improve certainty, effectiveness and deliverability.

5.800 Consequently, the Regulation 19 version is considered the most justified, effective and deliverable option.

Policy LP 54 Reasonable alternatives

5.801 The option of not including a policy protecting trees, orchards, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows was not considered a reasonable alternative because these features make a substantial contribution to biodiversity, landscape character, climate change mitigation, green infrastructure networks and community wellbeing. National planning policy places significant weight on the protection of ancient woodland, veteran trees and irreplaceable habitats, while local evidence highlights the importance of increasing tree canopy cover and strengthening ecological networks across Huntingdonshire.

5.802 The realistic policy choices therefore relate to the scope and strength of protection rather than whether these features should be protected. The Regulation 19 approach is preferred because it expands the policy's coverage to include orchards and more clearly links tree and hedgerow

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

protection with biodiversity recovery, carbon sequestration, climate resilience and green infrastructure delivery. As a result, it provides the strongest overall contribution towards the Sustainability Appraisal objectives while remaining justified, effective and deliverable.

LP 55 Protecting our open spaces, outdoor sport and recreational facilities

Policy numbering change

5.803 LP 52 LP 55: The proposed wording was included within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft Local Plan under Policy LP 52 Protecting our Open Spaces. The policy has subsequently been revised and expanded in the Pre-Submission Local Plan as Policy LP 55 Protecting our Open Spaces, Outdoor Sport and Recreational Facilities. The policy has therefore been reassessed to determine whether the amendments alter its sustainability performance against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Framework. Based on the SA Framework objectives, particularly SA5 (green and blue infrastructure, healthy lifestyles and access to recreation), SA7 (landscape and townscape quality), SA8 (pollution and environmental quality), SA10 (community cohesion and accessibility of services) and SA15 (quality places and communities), the changes are considered material because they broaden the scope of protection from open spaces alone to include outdoor sports and recreational facilities and strengthen the evidence base for decision-making.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.804 At Regulation 18 stage, Policy LP 52 focused primarily on the protection of existing public open spaces and sought to resist their loss unless replacement provision or clear evidence demonstrated that the space was no longer required. The policy contributed positively to maintaining access to green spaces and supporting the recreational needs of existing and future communities. Its emphasis was largely on retaining land uses that contribute to community wellbeing and local environmental quality.

5.805 The Regulation 19 version, Policy LP 55, broadens and strengthens this approach. The revised policy extends protection not only to public open spaces but also to outdoor sport and recreational facilities, reflecting the findings of the Council's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2022) and Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Strategy (2022). The policy provides a more comprehensive framework for managing proposals that could result in the loss of recreational assets and requires a more robust demonstration that facilities are surplus to requirements, have been replaced by equivalent or better provision, or that redevelopment would deliver wider community benefits. The revised wording improves consistency with the NPPF by explicitly recognising the importance of sport, recreation, physical activity, healthy lifestyles and social wellbeing.

5.806 The Regulation 19 policy therefore moves beyond a simple land protection policy and becomes a broader health, wellbeing and community infrastructure policy. It better integrates open space, recreation and sport provision within the wider growth strategy and infrastructure planning framework of the Local Plan.

5.807 The change to Policy LP 55 is material and the policy has therefore been reassessed. The updated appraisal concludes that LP55: Protecting our Open Spaces, Outdoor Sport and Recreational Facilities is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA5 and SA10, positive effects in relation to SA7, SA8 and SA15, and negligible effects across the remaining SA objectives. The table below shows the SA at Regulation 18 and again at Regulation 19:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16	
SA Reg 18	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	+	+	N	++	+	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	++	+
SA Reg 19	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	+	+	++	+	N	++	+	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	++	+

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.808** Both policy versions generate significant positive effects by protecting assets that support healthy lifestyles and community wellbeing.
- 5.809** **SA5 (Health and Wellbeing)** receives a significant positive effect because the policy safeguards access to open space, recreation and opportunities for physical activity.
- 5.810** The Regulation 19 version strengthens performance against **SA10 (Social Inclusion and Community Facilities)** through explicit protection of outdoor sport and recreational facilities as important community assets.
- 5.811** The revised policy also produces stronger positive effects for **SA7 (Landscape and Townscape)** and **SA8 (Environmental Quality)** through protection of multifunctional green spaces.
- 5.812** Overall, the Regulation 19 version of Policy LP 55 is the preferred option.
- 5.813** While both versions protect important community assets and deliver strong sustainability benefits, the Pre-Submission policy strengthens the relationship between open space protection, recreation, sport provision and healthy communities. It is supported by an updated and more comprehensive evidence base, including the Council's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy and Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Strategy, ensuring that decisions are informed by up-to-date assessments of community need.
- 5.814** The Regulation 19 policy secures broadly equivalent environmental benefits to the Regulation 18 version while delivering enhanced social and health outcomes. It provides clearer policy guidance, greater consistency with national planning policy, stronger protection of recreation infrastructure and improved justification for decision making. It also better supports the Local Plan's wider objectives relating to healthy lifestyles, community wellbeing, green infrastructure and sustainable placemaking.

- 5.815** Consequently, the Regulation 19 version achieves the strongest overall performance against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework, particularly SA5, SA7, SA8 and SA10. The policy therefore represents the most effective, justified and deliverable approach and is considered the version most appropriate.

Policy LP 55 Reasonable alternatives

- 5.816** The option of not including a policy to protect open spaces, outdoor sport and recreational facilities was not considered reasonable for Sustainability Appraisal purposes. National planning policy already places significant weight on protecting recreational land and sports facilities, recognising their contribution to health, wellbeing and community sustainability. Removing the policy would create uncertainty regarding the protection of locally important assets and would weaken the Local Plan's ability to support healthy lifestyles, social inclusion and high-quality places.
- 5.817** The realistic policy choice therefore relates to the level of protection and the scope of facilities covered. The Regulation 19 approach is preferred because it extends protection beyond open spaces alone to include outdoor sport and recreational facilities, providing a more comprehensive and evidence-based framework that better supports the sustainability objectives of the Local Plan and the SA Framework.

LP 56 Heritage Assets and their Settings

Policy numbering change

- 5.818** Draft Policy LP 53 has been retained as Policy LP 56. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that development proposals protect and conserve the district's heritage assets and where possible enhance them and their settings.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.819 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1		SA 2	SA 3		SA 4		SA 5	SA 6		SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10			SA 11		SA 12		SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	++	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	++	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	++

5.820 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead there has been refinement by adding reference to Heritage at Risk and amendments to the section addressing Archaeology. The updated policy is expected to achieve the same or stronger sustainability outcomes as the Regulation 18 version through improved implementation and heritage safeguards.

5.821 The Regulation 18 policy performed very positively against SA16 (Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting(s)) and SA7 (Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local distinctiveness of settlements) and positively against SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce these positive outcomes.

5.822 The amendments improve clarity, certainty and deliverability while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. The SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 56 Reasonable alternatives

5.823 The Further Issues and Options document set out options for the Vision and Objectives based on the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy which recognises the importance of conserving and enhancing the historic environment which underpin the Vision and Objectives in this Preferred Options Local Plan.

5.824 There is an existing statutory protection for designated heritage assets. Not setting out our approach to heritage and the historic environment is not a reasonable alternative as Local Plans are required in the NPPF to conserve and enhance them and comply with the legislative framework around the historic environment.

LP 57 Water related Development

Policy numbering change

5.825 Draft Policy LP 54 has been retained as Policy LP 57. The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to development proposals that relate to rivers, lakes and other water bodies within the district.

Changes since the Regulation 18 stage

5.826 The policy retains its original purpose and has not significantly changed. The SA from the Regulation 18 has been copied below:

SA Obj.	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14	SA 15	SA 16
SA	N	N	+	++	++	N	N	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	++

5.827 The policy has not fundamentally changed, instead wording has refined for clarity when referencing the built-up area, a criterion has been added requiring berths outside of a built-up area to demonstrate sustainable access to services. Regarding Grafham Water text added to reference resilient water infrastructure to support growth across the region as well as locally. The policy already performed very positively regarding SA9 (All people have access to high quality affordable homes that meet their needs across their lifetime) and SA3 (Manage Huntingdonshire's water resources in a sustainable manner and reduce the risk from all potential sources of flooding to people, properties and the environment). The amendments provide clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.828 The policy also performed positively against SA15 (Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities). It is expected that the refined wording will reinforce a more positive outcome.

5.829 The amendments provide clarity while maintaining the same sustainability objectives and positive effects. Considering this and that the text has already been appraised at the previous stage, SA reassessment is therefore not considered necessary.

Policy LP 57 Reasonable alternatives

5.830 The Further Issues and options document set out the following three options and the opportunity to suggest another regarding boat dweller accommodation:

- A. Look for sites to allocate for new permanent residential moorings with access to basic facilities including water provision, waste disposal and electric hook-ups as well as being close to a safe walking or cycling route to local shops and services
- B. Allow a proportion of moorings within existing leisure marinas to be used as permanent residential moorings Work with partners to ensure access to basic facilities for boat dwellers who prefer to continuously cruise

5.831 Not setting out our approach to water related development including boat dweller accommodation is not a reasonable alternative as Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 creates a duty under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to a local authority area with respect to the mooring of houseboats as part of the periodical review of housing needs. The NPPF also requires local plans to assess and establish the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community.

Assessment of Site Allocations

5.832 The information below provides a consolidated list of all Regulation 19 site allocation policies that require new or updated Sustainability Appraisal. These requirements arise where sites have been introduced or significantly amended resulting in material changes to their sustainability performance. The overall position between Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 is:

Table 6

Measure	Regulation 18	Regulation 19
Number of Allocated sites	67	68
Sites removed	-	4
New sites added	-	5
Site replacement	-	1
Strategic growth locations	5	5
Overall development strategy	Established	Maintained

5.833 In summary key changes are:

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Table 7

Change Type	Description
Reclassification of commitments	Existing strategic commitments in North Huntingdon and St Neots, including Alconbury Weald, Ermine Street and St Neots East, are identified separately from new allocations in the Regulation 19 Plan. Improved separation between committed development and proposed allocations for monitoring and implementation purposes. These changes improve clarity and do not alter planned development outcomes.
Sites removed	Five allocations identified in the Regulation 18 Plan were not carried forward and removed: - Ramsey 3: East of Wood Lane - this reduces allocations in Ramsey to two - Somersham 2: South of College Farm - this reduces allocations in Somersham to two - Bluntisham 1: South of Rectory Road - this reduces allocations in Bluntisham to two - Alwalton 1: North of 23-33 Oundle Road - this removes all allocations in Alwalton - Bythorn 1: West of Warren Lane - this site is replaced with Home Farm, Bythorn
New allocations	Three new village-scale allocations were introduced together with one replacement site in Bythorn: - Bythorn 1: Home Farm, Bythorn - this site replaces West of Warren Lane result in net net change in number of allocations in Bythorn - Catworth 1: Fruit Field, Catworth - introduces an allocation in Catworth - Ellington 2: Land west of Grafham Road, Ellington - increases number of allocations to two in Ellington - Grafham 2: South of Village Farm, Grafham - increases number of allocations to two in Grafham - Spaldwick 1: Land east of Stow Road, Spaldwick - introduces an allocation in Spaldwick - Ramsey Forty Foot 2: Woodlane Farm - - increases number of allocations to two in Ramsey Forty Foot
Renumbering and reclassifications	Some allocations were renumbered following the deletion of sites: - Somersham 3 in Regulation 18 became Somersham 2 and Somersham 4 in Regulation 18 became Somersham 3 after the deletion of former Somersham 2 South of College Farm - Bluntisham 2 in Regulation 18 became Bluntisham 1 and Bluntisham 3 in Regulation 18 became Bluntisham 2 after the deletion of former Bluntisham 1 South of Rectory Road Great Gransden was moved from the Local Service Village category to Village category meaning the employment allocation at South of Caxton Road (Great Gransden 1), was moved and no reclassified within the settlement hierarchy.
Strategic sites	The principal strategic growth locations remain unchanged: - Lodge Farm New Community for approximately 4,900 dwellings - Wyton Airfield New Community for approximately 4,000 dwellings

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Change Type	Description
	• The Lattenburys New Community for approximately 3,800 dwellings • Giffords Park for approximately 1,750 dwellings • Tithe Farm, St Neots for approximately 1,100 dwellings These sites continue to provide the majority of planned growth and remain central to the spatial strategy.
Overall strategy	The spatial strategy and overall housing trajectory remain broadly consistent between plan stages.

5.834 The Submission Plan largely retains the spatial strategy established at Regulation 18, with the overwhelming majority of allocations carried forward. Amendments are targeted and proportionate, removing a small number of sites where further evidence, environmental constraints, deliverability considerations or consultation responses indicated that alternative sites would perform better against the sustainability objectives of the Local Plan. The additions and substitutions help maintain the overall housing land supply while improving the Plan's environmental performance and deliverability. Consequently, the changes between Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 do not alter the overall strategy but refine its implementation to ensure the Plan is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

5.835 The full list of changes to sites allocation between Preferred Options stage and Pre-Submission Local Plan can be found in Appendix 'Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission'. It sets out all the proposed allocation sites in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and whether these have progressed into the Regulation 19 Local Plan. It identifies where sites have been removed and the new sites that have been added. A brief reason for the exclusion and inclusion of sites is also given in the table below. The table also identifies where policy references have been updated for ease of comparing sites between versions of the Local Plan.

5.836 The following sections group the Pre-Submission allocations into the LAA areas they were originally assessed in. Exceptions to these are the sites located within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster, these were assessed in the north central and eastern LAA areas previously but have been identified separately here to reflect their location within the Growth Cluster. Commentary is provided on how each site performs regarding its performance against the sustainability framework looking at key themes such as climate resilience, biodiversity, landscaping and heirtage, housing, community facilities, accessibility and economic performance. A short conclusion for each site is provided.

5.837 Following the overview of SA performance for each allocation, the impacts regarding health and inequalities and cumulative impacts on each settlement is provided.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Site Allocations

5.838 Allocated sites within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster area are:

- North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse
- North Huntingdon 2: Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307
- North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm, North of A141
- North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield

5.839 There have been some material changes to three of the site policies since the Preferred Options stage, these are shown below. Therefore, further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. No additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage.

5.840 No additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage in the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster. The existing site allocation of Alconbury Weald and Ermine Street from the Local Plan to 2036 have been identified as a retained allocation. The sites benefit from existing planning permissions and are building out and is expected to do so into the the new Local Plan period. The rational of including a retained policy in the Local Plan to 2036 is to provide guidance for the determination of any future planning applications which are primarily expected to be reserved matters providing detailed information to enhance that provided through the outline planning permissions.

5.841 The table below demonstrates how site policies changed from the Preferred Options stage and the subsequent change in significant effect.

Site	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
North Huntingdon 2 – Land North of A141	B2/B8 employment allocation (up to 70% B8), protection of heritage assets, ecological assessment, employment and skills strategy.	Same site area and employment function. Adds bus depot/sustainable transport use, SSSI Impact Risk Zone assessment, stronger drainage/foul water requirements and archaeological provisions.	No housing change. Employment quantum broadly unchanged (240,000 sqm retained). Includes 1,000sqm for a bus depot	Greater emphasis on sustainable transport, biodiversity mitigation and skills provision.	SA6 Biodiversity SA12 Sustainable Transport SA13 Economy	SA6 improves from potential (–) (+) due to specific SSSI safeguards. SA12 likely improves from (+) (++) through bus depot/mobility function. SA 13 Significant positive economic effects remain unchanged (++)
North Huntingdon 3 – Lodge Farm	4,900 homes including c.450 supported living, c.260 extra-care, 280 C2 bedspaces; 3 primary schools and land for	4,900 homes retained; specialist housing expressed through tenure/needs-based approach. Adds innovation quarter, mobility hub, minimum 10% BNG, employment and skills plan,	Overall housing number unchanged. Delivery assumption unchanged.	Stronger biodiversity, transport integration, employment and climate resilience requirements.	SA6 Biodiversity SA11 Employment SA12 Transport	SA6 likely increases from (+) (++) due to explicit 10% BNG requirement. SA11 improves from (+) (++)

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

	secondary school explicitly specified. No BNG target.	natural flood management. Educational provision made more flexible.				SA12 improves from (+) (++) through mobility hub and active travel emphasis.
North Huntingdon 4 – Wyton Airfield	4,000 homes; 400 supported living, 240 extra-care; 250 C2 bedspaces; employment land excluding B8 except ancillary uses; reserved land for schools specified.	4,000 homes retained; care provision becomes needs-based; allows ancillary/"last mile" B8; integrated water strategy strengthened to include natural flood management; stronger settlement separation wording.	No housing change. Employment land unchanged.	Enhanced flood-management and settlement-separation provisions.	SA2 Climate Adaptation SA3 Flood Risk	Likely improvement from (+) (++) for SA2/SA3 because natural flood management is explicitly required.

North Huntingdon 1 – Huntingdon Racecourse

5.842 Based on comparison of the Preferred Options allocation and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, North Huntingdon 1 has not undergone a significant material change that would alter the overall Sustainability Appraisal conclusions. The allocation remains a mixed-use proposal centred on the retention and enhancement of the racecourse and associated leisure, recreation, equestrian and event-related activities, together with supporting development and infrastructure. The Pre-Submission Plan places greater emphasis on:

- coordinated delivery across North Huntingdon allocations;
- cumulative infrastructure planning;
- active travel connections;
- A141 infrastructure improvements;
- strategic green infrastructure integration;
- stronger sustainable transport expectations.

5.843 These changes largely strengthen mitigation and implementation mechanisms rather than altering the development proposition itself. The principal changes relate to greater specificity regarding flood risk management, ecological protection, landscape mitigation, wastewater

capacity, transport assessments and sustainable travel requirements. Additional policy wording strengthens the approach to protecting nearby biodiversity assets, minimising visual impacts and securing infrastructure delivery. These modifications provide increased certainty over environmental mitigation and implementation but do not fundamentally alter the site's role, location, scale or overall development concept. Consequently, the sustainability performance of the allocation remains broadly unchanged and the previous SA conclusions remain robust.

North Huntingdon 2 – Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307

5.844 Based on comparison of the Preferred Options allocation and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, North Huntingdon 2 has undergone some material refinement, but these changes do not significantly affect the overall SA conclusions. The allocation continues to perform the strategic employment and logistics role envisaged in the Preferred Options plan and remains a key component of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster. The principal modifications include updated employment floorspace figures, stronger requirements for phased delivery, a more detailed emphasis on Employment and Skills Plans, and enhanced mitigation relating to landscape character, heritage assets, biodiversity, air quality, noise and water management. The Pre-Submission version also provides greater certainty

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

regarding infrastructure provision, wastewater treatment requirements, net zero measures and sustainable transport connections. These revisions improve clarity and strengthen mitigation measures, particularly for environmental objectives, but do not alter the allocation's strategic purpose as a major employment-led development. The overall SA findings therefore remain valid, with the site continuing to deliver strong economic benefits alongside manageable environmental effects subject to mitigation.

North Huntingdon 3 – Lodge Farm, North of A141

5.845 Based on comparison of the Preferred Options allocation and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, North Huntingdon 3 has not undergone a significant material change that would alter the overall Sustainability Appraisal conclusions. The allocation remains a large-scale mixed-use new community focused on delivering substantial housing growth, employment opportunities, education provision, community facilities, green infrastructure and sustainable transport connections. The principal changes comprise refinements to housing assumptions and phasing, enhanced requirements for health infrastructure, education provision, green infrastructure delivery, biodiversity net gain, water management and active travel connectivity. Additional detail has also been provided regarding place-making, skills and employment hub, the mobility hub, integrated water management and long-term stewardship arrangements. These modifications strengthen the certainty of delivery and mitigation while maintaining the same broad scale, land uses and strategic function. The allocation continues to generate significant positive effects for housing delivery, health, accessibility and economic growth, while environmental effects remain capable of mitigation. As such, the overall SA conclusions remain robust.

North Huntingdon 4 – Wyton Airfield

5.846 Based on comparison of the Preferred Options allocation and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, North Huntingdon 4 has not undergone a significant material change that would alter the overall Sustainability Appraisal conclusions. The allocation continues to comprise a major mixed-use new community delivering substantial housing growth,

employment land, local centres, schools, community facilities, strategic green infrastructure and transport improvements within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster. The key changes are refinements that provide greater certainty regarding the defence and innovation employment focus associated with RAF Wyton, park and ride facilities, public transport connectivity, infrastructure phasing, contamination assessment, wastewater management and biodiversity enhancement. The Pre-Submission plan also strengthens requirements relating to landscape protection, settlement separation, flood risk management, heritage considerations and sustainable design. These changes reinforce mitigation measures and improve confidence in implementation but do not represent a fundamental alteration to the allocation's role, scale, location or development strategy. The site's sustainability performance therefore remains broadly consistent with the Preferred Options assessment, and the previous SA conclusions remain appropriate and robust.

5.847 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

SA Objectives	SA1		SA2		SA3		SA4		SA5		SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
North Huntingdon 1	N	+	-	--	-	--	-	-	+		--	+	-	-	N	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	-	+	+
North Huntingdon 2	+	+	+	++	--	+	--	--	-	++	+	++	-	-	N	+	N		--	++	++		++	N	-	-
North Huntingdon 3	++	++	+	++	--	+	--	--	++	++	++	++	-	-	++	+	++		--	++	++		+	+	-	+
North Huntingdon 4	++	++	++	++	--	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	-	N	+	++		++	+	+		+	+	+	+

North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse

5.848 The site is significantly constrained by flood risk, with the majority of the racecourse lying within areas susceptible to fluvial flooding and only a limited area within flood zone 1 suitable for more intensive built development. Nevertheless, the allocation directs development towards previously developed land and lower-risk areas, supported by site-specific flood risk assessment, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), climate change allowances and integrated water management measures. These requirements help ensure that any development remains resilient to future climate impacts while avoiding increases in flood risk elsewhere.

5.849 The site lies within the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area and contains the Brampton Racecourse SSSI, with other ecological assets nearby including Brampton Meadow SSSI and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Development therefore has the potential to affect biodiversity and ecological connectivity. However, the allocation requires retention and

enhancement of green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain measures and sensitive management of visitor pressure. As a result, residual effects are considered neutral to positive provided the racecourse's environmental assets are safeguarded and enhanced.

5.850 The racecourse forms part of an important open landscape setting on the northern approach to Huntingdon. Extensive development could adversely affect landscape character and rural openness. However, careful siting, landscape buffers, structural planting and design requirements will limit visual impacts. While there are no major designated heritage assets within the site itself, nearby listed buildings require consideration through heritage assessment and sensitive design. Residual effects are therefore considered neutral.

5.851 The allocation supports the ongoing viability of Huntingdon Racecourse as a district-wide visitor attraction and enables growth in leisure, tourism and event-related activity. Additional employment opportunities and investment

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

generated through complementary leisure and commercial uses contribute positively to local economic objectives. Community benefits also arise through the retention of recreational facilities and enhanced accessibility.

- 5.852** The site faces substantial flood risk and ecological constraints, but the Sustainability Appraisal indicates these can be managed through strong mitigation and a focus on limited development within the least constrained areas. The allocation supports tourism, leisure and economic objectives while maintaining strategic green infrastructure functions, giving rise to a broadly positive residual sustainability outcome.

North Huntingdon 2: Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307

- 5.853** The site performs relatively well against climate resilience objectives, with approximately 91% of the allocation located within Flood Zone 1 and built development being accommodated in this area. Development requirements include SuDS, attenuation measures, strategic drainage infrastructure and climate-adapted design. Significant green infrastructure provision and landscape-led masterplanning provide additional resilience benefits and support carbon reduction ambitions.
- 5.854** Although no nationally designated ecological assets lie within the site itself, it adjoins important habitats including Brampton Racecourse SSSI and the Great Ouse Valley Priority Area. The allocation incorporates extensive green and blue infrastructure, biodiversity net gain requirements and ecological corridors. These measures provide opportunities to strengthen habitat connectivity while mitigating development impacts. Biodiversity effects are therefore assessed as neutral to positive.
- 5.855** Development of a strategic employment location will alter the existing agricultural landscape and could affect views from surrounding areas. Heritage considerations include nearby listed buildings and non-designated farmsteads whose settings require protection. The policy framework requires substantial structural landscaping, sensitive design and heritage assessment to minimise adverse effects. Following mitigation, landscape and heritage effects are considered broadly neutral.

- 5.856** The site represents one of the most significant employment allocations in the Local Plan and is expected to deliver substantial logistics, industrial and commercial floorspace with the capacity to support over 2,000 jobs. Its proximity to strategic transport routes and the wider North Huntingdon Growth Cluster strongly supports economic growth, inward investment and labour

- 5.857** North Huntingdon 2 generates significant positive economic and employment benefits and performs positively against climate adaptation and infrastructure objectives. Environmental effects relating to biodiversity, landscape and heritage can be effectively managed through embedded mitigation measures. The overall sustainability outcome is therefore strongly positive.

North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm, North of A141

- 5.858** The site performs favourably against flood risk objectives, with over 98% of the 317ha site located within flood zone 1. Strategic green infrastructure, drainage corridors and open space provision are embedded within the masterplan concept to manage surface water, address climate change risks and support long-term resilience. The allocation therefore performs positively against flood risk and adaptation objectives.
- 5.859** The allocation creates substantial opportunities for habitat creation, green infrastructure enhancement and ecological connectivity. Existing tree belts, hedgerows and woodland features provide a strong framework for biodiversity enhancement. While development will result in the loss of agricultural land, biodiversity net gain requirements and habitat-led masterplanning are expected to deliver a net improvement in ecological value over time.
- 5.860** Lodge Farm occupies a visually prominent location north of the A141 and development will extend Huntingdon's urban edge into the surrounding rural landscape. Significant landscape mitigation, green buffers and high-quality placemaking will be necessary to maintain separation from nearby settlements and minimise visual impacts. Archaeological potential

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

and heritage considerations will require assessment, but no overriding constraints have been identified. Residual effects are assessed as neutral following mitigation.

5.861 As a major strategic residential allocation, Lodge Farm makes a significant contribution to district housing needs and supports delivery of a broad range of housing types and tenures. The site benefits from proximity to Huntingdon's services, employment areas, education facilities and strategic transport improvements associated with the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster. Community infrastructure and active travel links further strengthen sustainability performance.

5.862 Lodge Farm performs strongly against housing delivery, accessibility and climate resilience objectives. Although landscape change will be significant, comprehensive masterplanning and environmental mitigation can successfully address identified constraints. The allocation is therefore considered capable of achieving a positive overall sustainability outcome.

North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield

5.863 Wyton Airfield benefits from being predominantly located within flood zone 1 and comprises largely previously developed land, supporting efficient land use objectives. The scale of the site allows integrated drainage solutions, climate-resilient design and extensive open space provision. Consequently, the site performs positively against climate adaptation and flood risk objectives.

5.864 The allocation contains significant opportunities for strategic habitat creation, biodiversity net gain and enhancement of ecological networks associated with the wider Great Ouse Valley. Although nearby ecological assets require careful protection, the extensive green infrastructure framework proposed provides opportunities for substantial environmental enhancement and improved habitat connectivity. Biodiversity effects are therefore considered positive overall.

5.865 Redevelopment of the former RAF airfield will transform the existing landscape character. However, extensive masterplanning, woodland retention, green buffers and landscape enhancements will help establish a distinctive new community while avoiding coalescence with neighbouring settlements. The site's military heritage offers opportunities for place-making and local distinctiveness. Heritage effects are assessed as neutral to positive.

5.866 Wyton Airfield is a strategic new community allocation capable of delivering substantial housing, employment opportunities, social infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements. The site supports regeneration through reuse of previously developed land and aligns strongly with the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster vision and sustainability objectives. Long-term benefits include improved connectivity, investment, employment opportunities and support for district-wide housing delivery. Development can also support the enhanced sustainability of nearby settlements such as Wyton on the Hill who currently has very limited services.

5.867 The Sustainability Appraisal identifies Wyton Airfield as one of the strongest performing strategic allocations due to its scale, previously developed nature, infrastructure opportunities and capacity for comprehensive environmental mitigation. While careful management of landscape, heritage and ecological issues will be necessary, the site is expected to deliver a significantly positive overall sustainability outcome.

5.868 Summary of Impacts on Human Health and Inequalities

5.869 In relation to SA Objective 10 (Healthy Communities and Reduced Inequalities), all four North Huntingdon allocations and the retained allocations of Alconbury Weald and Ermine Street are expected to deliver positive residual effects. Huntingdon Racecourse supports recreation, tourism and employment opportunities; North Huntingdon 2 delivers substantial job creation and economic inclusion benefits; Lodge Farm provides new homes, active travel connections and access to services; and Wyton Airfield offers the most comprehensive package of housing, employment, green infrastructure and community facilities. Collectively,

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

these allocations contribute positively towards healthier lifestyles, improved access to employment and services, stronger community cohesion and reduced social and economic inequalities across northern Huntingdonshire.

Cumulative effects

5.870 The North Huntingdon Growth Cluster represents the largest concentration of planned growth in Huntingdonshire, comprising the existing Alconbury Weald and Ermine Street developments alongside the proposed allocations at Huntingdon Racecourse, Land North of the A141, Lodge Farm and Wyton Airfield. Collectively, these allocations would deliver substantial housing and employment growth, creating a new urban extension to Huntingdon and significantly expanding the settlement's strategic role within the district. The Local Plan identifies approximately 8,900 homes and around 198.5ha of employment land across the wider cluster, including major logistics, innovation, defence and business uses.

5.871 In cumulative terms, the principal effects are expected to relate to transport, healthcare, education, utilities and environmental infrastructure. Growth across all North Huntingdon allocations will increase demand on the A141 corridor, A1307, A14 junctions and connections into Huntingdon town centre. Significant strategic transport investment is already anticipated, including A141 improvements, new junction infrastructure, active travel routes, mobility hubs and enhanced public transport provision, which these sites can help to facilitate. Nevertheless, cumulative traffic generation from residential, employment and logistics development will require coordinated delivery of these interventions to avoid congestion and maintain network performance.

5.872 The combined allocations will also generate substantial demand for healthcare services. Whilst the cluster includes provision for new neighbourhood health facilities and the redevelopment of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, cumulative population growth will increase pressure on existing primary healthcare services and hospital facilities. Similarly, demand for education provision will rise significantly, requiring delivery of new primary schools, secondary school capacity, early years provision and specialist educational facilities across Lodge Farm and Wyton Airfield.

5.873 The cumulative effect on water supply, wastewater treatment and drainage infrastructure will also be notable. Evidence indicates that Water Recycling Centres that serve these sites will likely to require future upgrades to accommodate planned growth, whilst integrated water management strategies and sustainable drainage systems will be essential to address flood risk and surface water management across the cluster.

5.874 Notwithstanding these infrastructure requirements, the concentration of housing, employment, healthcare, education and community facilities within a highly sustainable location is expected to generate positive cumulative effects by creating new communities supported by a broad range of services, jobs and sustainable transport opportunities, reducing the need for longer-distance travel and strengthening Huntingdon's role as one of the district's principal growth locations.

North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse

5.875 Huntingdon Racecourse is a mixed-use allocation focused on retaining and enhancing the existing racecourse, equestrian and leisure functions while supporting complementary development. When considered alongside the wider North Huntingdon Growth Cluster, the site contributes relatively modest population growth but forms an important component of the area's leisure, recreation and visitor economy.

5.876 In cumulative terms, the site is likely to increase traffic associated with residential growth, leisure activities, conferences, events and race day operations. Combined with development at Lodge Farm, Wyton Airfield and the adjacent employment allocation, this will contribute to additional pressures on the A141 corridor and surrounding junctions. Sustainable transport improvements and enhanced walking, cycling and public transport connections will therefore be important to managing cumulative effects.

5.877 The site will also contribute to cumulative demands on healthcare and education services generated across the wider cluster, although these effects are expected to be proportionately smaller than those arising from the larger residential-led allocations. Environmental considerations are

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

particularly important at this location given the proximity of Brampton Racecourse SSSI, the Great Ouse Valley and areas of flood risk. In combination with neighbouring allocations, careful ecological management, flood mitigation and green infrastructure provision will be required to avoid adverse cumulative effects.

- 5.878** Overall, the allocation is expected to complement the wider growth strategy by reinforcing leisure, recreation and tourism functions whilst contributing to a balanced mix of uses within North Huntingdon.

North Huntingdon 2: Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307

- 5.879** North Huntingdon 2 is a major employment-led allocation focused primarily on logistics, industrial and distribution uses. Together with employment growth at Alconbury Weald, the defence and innovation activities associated with Wyton Airfield and employment provision at Lodge Farm, the site will significantly strengthen North Huntingdon's economic role within the Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor.
- 5.880** The principal cumulative effect is likely to relate to transport. Logistics and distribution operations have the potential to generate substantial HGV movements which, combined with residential growth across the cluster, will increase pressure on the A141, A14 and wider strategic road network. Proposed highway improvements, active travel connections and public transport infrastructure will therefore be critical to mitigating cumulative effects.
- 5.881** The employment allocation is expected to generate a large number of new jobs and help improve the balance between homes and employment within the wider growth area. This may reduce out-commuting and support more sustainable travel patterns when considered alongside the nearby residential allocations.
- 5.882** Cumulative environmental effects will require careful management, particularly in relation to landscape character, heritage assets, air quality, noise and biodiversity. However, with appropriate mitigation and delivery

of strategic green infrastructure, the site is expected to provide significant positive cumulative economic benefits whilst supporting the wider sustainability of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster.

North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm, North of A141

- 5.883** Lodge Farm is the largest residential-led allocation within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster and will form a major new community. Together with Wyton Airfield and existing commitments, the site will contribute significantly towards planned housing growth in the district.
- 5.884** In cumulative terms, Lodge Farm will increase demand across all key infrastructure sectors. Additional residents will place pressure on healthcare services, schools, community facilities, utilities and transport infrastructure. However, the allocation incorporates substantial supporting infrastructure, including a local centre, neighbourhood health facilities, primary schools, secondary school provision, sports facilities, green infrastructure and an innovation quarter providing employment opportunities.
- 5.885** Transport impacts will be particularly significant when combined with neighbouring allocations. Additional movements will increase demand on the A141, local roads and active travel network. Delivery of A141 improvements, mobility hubs, bus services and high-quality pedestrian and cycling routes will be essential to supporting sustainable travel across the wider growth area.
- 5.886** The allocation also offers positive cumulative effects through provision of local jobs, services and community facilities, reducing dependency on Huntingdon town centre and helping create a more self-sustaining settlement pattern. Combined with Wyton Airfield, Lodge Farm will underpin the creation of a substantial new urban community capable of supporting strategic investment in infrastructure and services.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield

- 5.887** Wyton Airfield is a strategic mixed-use new community which, alongside Lodge Farm, will drive much of Huntingdonshire's long-term growth beyond the current plan period. The allocation incorporates substantial housing, employment, education, healthcare and community infrastructure and is closely linked to the future role of RAF Wyton and associated defence-related activities.
- 5.888** In cumulative terms, the site will contribute significantly to population growth, increasing demand on healthcare, education, leisure and utility infrastructure. However, unlike many smaller allocations, Wyton Airfield includes provision for a wide range of services and facilities intended to meet much of this demand on-site, including schools, a local centre, health facilities, sports provision and employment land.
- 5.889** The cumulative transport effect is likely to be substantial when combined with Lodge Farm, the employment allocation north of the A141 and other North Huntingdon development. Pressure on the A141 corridor, strategic road network and public transport systems will increase considerably. Consequently, the timely delivery of highway improvements, active travel infrastructure and public transport enhancements will be critical.
- 5.890** The allocation is also expected to produce significant positive cumulative economic effects through new employment opportunities, support for defence and technology sectors and links to RAF Wyton and the emerging innovation economy. Whilst environmental impacts relating to landscape, heritage and biodiversity will require careful management, the scale of strategic green infrastructure proposed across the site should help mitigate these effects and contribute to wider environmental enhancement.
- 5.891** Overall, Wyton Airfield is expected to act as one of the primary drivers of Huntingdon's future growth and long-term sustainability.

Northern Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

- 5.892** In total five sites are allocated within settlements in Northern Huntingdonshire.
- Holme 1: North of Station Road
 - Peterborough Services 1: West of the A1 and south of Peterborough Motorway Services
 - Stilton 1: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese Inn
 - Stilton 2: Rear of 16–58 North Street
 - Yaxley 1 – Eagle Business Park Phase 3
- 5.893** There have been no material changes to most site policies since the Preferred Options stage, Holme 1 saw a material change as set out below. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. The site allocation at the Preferred Options stage for Alwalton 1: North of 23–33 Oundle Road has been removed from the Plan following a review of comments received from residents, stakeholders and neighbouring authorities, who cite concern regarding heritage, transport impacts and scale of the proposal.
- 5.894** No additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage in the Northern Huntingdonshire area.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Site	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
Holme 1 - North of Station Road	50 homes, local retail/health uses or commercial uses.	Site area reduced to omit the two residential properties, landowner confirmed through the housing trajectory for the site that these will be retained and that 40 homes will be sought on site. Reduces site by 0.7ha.	40 homes - reduction of 10 homes.t	Greater emphasis on sustainable transport, biodiversity mitigation and skills provision.	SA7 Landscape and Townscape SA15 Integration	SA7 ad SA15 both improve from from (+) (++) through a slightly smaller development retaining existing properties providing a scale of development that can be integrated with the wider community.

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
Holme 1	N	+	+	++	+	++	+	-	+	+	-	++	-	+	-	+	N	--	++	--	++	N	++	++	++
Peterborough Services 1	+	N		+	--	++	--	-	+	+	+	+	-	N	++	+		--	++	+		++	N	+	+
Stilton 1	N	+	+	++	+	++	--	++	--	++	-	++	-	++	+	++	+	--	++	+	++	N	N	+	-
Stilton 2	N	+	-	++	+	+	--	++	--	++	-	++	-	+	+	++	+	--	++	+	++	N	N	+	-
Yaxley 1	+	+	-	+	+	+	--	--	+	++	+	+	-	N	+	N	-	++	++	+	++	+	N	+	++

Holme 1: North of Station Road

5.895 Since the Preferred Options, the site promoter has sought to amend the site boundary to exclude the two existing properties on site and reduce the capacity to 40 dwellings, providing growth that that enables greater integration opportunities.

5.896 The site is located within flood zone 1 and therefore performs positively against flood risk and climate resilience objectives. Allocation requirements for a site-specific drainage strategy, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS),

greenfield runoff rates and integration of natural flood management measures will ensure that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

5.897 The allocation provides opportunities for green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancement. Habitat creation, landscape buffers and integration of natural flood management measures can result in positive residual biodiversity effects.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.898 Development has the potential to affect the rural setting of Holme and to a lesser extent the wider Great Fen landscape. The allocation requirements for landscape-sensitive design, retention of boundary vegetation, archaeological assessment. Heritage constraints are limited and can be overcome through design.

5.899 The site contributes positively to housing delivery in a village settlement and supports the maintenance of local services through population retention and growth. The provision of additional homes and a local retail and health facility supports community cohesion and contributes towards identified housing needs. While access to higher-order employment opportunities remains more limited than in larger settlements, these effects are not considered significant in the context of the scale of growth proposed.

5.900 Taking account of all embedded mitigation measures, Holme 1 is considered capable of delivering a net positive sustainability outcome. Any adverse effects relating to biodiversity, landscape character and heritage are effectively managed through the allocation requirements and wider policy framework, resulting in predominantly positive residual effects.

Peterborough Services 1: West of the A1 and south of Peterborough Motorway Services

5.901 The site is located within the parish of Haddon but is located in the countryside nearer to Peterborough Motorway Services and the A1(M) rather than the settlement itself. The allocation makes a significant contribution towards the Local Plan's employment objectives through provision of approximately 116,000sqm of commercial, industrial and distribution floorspace. The site directly supports economic growth, business expansion, inward investment and employment creation. These benefits are considered substantial and represent one of the strongest positive features of the allocation.

5.902 The site is predominately within flood zone 1, the allocation requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, drainage strategy, maintenance strips and ongoing management of watercourses. Consequently, the residual flood risk effect is positive and demonstrates a clear application of the sequential approach.

5.903 The allocation provides opportunities for habitat creation, natural flood management, ecological enhancement and strengthening of green infrastructure. Landscape buffers, drainage corridors and retained open space provide opportunities for biodiversity net gain and ecological connectivity. The policy expectation for biodiversity enhancement means that residual ecological effects are considered neutral to positive.

5.904 There is potential for archaeology within the site, the allocation requires additional investigation to assess this. Also, requirements for buffer planting, landscape management and sensitive design ensure that the development integrates successfully with the surrounding environment and minimises visual effects on the wider landscape setting.

5.905 The site performs strongly in relation to infrastructure provision, digital connectivity and sustainable transport being located along the A1(M) south of Peterborough motorway services. The allocation has the potential to be a free standing employment location with linkages to nearby employment locations in Yaxley and Peterborough. It can connect directly to existing road infrastructure, active travel routes and utility networks. Policy requirements relating to wastewater capacity, transport assessments and sustainable movement further improve performance against sustainability objectives.

5.906 When assessed on a mitigation-on basis, Peterborough Services 1 delivers substantial positive economic and employment benefits with environmental effects effectively managed through embedded policy requirements. The allocation is therefore considered to result in a significantly positive overall sustainability outcome.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Stilton 1: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese Inn

- 5.907** The site is previously developed being land associated used for parking for the Stilton Cheese Inn so its redevelopment provides sustainability benefits by reusing land and provide a visual benefit to the streetscene as well as biodiversity enhancements.
- 5.908** The site is within flood zone 1 with minimal surface water flood risk. Through application of SuDS, water efficiency measures and climate-resilient design principles, the allocation performs positively against climate adaptation objectives.
- 5.909** Potential impacts on village character and nearby heritage assets are effectively managed through requirements for landscape integration, sensitive design and heritage assessment and mitigation where necessary. The redevelopment of the site can provide a heritage benefit through bringing it back into use.
- 5.910** The site contributes positively towards district housing requirements and supports the sustainability of Stilton by helping to maintain the local population, support services and provide additional housing choice. The social benefits of the allocation are therefore considered significant and long term.
- 5.911** The allocation generates positive social and housing outcomes and any environmental effects are appropriately mitigated through policy requirements. Consequently, the residual sustainability effect is positive overall.

Stilton 2: Rear of 16–58 North Street

- 5.912** The site is within flood zone 1 with minimal surface water flood risk which can be addressed through a drainage strategy, climate change modelling and implementation of SuDS. Consequently, residual effects against flood risk objectives are considered positive.

- 5.913** The site lies close to the Stilton Conservation Area and several listed buildings on North Street. Without mitigation there is potential for adverse effects on setting and local character. However, the allocation requires a proportionate heritage assessment, heritage-led design approach and consideration of impacts on designated assets. The retention of landscape buffers and careful integration with existing development significantly reduces potential effects. The residual heritage effect is therefore considered neutral rather than adverse.

- 5.914** The allocation requires retention of existing trees and landscape features, biodiversity enhancement measures and incorporation of green infrastructure. Opportunities for biodiversity net gain, ecological enhancement and habitat connectivity are available across the site. As a result, biodiversity effects are considered neutral to positive following mitigation.

- 5.915** Potential adverse effects arise from proximity to the A1, particularly in relation to noise, air quality and visual intrusion. The allocation requires appropriate mitigation measures including retention of landscaping, design responses and detailed technical assessments. With mitigation in place, residential amenity standards can be achieved and residual effects are reduced to minor adverse or neutral levels.

- 5.916** The allocation performs strongly against housing objectives by contributing approximately 55 dwellings in a Local Service Village. The site supports local services, education provision and village vitality, while making a proportionate contribution towards district-wide housing needs. These benefits are expected to be permanent and long term.

- 5.917** The Sustainability Appraisal concludes that the identified constraints can be satisfactorily addressed through embedded mitigation. The site therefore delivers a positive overall sustainability outcome with no significant residual adverse effects.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Yaxley 1 – Eagle Business Park Phase 3

- 5.918** The allocation makes a significant contribution towards the Local Plan's employment objectives through provision of approximately 33,000sqm of commercial, industrial and distribution floorspace. The site directly supports economic growth, business expansion, inward investment and employment creation. It would provide a third phase to the Eagle Business Park established Employment Area. These benefits are considered substantial and represent one of the strongest positive features of the allocation.
- 5.919** A key strength of the allocation is the sequential approach to site layout. Built development is restricted to Flood Zone 1, whilst areas affected by higher flood risk are retained as open space, flood mitigation areas and environmental enhancement land. The allocation requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, drainage strategy, maintenance strips and ongoing management of watercourses. Consequently, the residual flood risk effect is positive and demonstrates a clear application of the sequential approach.
- 5.920** The allocation provides opportunities for habitat creation, natural flood management, ecological enhancement and strengthening of green infrastructure. Landscape buffers, drainage corridors and retained open space provide opportunities for biodiversity net gain and ecological connectivity. The policy expectation for biodiversity enhancement means that residual ecological effects are considered neutral to positive.
- 5.921** No significant heritage constraints have been identified within the allocation itself. Nevertheless, requirements for buffer planting, landscape management and sensitive design ensure that the development integrates successfully with the surrounding environment and minimises visual effects on the wider fenland landscape setting. Residual heritage and landscape effects are therefore assessed as neutral.
- 5.922** The site performs strongly in relation to infrastructure provision, digital connectivity and sustainable transport. The allocation extends an established employment location and can connect directly to existing road infrastructure,

active travel routes and utility networks. Policy requirements relating to wastewater capacity, transport assessments and sustainable movement further improve performance against sustainability objectives.

- 5.923** When assessed on a mitigation-on basis, Yaxley 1 delivers substantial positive economic and employment benefits with environmental effects effectively managed through embedded policy requirements. The allocation is therefore considered to result in a significantly positive overall sustainability outcome.

Summary of Impacts on Human Health and Inequalities

- 5.924** In respect of SA Objective 10 (Healthy Communities and Reduced Inequalities), all five allocations are considered to result in positive residual effects once embedded mitigation measures are taken into account. Holme 1, Stilton 1 and Stilton 2 support community cohesion, local service retention, access to green infrastructure and housing choice, whilst Yaxley 1 and Peterborough Services 1 deliver substantial employment, skills and economic inclusion benefits. No significant adverse effects on health have been identified that cannot be mitigated through allocation requirements, development management policies and statutory environmental assessment. Consequently, the allocations collectively contribute positively towards improving health outcomes and reducing social and economic inequalities across Huntingdonshire.

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Holme

- 5.925** Holme is a small rural village with limited local services and facilities and a high degree of reliance on neighbouring settlements, particularly Yaxley, Sawtry and Peterborough, for retail, employment, healthcare and secondary education needs. Additional development at Holme 1 would increase vehicle movements on the local road network and is likely to generate additional journeys to these higher-order centres, reflecting the limited public transport provision and absence of a rail connection.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.926** In cumulative terms, growth could place additional demand on Holme Church of England Primary Academy and Sawtry Village Academy, although both schools currently have surplus capacity. Similarly, healthcare demand would increase on nearby GP practices serving the village, which are already operating with capacity pressures. Nevertheless, the overall scale of growth is unlikely to result in significant cumulative infrastructure impacts and could help support the long-term viability of existing community facilities within the village.

Haddon (Peterborough Services)

- 5.927** The site is located within the parish of Haddon but is located in the countryside nearer to Peterborough Motorway Services and the A1(M) rather than the settlement itself. It is located in a sustainable location for connections to the strategic road network supporting the site's proposed employment and commercial uses. The allocation has the potential to be a free standing employment location with linkages to nearby employment locations in Yaxley and Peterborough as it can connect directly to existing road infrastructure, active travel routes and utility networks.
- 5.928** The principal cumulative impact is likely to relate to transport, particularly where employment growth combined with ongoing nearby developments in Peterborough located on the other side of the A1(M). This may increase traffic on the strategic and local highway network and reinforces the importance of sustainable travel and active travel connections.
- 5.929** Additional employment development may also indirectly increase demand for local services, including schools and healthcare facilities, through associated workforce growth and population retention. While Haddon as a settlement has very limited services and facilities and relies on nearby settlements such as Sawtry, Yaxley and Peterborough for these, and whilst cumulative demands on education and healthcare services may increase, the scale of existing provision means that impacts are expected to be more readily accommodated than elsewhere in the district. Overall, the cumulative effect of Peterborough Services 1 is expected to be positive, supporting economic growth.

Stilton

- 5.930** Stilton is a relatively sustainable Local Service Village with a primary school, convenience shopping, healthcare access and regular public transport links. When considered alongside Stilton 2 and other existing commitments, development at Stilton 1 would result in additional traffic movements, particularly towards Peterborough, Yaxley and the strategic road network. However, the settlement is already well connected and benefits from established transport infrastructure capable of accommodating a moderate level of growth.
- 5.931** In combination with Stilton 1 and other planned development, Stilton 2 would contribute towards a level of growth consistent with the settlement's role as a Local Service Village. Cumulative transport impacts are likely to include increased use of local roads and additional commuting and service-related trips, although the village benefits from existing bus services and close proximity to larger settlements where higher-order services and employment opportunities are available.
- 5.932** The cumulative effect of growth would also increase demand for education and healthcare services. Existing primary and secondary schools currently have capacity to accommodate additional pupils, but cumulative growth may require future monitoring and infrastructure planning as demonstrated in infrastructure studies accompanying the Local Plan. Healthcare demand is similarly likely to rise across surrounding GP practices that already experience capacity pressures. Notwithstanding these considerations, the additional housing would help support the viability of local facilities and strengthen the sustainability of the settlement.

Yaxley

- 5.933** Yaxley is one of the district's most sustainable settlements, benefiting from extensive retail, educational, healthcare, recreational and employment provision. As an employment allocation at Yaxley 1 would contribute to the settlement's existing economic role and support a more balanced relationship between homes and jobs.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.934 The principal cumulative impact is likely to relate to transport, particularly where employment growth combines with ongoing residential development in Yaxley and the wider Peterborough fringe. This may increase traffic on the strategic and local highway network and reinforces the importance of sustainable travel and active travel connections. However, the settlement benefits from existing infrastructure and strong connectivity that are capable of supporting growth.

5.935 Additional employment development may also indirectly increase demand for local services, including schools and healthcare facilities, through associated workforce growth and population retention. Yaxley contains multiple primary schools, access to secondary education and an existing GP surgery, providing a significantly stronger infrastructure base than most villages in the district. Whilst cumulative demands on education and healthcare services will increase, the scale of existing provision means that impacts are expected to be more readily accommodated than elsewhere in the district. Overall, the cumulative effect of Yaxley 1 is expected to be positive, supporting both economic growth and the long-term sustainability of the wider settlement.

North Eastern Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

5.936 In total ten sites are allocated within settlements in North Eastern Huntingdonshire:

- Bury 1: Bury Industrial Estate
- Bury 2: Land off Cheveril Lane
- Bury 3: RAF Upwood - Phase 3
- Ramsey 1: RAF Upwood Phase 4
- Ramsey 2: North of Hollow Lane
- Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Rural Mooring
- Ramsey Forty Foot 2: Woodlane Farm, West of Ramsey Road
- Somersham 1: College Farm West of Parkhall Road
- Somersham 2: Dews Bus & Coach Depot
- Somersham 3: College Farm West of Newlands Industrial Estate

5.937 There have been no material changes to the majority of site policies since the Preferred Options stage. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites.

5.938 Ramsey 3: East of Wood Lane was initially allocated in the Preferred Option Local Plan subsequently removed from Pre-Submission Plan. Upon review of the concerns and objections raised to the loss of community land at Ramsey 3, the site has been removed as a draft allocation despite the rationale for allocating it being to secure the long term use of the wider site for community open space uses. Ramsey Forty Foot 2: Woodlane Farm, West of Ramsey Road was added to the Pre-Submission Plan following the additional site allocations consultation in May-June 2026.

5.939 The site option Somersham 2: South of College Farm, was initially allocated in the Preferred Option Local Plan subsequently removed from Pre-Submission Plan. Following a review of comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cite concern regarding infrastructure capacity, cumulative impact of all draft allocations on the village, transport

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

impacts, landscape harm and scale of the proposal, the site has been removed as a draft allocation. The removal of this site resulted in the re-numbering of the remaining sites in the settlement.

5.940 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
Bury 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	+	++	+	++	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	+	++	N	N	+	-
Bury 2	N	+	-	++	-	--	N	N	+	++	+	++	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	--	+	N	N	+	++
Bury 3	N	+	+	++	-	++	++	++	-	++	+	++	+	+	++	+	-	++	++	-	+	N	N	+	++
Ramsey 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	++	-	+	+	++	+	N	++	N	-	++	++	--	++	+	N	+	++
Ramsey 2	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	++	--	++	-	-	+	+	++	+	N	++	+	-	+	N	N	-	-
Ramsey Forty Foot 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	N	N	+	++	--	++	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	-	++	N	N	+	-
Ramsey Forty Foot 2	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	--	++	-	++	+	+	++	--	N	+	++	-	++		N	+	++
Somersham 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	+	+	-	++	+	++	+	++	+	+	++	-	++	N	N	++	++
Somersham 2	N	+	+	++	-	+	+	--	--	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	--	+	-	+	N	N	+	++
Somersham 3	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	--	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	N	+	++	-	++	N	N	+	+

Bury 1: Bury Industrial Estate, Old Station Road

5.941 The site is located within flood zone 1 with low surface water flood risk and therefore performs positively against flood risk objectives. The allocation requires a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, drainage strategy, SuDS

and modelling of the High Lode watercourse. These measures are expected to provide a positive residual effect for climate resilience and flood adaptation.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- 5.942** The site is previously developed land, which helps minimise pressure on undeveloped countryside. Retention of mature trees and enhanced landscaping are required, providing opportunities for biodiversity net gain and improved ecological connectivity. Residual effects are therefore considered neutral to positive.
- 5.943** The site is adjacent to the Ramsey Conservation Area and requires a heritage assessment and sensitive design response. Redevelopment provides an opportunity to remove detracting industrial land uses and enhance the setting of the conservation area. Following mitigation, heritage effects are assessed as neutral to positive.
- 5.944** The allocation contributes approximately 30 dwellings in a sustainable location adjoining a market town. The site provides housing close to services, shops and employment opportunities while supporting regeneration of underused land. Social benefits are assessed as positive and long term.
- 5.945** The allocation performs particularly well through redevelopment of previously developed land, regeneration benefits and sustainable location. Embedded mitigation adequately addresses flood risk, contamination and heritage considerations, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Bury 2: Land off Cheveril Lane

- 5.946** The allocation is intended primarily for biodiversity enhancement and flood mitigation rather than built development. Significant areas fall within flood zones 2, 3a and 3b, making residential development inappropriate. The creation of flood storage and natural flood management features generates positive effects for climate adaptation.
- 5.947** The allocation performs strongly against biodiversity objectives. Habitat creation, wet woodland, flood meadow restoration and opportunities for biodiversity net gain are integral to the proposal. Ecological enhancement is likely to produce substantial positive effects.

- 5.948** The site contributes to the rural setting of Ramsey and lies adjacent to the Ramsey Conservation Area. The proposed habitat-led approach and retention of landscape features are likely to preserve and potentially enhance local character and heritage setting. Residual effects are positive.

- 5.949** The allocation does not directly contribute housing or employment. However, it provides wider public benefits through flood resilience, environmental enhancement and ecosystem services. Effects are therefore neutral to moderately positive.

- 5.950** Although the site does not contribute directly to growth objectives, it performs exceptionally well against environmental sustainability objectives. The residual sustainability effect is strongly positive.

Bury 3: RAF Upwood Phase 3

- 5.951** The site includes previously developed land being part of the former RAF Upwood airfield. This helps minimise pressure on undeveloped countryside. Residual effects are therefore considered neutral to positive.

- 5.952** The site lies within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. Allocation requirements include SuDS, greenfield runoff rates, climate change modelling and natural flood management measures. Significant green infrastructure provision further supports climate resilience objectives.

- 5.953** Approximately 11.5ha of the allocation is dedicated to green infrastructure, accessible green space and flood mitigation. Retention of hedgerows and trees, coupled with biodiversity enhancement measures, creates strong opportunities for habitat creation and ecological connectivity. Residual biodiversity effects are positive.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.954** The allocation requires landscape-led design, retention of existing vegetation and preservation of elements of the former RAF runway as heritage assets. Integration with adjacent RAF Upwood phases helps create a coherent place while preserving landscape character. Effects are assessed as neutral to positive.
- 5.955** The allocation delivers approximately 170 homes and supports community growth within the Ramsey and Bury area. New green infrastructure, active travel links and proximity to existing services generate significant social benefits and support identified housing needs.
- 5.956** RAF Upwood Phase 3 delivers a balanced sustainability outcome with strong housing, recreational and environmental benefits. Residual effects are considered positive overall.

Ramsey 1: RAF Upwood Phase 4 (Upwood)

- 5.957** The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. The allocation requires SuDS, natural flood management and climate-resilient design, resulting in positive residual effects.
- 5.958** Around 9.2ha of the allocation is dedicated to green infrastructure and environmental enhancement. Opportunities exist to strengthen ecological corridors, improve habitats and enhance biodiversity through integrated landscape design. Residual effects are positive.
- 5.959** The allocation requires sensitive integration with surrounding residential areas, the wider RAF Upwood development and the rural edge of Ramsey. Landscape buffers and heritage-sensitive design help minimise adverse effects. Residual impacts are assessed as neutral.
- 5.960** A key strength of the allocation is its mixed-use nature. In addition to employment floorspace of approximately 19,200sqm, the scheme supports job creation, economic diversification and local investment. These

employment benefits are complemented by enhanced accessibility and community infrastructure. It serves to balance the residential phases delivered through the redevelopment of RAF Upwood.

- 5.961** The allocation delivers substantial economic benefits alongside environmental enhancement and sustainable transport improvements. Residual sustainability effects are strongly positive.

Ramsey 2: North of Hollow Lane

- 5.962** The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. SuDS, runoff controls and natural flood management measures are expected to ensure positive residual effects against flood risk objectives.
- 5.963** Existing trees, hedgerows and landscape features are required to be retained and enhanced. Additional landscaping and biodiversity measures provide opportunities for biodiversity net gain and ecological improvement. Effects are assessed as neutral to positive.
- 5.964** The allocation lies within the Ramsey Conservation Area and forms part of the historic setting of Ramsey Abbey. Heritage assessment, archaeological investigation and conservation-led design are therefore essential. Mitigation measures are likely to reduce adverse effects to neutral.
- 5.965** The site contributes approximately 20 dwellings and strengthens housing supply in a sustainable market town location. Proximity to services, schools and community facilities provides long-term social benefits.
- 5.966** While heritage sensitivity is a significant consideration, the allocation includes robust safeguards. The site is capable of delivering a positive overall sustainability outcome following mitigation.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Rural Mooring

- 5.967** The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. Allocation requirements include a proportionate flood risk assessment, drainage strategy, maintenance of greenfield runoff rates and incorporation of natural flood management measures.
- 5.968** Retention and enhancement of trees, hedgerows and green infrastructure are required. Opportunities for biodiversity net gain and landscape enhancement are available, particularly along site boundaries and drainage features. Residual ecological effects are positive.
- 5.969** The site is on the northern edge of Ramsey Forty Foot along the Forty Foot/ Vermuden's Drain water way so will be prominent on the localised landscape. Heritage impacts can be managed through design.
- 5.970** The allocation provides moorings and open space uses and supports the sustainability of Ramsey Forty Foot by strengthening the local population and supporting community vitality. These social benefits are significant for a village-scale settlement.
- 5.971** The site performs positively against housing, community and environmental objectives. Heritage considerations can be effectively managed through allocation requirements, resulting in a positive residual sustainability effect.

Ramsey Forty Foot 2: Woodlane Farm

- 5.972** The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. Allocation requirements include a proportionate flood risk assessment, drainage strategy, maintenance of greenfield runoff rates and incorporation of natural flood management measures.
- 5.973** Retention and enhancement of trees, hedgerows and green infrastructure are required. Opportunities for biodiversity net gain and landscape enhancement are available, particularly along site boundaries and drainage features. Residual ecological effects are positive.

5.974 The site occupies an edge-of-settlement location and is close to scheduled prehistoric barrow cemeteries. Archaeological investigation and sensitive landscape treatment are required to protect heritage significance and maintain local character. Residual effects are considered neutral.

5.975 The allocation provides approximately 30 dwellings and supports the sustainability of Ramsey Forty Foot by strengthening the local population and supporting community vitality. These social benefits are significant for a village-scale settlement.

5.976 The site performs positively against housing, community and environmental objectives. Heritage considerations can be effectively managed through allocation requirements, resulting in a positive residual sustainability effect.

Somersham 1: College Farm West of Parkhall Road

5.977 The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. Detailed drainage design, climate change allowances, greenfield discharge rates and natural flood management measures are required. Overall effects are positive.

5.978 Retention of trees, hedgerows and landscape features forms a key component of the allocation. Public open space and biodiversity enhancement measures as part of the development provide opportunities for measurable biodiversity gains and improved recreational access. Effects are positive.

5.979 The site occupies a transition between the village and surrounding countryside. Landscape-sensitive design, planting and archaeological investigation are required to protect local character. Heritage and landscape effects are therefore assessed as neutral.

5.980 The allocation is expected to deliver around 120 homes in a Service Centre settlement. This represents a significant contribution to housing delivery while supporting local schools, services and community facilities. Social effects are strongly positive.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.981** The allocation makes a significant contribution to housing provision in a sustainable settlement while maintaining appropriate environmental safeguards. Residual sustainability effects are positive overall.

Somersham 2: Dews Bus & Coach Depot

- 5.982** The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. SuDS, climate change modelling and natural flood management measures are required. Residual flood effects are positive.
- 5.983** As a previously developed site, redevelopment limits pressure on greenfield land. New landscaping, retention of screening vegetation and provision of open space offer biodiversity enhancement opportunities. Effects are neutral to positive. The site is about 3.2km from the Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar so assessment of impact on these nature sites is required, it is noted that as a previously developed site the possibility of the site being functionally linked land to the nature sites is low.
- 5.984** The site is well screened by mature vegetation. Archaeological assessment and careful design are required due to nearby heritage interests. Retention of landscaping significantly mitigates visual effects. Residual effects are neutral.
- 5.985** The site provides approximately 50 homes through the redevelopment of an existing depot site. It supports efficient land use, regeneration and housing delivery within a sustainable Service Centre location. Social benefits are positive.
- 5.986** Redevelopment of a brownfield site is a major sustainability advantage. With mitigation in place for contamination, drainage and ecology, the allocation achieves a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Somersham 3: College Farm West of Newlands Industrial Estate

- 5.987** The site lies is within flood zone 1 and benefits from low levels of surface water flood risk. Drainage strategies, SuDS and natural flood management measures are required to manage surface water and climate change effects, resulting in positive residual impacts.
- 5.988** The retention of boundary vegetation, creation of green infrastructure and provision of biodiversity net gain contribute positively to ecological objectives. Opportunities also exist to enhance green corridors linking the settlement edge with the wider countryside.
- 5.989** The site forms a transitional area between Somersham and the countryside. Landscape buffers and high-quality design will be necessary to soften the settlement edge and minimise visual impacts. Effects are assessed as neutral.
- 5.990** The allocation contributes approximately 45 homes and supports the sustainability of Somersham. Its location adjacent to the Newlands Industrial Estate also offers access to local employment opportunities, supporting a balanced pattern of development.
- 5.991** The allocation provides positive housing and accessibility benefits while maintaining environmental safeguards. Any landscape and amenity effects can be successfully mitigated, leading to a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Summary of Human Health and Inequalities

- 5.992** Across the ten allocations, residual effects against SA Objective 10 (Healthy Communities and Reduced Inequalities) are generally positive. Bury 3, Ramsey 1, Somersham 1 and Somersham 3 particularly benefit from access to green infrastructure, active travel opportunities and proximity to services. Bury 1 and Somersham 2 make effective use of previously developed land and support regeneration objectives, while Ramsey 2 and Ramsey Forty Foot 1 and Ramsey Forty Foot 2 strengthen local housing provision in

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

sustainable locations. Collectively, the allocations support housing delivery, community cohesion, healthy lifestyles and access to employment while ensuring environmental constraints are appropriately mitigated.

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Bury and Ramsey

5.993 Bury and Ramsey function as closely related settlements both physically and in terms of shared services. The proposed allocations at Bury 1 (Bury Industrial Estate), Bury 3 (RAF Upwood Phase 3), Ramsey 1 (RAF Upwood Phase 4) and Ramsey 2 (North of Hollow Lane) together represent a significant concentration of growth within the wider settlement area. In combination, these sites would provide approximately 230 additional dwellings, new employment floorspace at RAF Upwood Phase 4, and biodiversity enhancement land at Bury 2. The cumulative effect would be to strengthen Ramsey's role as a market town and service centre for the surrounding rural area.

5.994 Additional growth is likely to increase traffic movements on Ramsey Road, Hollow Lane, Park Road and the wider local highway network, particularly for journeys towards Huntingdon, St Ives and the wider fenland area. The RAF Upwood Phase 3 and Phase 4 allocations are intended to be planned comprehensively, with active travel connections and substantial green infrastructure helping to mitigate some transport impacts. Nevertheless, cumulative growth is likely to increase demand on junction capacity and local road infrastructure, requiring ongoing monitoring and mitigation through transport assessments and infrastructure delivery.

5.995 In combination, the allocations would increase demand for local education, healthcare and community facilities. Ramsey benefits from a comparatively strong infrastructure base, including primary schools, Abbey College Ramsey, healthcare provision and a range of retail and community services. However, the Sustainability of Settlements assessment identifies existing pressures on healthcare capacity and cumulative growth is likely to place

additional demand on GP services and wider community infrastructure. Future investment and infrastructure planning may therefore be required to ensure service provision keeps pace with growth.

5.996 The cumulative environmental effects are mixed. Bury 2 provides strategic biodiversity net gain and flood mitigation land, which could help offset ecological pressures arising from residential growth elsewhere within the wider settlement. RAF Upwood Phases 3 and 4 include significant green infrastructure requirements and opportunities for habitat enhancement, active travel and natural flood management measures. While development would result in the loss of some undeveloped land at the edge of the settlements, the overall package of allocations has the potential to deliver environmental enhancements and strengthen green infrastructure connectivity.

5.997 The employment allocation at Ramsey 1 (RAF Upwood Phase 4) would also contribute towards improving the balance between homes and jobs in the area. When considered alongside the residential allocations at Bury 3 and Ramsey 2, this may help reduce the need for some out-commuting and support the long-term economic sustainability of the wider Ramsey-Bury-Upwood area.

5.998 Overall, the cumulative effect of the allocations is expected to be positive in strategic terms, supporting housing delivery, employment growth and local service sustainability, although ongoing monitoring of transport, healthcare and educational infrastructure will be necessary.

Ramsey Forty Foot

5.999 Ramsey is classified as a village closely linked to the market town of Ramsey. It has limited services and development at Ramsey Forty 1 and Ramsey Forty Foot 2 would see a modest increase to the size of the settlement. Moorings and leisure uses balance out built development and strengthen the sustainability of the settlement. It is still likely that residents will travel to Ramsey for main services, education and transport connections.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1000 Overall, the cumulative effect of the allocations is expected to be positive in strategic terms, supporting housing delivery, employment growth and local service sustainability, although ongoing monitoring of transport, healthcare and educational infrastructure will be necessary.

Somersham

5.1001 Somersham is a Service Centre with a comparatively good range of local services and facilities, including primary education, retail provision, community facilities and employment opportunities. The proposed allocations at Somersham 1 (College Farm West of Parkhall Road), Somersham 2 (Dews Bus & Coach Depot) and Somersham 3 (College Farm West of Newlands Industrial Estate) would together deliver approximately 215 additional dwellings and represent a notable level of growth for the settlement.

5.1002 In cumulative terms, development at these sites would increase vehicle movements on Parkhall Road, Chatteris Road, the B1086 and surrounding local roads. Whilst Somersham benefits from an established settlement structure and local services that reduce the need for some longer-distance travel, many residents continue to rely on private vehicles for journeys to Huntingdon, St Ives and Cambridge. As a result, cumulative growth is likely to increase traffic levels and place additional pressure on local junctions and highway infrastructure. All three allocations promote active travel improvements and enhanced pedestrian connectivity, which should help mitigate some transport effects.

5.1003 The cumulative impact of growth would increase demand for healthcare, education and community services. Somersham already functions as a service hub for surrounding villages and the additional population generated by the allocations would place further pressure on local GP provision and school places. Although the settlement has a stronger service base than many villages, healthcare capacity is a known issue across much of Huntingdonshire and may require future infrastructure investment to accommodate cumulative growth.

5.1004 The allocations would also increase pressure on wastewater and drainage infrastructure. The Local Plan evidence identifies that Somersham Water Recycling Centre is likely to be close to, or exceed, current permit limits during the plan period. Consequently, upgrades to wastewater infrastructure and careful phasing of growth may be required to avoid cumulative impacts on water quality and environmental capacity.

5.1005 From an environmental perspective, cumulative effects are likely to be moderate. Development would extend the settlement edge in several locations and result in the loss of areas of agricultural land. However, the allocations include requirements for landscaping, tree retention, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage systems and natural flood management measures. Somersham 3 will require particular attention to managing the relationship between new residential development and the adjacent industrial estate, including cumulative effects relating to noise and amenity.

5.1006 Taken together, the three allocations would help reinforce Somersham's role as a Service Centre by supporting local services, shops and community facilities through population growth. Subject to appropriate infrastructure improvements and mitigation measures, the cumulative effects are considered generally positive, although continued monitoring of transport, education, healthcare and wastewater infrastructure will be important to ensure that growth remains sustainable.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

North Central Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

5.1007 In total 12 sites are allocated within settlements in Northern Central Huntingdonshire.

- Abbots Ripton 1: Home Farm South
- Alconbury 1: South of Great North Road
- Alconbury 2: East of Globe Lane
- Sawtry 1: West of Glatton Road 293
- Sawtry 2: East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate
- Sawtry 3: West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road
- Sawtry 4: Off Old North Road
- Sawtry 5: Little Common Farm
- Sawtry 6: North of Black Horse Industrial Estate
- The Stukeleys 1: Between 76-86 Owl End
- Spaldwick 1: Land east of Stow Road
- Upton 1: Land south west of South Farm

5.1008 There have been no material changes to these site policies since the Preferred Options stage. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. Spaldwick 1: Land east of Stow Road was introduced as an additional allocation in the Plan at the Pre-Submission stage following the additional site allocations consultation in May-June 2026.

5.1009 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
Abbots Ripton 1	N	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	++	-	+	+	+	+	+	++	++	++	--	+	++	N	++	-
Alconbury 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	++	+	++	-	++	-	+	+	+	++	+	+	-	++	N	N	+	-
Alconbury 2	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	++	+	++	-	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	-	++	N	N	+	+
Sawtry 1	N	+	-	++	-	+	--	-	++	++	-	-	+	++	+	+	-	++	++	+	++	N	N	-	+
Sawtry 2	N	+	-	+	-	+	--	-	--	++	-	-	+	++	+	+	N	++	++	+	+	N	N	-	+
Sawtry 3	N	+	-	++	-	+	--	-	+	+	-	+	-	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	++	+	+	+	+
Sawtry 4	+	+	-	++	-	++	--	-	-	++	-	++	-	N	-	+	N	++	-	-	++	+	-	+	-
Sawtry 5	N	+	-	+	-	+	--	-	--	++	-	+	-	N	-	+	N	++	-	-	++	+	N	+	-
Sawtry 6	N	+	-	+	-	+	--	-	+	++	-	+	-	N	-	+	N	++	+	+	++	++	+	+	+
The Stukeleys 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	-	++	-	++	+	++	++	+	+	++	++	++	+	N	N	+	++
Spaldwick 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	-	-	-	++	-	+	+	+	-	++	+	--	++	-	++	N	N	+	+
Upton 1	N	+	-	+	-	++	--	-	-	++	-	+	+	++	-	--	N	--	+	--	+	N	N	+	+

Abbots Ripton 1: Home Farm South

5.1010 The site performs positively in relation to flood risk. The majority of the allocation lies within flood zone 1. A site specific flood risk assessment, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and natural flood management

measures are required as part of the allocation. These measures are expected to ensure a positive residual effect against climate resilience and flood risk objectives.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1011 The site contains important mature trees, including protected elm trees and areas of ecological value. Development presents some risks to biodiversity, but allocation requirements include retention of key landscape features, biodiversity enhancement, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. Consequently, residual biodiversity effects are considered neutral to positive.

5.1012 The allocation lies adjacent to the Abbots Ripton Conservation Area. There is potential for effects on setting and local character, but heritage assessment, sensitive design and retention of landscape features are required. The overall residual effect is considered neutral.

5.1013 The site supports village housing delivery and includes opportunities for small-scale employment expansion through redevelopment of existing commercial buildings. Good access to local facilities, including the primary school, village hall and local services, contributes positively to sustainability objectives.

5.1014 With embedded mitigation and retention of ecological features, Home Farm South is assessed as capable of delivering a positive sustainability outcome with strong social and moderate economic benefits.

Alconbury 1: South of Great North Road

5.1015 The site lies within flood zone 1 and is at only limited risk from surface water flooding. Drainage requirements and SuDS provide confidence that flood risk can be effectively managed. Residual effects are positive.

5.1016 The site is remote from designated ecological sites, but opportunities for habitat enhancement are somewhat limited. Biodiversity net gain and landscaping requirements are expected to achieve neutral to positive outcomes.

5.1017 The site is well related to existing development and can form a logical extension to the village. Nearby listed buildings require sensitive consideration, but landscape and heritage impacts are considered manageable through design-led mitigation.

5.1018 The allocation supports approximately 30 dwellings and benefits from proximity to local services, schools and employment opportunities at Alconbury Weald. Housing and accessibility effects are therefore strongly positive.

5.1019 The site performs positively across most sustainability objectives and is considered a sustainable housing allocation subject to heritage and landscaping mitigation.

Alconbury 2: East of Globe Lane

5.1020 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and has limited identified flooding constraints. Drainage infrastructure and flood mitigation requirements ensure positive performance against SA climate objectives.

5.1021 The site is not constrained by statutory ecological designations and can incorporate biodiversity net gain and extensive planting. Residual ecological effects are considered positive.

5.1022 Development has potential visibility within the wider landscape and lies near conservation area and listed building settings. Landscape mitigation and heritage assessments are required. Residual impacts are considered neutral.

5.1023 The allocation contributes around 60 homes within a Local Service Village that has access to services and nearby employment opportunities. The scheme performs strongly against housing and community objectives.

5.1024 The site delivers a positive overall sustainability outcome with housing benefits outweighing manageable environmental constraints.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Sawtry 1: West of Glatton Road

- 5.1025** The site is influenced by Sawtry Brook and associated flood risk. The allocation requires a sequential approach, significant open space for flood attenuation, drainage infrastructure and natural flood management measures. Following mitigation, effects are considered neutral to positive.
- 5.1026** Green infrastructure corridors and flood mitigation land provide substantial opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and habitat connectivity.
- 5.1027** The site forms a substantial extension to the settlement and will require careful landscape treatment, it provides a second phase to development now under construction. Retention of existing vegetation and creation of landscape buffers reduces visual impacts. Heritage effects are limited and manageable.
- 5.1028** The allocation contributes approximately 330 homes and supports population growth in a Service Centre with good access to schools, services and employment. The social benefits are significant and long term.
- 5.1029** Subject to flood mitigation and landscape integration, Sawtry 1 delivers a positive sustainability outcome with significant housing benefits.

Sawtry 2: East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate

- 5.1030** Flood risk is a central consideration owing to the proximity of Sawtry Brook. Open space buffers, drainage measures, flood assessments and SuDS are required. Residual flood effects are considered manageable following mitigation.
- 5.1031** The allocation includes open space provisions and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement associated with green infrastructure corridors. Residual effects are positive.

- 5.1032** The site benefits from opportunities to integrate development with existing residential and employment uses. Landscape mitigation will be required along exposed boundaries. Heritage constraints are limited and any can be overcome through design.
- 5.1033** Approximately 170 homes would be delivered in a sustainable Service Centre location close to employment, community facilities and local services, creating significant social benefits.
- 5.1034** The site performs positively overall and contributes meaningfully towards housing delivery while accommodating flood risk through embedded mitigation measures.

Sawtry 3: West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road

- 5.1035** The site benefits from a relatively low level of flood risk and can accommodate climate-resilient drainage infrastructure and SuDS. Residual effects are positive.
- 5.1036** Development would result in the loss of some greenfield land, but biodiversity net gain, landscape planting and habitat creation opportunities are expected to achieve neutral to positive residual effects.
- 5.1037** Potential impacts on village edge character are capable of mitigation through landscape-led design and retention of existing boundary features. Heritage impacts are anticipated to be neutral and impacts can be overcome through design.
- 5.1038** The site supports housing delivery within a highly sustainable Service Centre and reinforces the viability of local services and facilities.
- 5.1039** Sawtry 3 is expected to generate positive sustainability benefits, particularly in relation to housing, accessibility and community objectives.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Sawtry 4: Off Old North Road

- 5.1040** The site benefits from a generally favourable flood risk position and can incorporate sustainable drainage infrastructure. The allocation requires open space to safeguard against flood risk.
- 5.1041** The site presents opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through landscaping and green infrastructure. Net gain measures are expected to offset development impacts.
- 5.1042** Landscape effects are moderate due to the site's edge-of-settlement location but can be effectively mitigated through design requirements. Archaeology works are required.
- 5.1043** The site contributes positively to providing employment development supporting job creation and services in a sustainable location off the A1(M).
- 5.1044** The allocation delivers a positive sustainability outcome by providing employment development in a sustainable location, no significant residual environmental effects identified.

Sawtry 5: Little Common Farm

- 5.1045** Flood risk constraints are limited and can be addressed through standard drainage and climate adaptation measures. The allocation requires open space to safeguard against flood risk.
- 5.1046** Biodiversity net gain and habitat enhancement opportunities provide scope for positive ecological outcomes.
- 5.1047** Potential landscape effects arise from extending the built form of the settlement, but these are capable of mitigation through planting, buffering and design quality. Heritage constraints are limited and can be overcome through design.
- 5.1048** The site contributes positively to providing employment development supporting job creation and services in a sustainable location off the A1(M).

- 5.1049** The overall sustainability outcome is positive, with economic benefits outweighing minor environmental effects.

Sawtry 6: North of Black Horse Industrial Estate

- 5.1050** The site is capable of accommodating development with standard flood mitigation and SuDS requirements. The allocation requires open space to safeguard against flood risk.
- 5.1051** Proximity to existing employment areas presents opportunities for landscape enhancement and creation of ecological corridors alongside development.
- 5.1052** The relationship with existing industrial development limits wider landscape impacts. Effects can be mitigated through appropriate buffers and planting. Heritage constraints are limited and can be overcome through design.
- 5.1053** The site contributes positively to providing employment development supporting job creation and services in a sustainable location off the A1(M). It is located north of the Black Horse Industrial Estate so reduces travel demand and supports economic sustainability.
- 5.1054** Sawtry 6 is considered a sustainable allocation capable of delivering positive social and economic effects with manageable environmental impacts.

The Stukeleys 1: Between 76-86 Owl End

- 5.1055** The site benefits from a low flood risk location and can accommodate sustainable drainage measures and climate adaptation requirements.
- 5.1056** Biodiversity enhancement, retention of vegetation and green infrastructure provision will support positive residual ecological outcomes.
- 5.1057** The site adjoins existing development and can be integrated into the settlement without significant landscape harm. Heritage constraints are limited and manageable.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1058 The allocation provides modest housing growth in a village benefiting from strong connections to Huntingdon and Alconbury Weald, offering good access to employment and services.

5.1059 The site achieves a positive sustainability balance with strong housing and accessibility benefits.

Spaldwick 1: Land East of Stow Road

5.1060 The site is principally located within a low flood risk area. Site-specific drainage measures, SuDS and climate adaptation requirements support positive performance against flood resilience objectives.

5.1061 The allocation provides opportunities for biodiversity net gain through landscape planting, strategic green infrastructure and habitat enhancement.

5.1062 Potential effects on village character and wider countryside setting can be addressed through phasing of development, sensitive design, landscaping and retention of existing boundary features. Heritage impacts require assessment so that mitigations can shape site layout and design.

5.1063 The site contributes positively to housing supply within a Local Service Village and assists in maintaining local services such as the village's primary school, community vitality and housing choice.

5.1064 Spaldwick 1 is assessed as delivering a positive sustainability outcome with manageable environmental effects and strong social benefits.

Upton 1: Land south west of South Farm

5.1065 The site is located in flood zone 1, with only limited areas affected by surface water flood risk and is capable of accommodating development while managing surface water and drainage constraints through site-specific flood mitigation measures. Climate adaptation objectives can be incorporated within the allocation.

5.1066 Appropriate landscape mitigation, retention of key features and sensitive design will be necessary to avoid adverse landscape effects. Heritage impacts are limited and can be managed through design.

5.1067 The allocation is a very small-scale development of approximately seven dwellings. Consequently, its direct cumulative effects are expected to be limited. It makes a positive contribution to housing choice through provision of self-build and custom-build opportunities.

5.1068 There are limited services within Upton itself so relies on most services in nearby settlements such as Alconbury, Sawtry and Huntingdon. Public transport is limited so development will likely result in private car usage. It benefits from reasonable access to local facilities, services and employment opportunities in Great Paxton and St Neots, supporting community sustainability.

5.1069 Overall, the allocation represents infill growth that supports the continued vitality of the village without generating significant additional infrastructure requirements.

Summary of Human Health and Inequalities

5.1070 Across all 12 allocations, the dominant sustainability benefits arise from housing delivery, support for local services, community cohesion, improved accessibility and opportunities for active travel. Embedded requirements relating to biodiversity net gain, flood risk management, heritage protection, landscape design and climate resilience ensure that environmental constraints are generally reduced to neutral or positive residual effects. Consequently, all 11 sites are considered capable of contributing positively towards SA Objective 10 relating to healthy communities and reduced inequalities.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Abbots Ripton

5.1071 Abbots Ripton is a Local Service Village with a very limited range of services and facilities and a high degree of dependence on larger nearby settlements, particularly Sawtry, Alconbury Weald and Huntingdon for employment, healthcare, secondary education and day-to-day services. Development at Abbots Ripton 1 would provide a modest level of housing alongside a small area of employment land, helping to support local economic activity and the long-term vitality of the village.

5.1072 In cumulative terms, the allocation would increase vehicle movements on local roads and generate additional journeys to surrounding service centres and Huntingdon. Demand for healthcare services is likely to increase on nearby GP practices. Additional residents would also contribute towards demand for places at Abbots Ripton Church of England Primary School and St Peter's School in Huntingdon, although current evidence indicates available surplus capacity at both schools.

5.1073 The cumulative effects of growth are likely to be most pronounced in relation to wastewater infrastructure, flood risk management and transport connectivity. The allocation itself highlights the need for drainage mitigation and engagement with utility providers, and in combination with other allocations in nearby settlements may increase pressure on water and wastewater infrastructure. Nevertheless, the relatively modest scale of growth is unlikely to result in significant cumulative infrastructure impacts and could help sustain the long-term viability of local employment opportunities and community facilities within the village.

Alconbury

5.1074 Alconbury is a relatively sustainable Local Service Village benefitting from a primary school, GP provision, local retail services and close functional relationships with Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon and the wider North

Huntingdon Growth Cluster. In combination, Alconbury 1 and Alconbury 2 would deliver approximately 90 dwellings, representing a moderate level of growth for the settlement.

5.1075 When considered alongside the ongoing expansion of Alconbury Weald and other North Huntingdon allocations, cumulative impacts are likely to include increased traffic movements on the Great North Road, Globe Lane, A141 and strategic highway network. These allocations will also contribute to additional demand on local services, particularly Alconbury and Brampton Surgeries, which already experience capacity pressures. Alconbury Church of England Primary School currently has limited surplus capacity and may experience additional pressure from cumulative residential growth, although secondary education capacity at Sawtry Village Academy and St Peter's School remains more readily available.

5.1076 The cumulative effect of growth will also increase demand for wastewater infrastructure, with evidence indicating that Alconbury Water Recycling Centre may require upgrades or permit changes during the plan period. Taken together with nearby growth at Alconbury Weald, the allocations reinforce the importance of coordinated infrastructure delivery, active travel connections and sustainable transport measures. Notwithstanding these considerations, the additional housing would help support local services and strengthen the sustainability of the settlement.

Sawtry

5.1077 Sawtry is one of the district's more sustainable Service Centres, providing a broad range of services including a GP surgery, primary schools, secondary education, convenience retailing, employment areas and community facilities. Together, the six allocations represent a significant level of growth, comprising approximately 830 additional dwellings and substantial new employment development at Sawtry 4, Sawtry 5 and Sawtry 6.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.1078** In cumulative terms, the combined allocations would substantially increase vehicle movements across the local highway network, particularly on Glatton Road, Green End Road, Old North Road, the A1(M) junctions and routes connecting to Huntingdon, Peterborough and employment centres elsewhere in the district. While Sawtry benefits from a relatively strong service base compared with many villages, the cumulative scale of development would increase demand for local infrastructure and services.
- 5.1079** Education demand is likely to rise significantly. Sawtry Village Academy currently has surplus secondary capacity; however, cumulative growth may require future monitoring to ensure sufficient education provision. Primary school capacity pressures may become more notable, particularly given existing deficits identified within the village's primary school provision. Healthcare demand will similarly increase on Wellside Surgery, which is already operating with capacity constraints.
- 5.1080** The allocations also introduce cumulative flood risk, drainage and wastewater considerations. Several sites are associated with watercourses and flood mitigation areas, with significant areas of open space required to manage surface water. Collectively, the allocations are likely to increase pressure on Sawtry Water Recycling Centre, which has been identified as potentially requiring upgrades during the plan period. Employment allocations at Old North Road, Little Common Farm and Black Horse Industrial Estate would generate additional commercial traffic but would also strengthen the settlement's employment base and improve the balance between homes and jobs.
- 5.1081** Overall, the cumulative effect of the Sawtry allocations would be substantial, reflecting the settlement's role as a Service Centre. While additional infrastructure investment and careful phasing will be important, the growth would support local services, community facilities and employment opportunities, increasing the long-term sustainability of the settlement.

The Stukeleys

- 5.1082** The Stukeleys benefits from its close relationship with Huntingdon, Alconbury Weald and the wider North Huntingdon Growth Cluster. Although The Stukeleys itself contains a relatively limited range of facilities, residents have access to significant nearby employment, retail, healthcare and educational opportunities.
- 5.1083** The allocation at Owl End is a very small-scale development of approximately three dwellings. Consequently, its direct cumulative effects are expected to be limited. Additional residents would be largely accommodated within the existing service and infrastructure networks centred on Huntingdon, Alconbury and Alconbury Weald. Demand on local schools, GP practices and community facilities would increase only marginally and would be insignificant when considered alongside the much larger growth already planned within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster.
- 5.1084** The most relevant cumulative consideration is the relationship with ongoing growth at Alconbury Weald, Ermine Street, Lodge Farm and other strategic allocations, which collectively will continue to place pressure on transport corridors, utility infrastructure and community services. However, the scale of The Stukeleys 1 is unlikely to materially affect these wider cumulative impacts. Overall, the allocation represents infill growth that supports the continued vitality of the village without generating significant additional infrastructure requirements.

Spaldwick

- 5.1085** Spaldwick is a Local Service Village with a primary school, convenience retail provision and community facilities, but it remains reliant on larger settlements such as Kimbolton and Huntingdon for a wider range of services, employment opportunities and secondary education. Development at Spaldwick 1 would deliver approximately 90 dwellings, representing a notable level of growth relative to the size of the village.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1086 In cumulative terms, the allocation is likely to increase traffic movements on Stow Road and the wider strategic road network, particularly the A14 corridor and routes to Huntingdon and Kimbolton. Additional residents would generate increased demand for healthcare services, particularly Kimbolton Surgery and other nearby GP practices, which already experience capacity pressures.

5.1087 The settlement benefits from Spaldwick Community Primary School, which currently has surplus capacity and is therefore relatively well positioned to accommodate additional pupils arising from development. Secondary school demand would increase at Hinchingsbrooke School and other surrounding education facilities, although existing capacity evidence suggests this is likely to be manageable. Growth would also place additional pressure on wastewater infrastructure, with Easton Water Recycling Centre identified as potentially requiring upgrades during the plan period.

5.1088 The cumulative effects of development are therefore likely to centre on transport, healthcare and utility infrastructure requirements. However, the additional housing would help support local community facilities, the primary school and village services, strengthening the long-term sustainability of the settlement whilst remaining proportionate to its role in the settlement hierarchy.

Upton

5.1089 Upton has limited services and facilities itself so residents are reliant on Alconbury, Sawtry and Huntingdon for higher-order services, employment and secondary education. Development at Upton 1 would represent a proportionate increase in housing development, specifically self and custom building, therefore diversifying the housing stock in the village and providing some growth to support services.

5.1090 The cumulative effect of growth would include additional traffic movements along Main Street. Public transport provision remains limited and therefore much of the additional travel demand is likely to be car-based. Whilst the site is relatively accessible to village services on foot, cumulative growth would increase pressure on local roads and parking within the settlement.

5.1091 Upton 1 is a very small-scale development of approximately six dwellings. Consequently, its direct cumulative effects are expected to be limited. Additional residents would be largely accommodated within the existing service and infrastructure networks centred on Sawtry and Huntingdon. Demand on local schools, GP practices and community facilities would increase only marginally.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Western Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

5.1092 In total 10 sites are allocated within settlements in Western Huntingdonshire:

- Bythorn 1: Home Farm
- Catworth 1: Fruit Field
- Ellington 1: Old Sheds at Manor Farm
- Ellington 2: Land West of Grafham Road
- Grafham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close
- Grafham 2: South of Village Farm
- Great Staughton 1: East of B661
- Hail Weston 1: West of 5 High Street
- Kimbolton 1: Brittens Farm
- Kimbolton 2: South East of Bicton Industrial Estate

5.1093 There have been no material changes to the majority of site policies since the Preferred Options stage. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. Four additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage: Bythorn 1: Home Farm, Catworth 1: Fruit Field, Grafham 2: South of Village Farm, and Ellington 2: Land West of Grafham Road following the additional site allocations consultation in May-June 2026.

5.1094 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
Bythorn 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	-	-	--	++	-	+	+	++	-	--	N	--	+	--	+	N	N	+	-
Catworth 1	N	+	-	++	+	++	-	--	+	++	-	++	-	+	-	--	+	--	+	--	+	N	N	+	++
Ellington 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	-	-	--	++	-	-	-	+	-	--	+	+	++	-	++	N	N	+	-
Ellington 2	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	-	+	++	-	++	+	+	-	--	+	++	+	-	++	N	N	+	++
Grafham 1	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	-	+	+	-	++	+	+	+	--	+	+	+	-	+	N	N	+	++
Grafham 2	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	--	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	--	+	+	++	-	++	N	N	+	-
Great Staughton 1	N	+	-	++	+	+	--	-	--	++	-	++	+	++	-	++	+	-	+	-	++	N	N	+	-
Hail Weston 1	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	--	--	++	-	+	+	+	++	-	+	+	+	++	++	N	N	+	++
Kimbolton 1	N	+	-	+	+	-	--	-	+	++	-	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	+	-	++	N	N	+	-
Kimbolton 2	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	--	--	++	-	++	+	N	-	N	-	+	++	--	+	++	N	+	++

Bythorn 1: Home Farm

5.1095 The site is located within flood zone 1 and therefore performs positively against sustainability objectives relating to flood risk and climate resilience. Development will be required to incorporate a proportionate site-specific drainage strategy and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

5.1096 The site contains opportunities for environmental enhancement through removal of poor-quality agricultural structures, retention of existing vegetation and implementation of biodiversity net gain. Landscaping along the northern and western boundaries will strengthen ecological connectivity and improve the transition between the village and surrounding countryside. Residual biodiversity effects are considered neutral to positive.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1097 Most of the site lies within the Bythorn Conservation Area and includes buildings associated with the historic farmstead, some of which are likely to have heritage significance. Retention and conversion of traditional brick structures alongside removal of visually intrusive modern sheds presents a clear opportunity for heritage enhancement. Archaeological assessment and landscape-led design will be required. Residual effects are assessed as positive overall.

5.1098 The allocation provides approximately 15 homes within a rural village, helping to maintain population levels and support local services. The development contributes towards district housing requirements while reinforcing community sustainability.

5.1099 The Sustainability Appraisal indicates that the site can deliver a positive sustainability outcome, with heritage enhancement and housing provision outweighing limited landscape and environmental impacts, all of which can be mitigated through allocation requirements.

Catworth 1: Fruit Field

5.1100 The site is located within flood zone 1 and experiences very limited surface water flood risk. Development will be required to incorporate SuDS and provide a detailed drainage strategy. Consequently, the site performs positively against climate adaptation and flood resilience objectives.

5.1101 Existing trees, hedgerows and boundary vegetation are key environmental assets that will be retained and enhanced through a comprehensive landscape strategy. Biodiversity net gain requirements create opportunities for habitat enhancement beyond baseline conditions, resulting in neutral to positive residual effects.

5.1102 Located on the southern edge of the village, the site has the potential to alter the existing settlement edge. However, retention of established vegetation and additional planting will soften visual impacts and ensure effective integration with the rural landscape. Landscape effects are therefore considered neutral following mitigation.

5.1103 The provision of approximately 25 dwellings contributes positively to local housing needs and supports the long-term viability of local facilities and community services. Additional residents will strengthen the sustainability of the village.

5.1104 With embedded mitigation measures relating to landscaping, drainage and biodiversity, Catworth 1 is assessed as delivering positive social benefits alongside neutral to positive environmental outcomes.

Ellington 1: Old Sheds at Manor Farm

5.1105 The site is situated within flood zone 1 with only limited surface water flood risk. A site-specific drainage strategy, SuDS and climate change allowances will be required. Wastewater infrastructure capacity will be considered through engagement with utility providers. Residual flood risk effects are therefore positive.

5.1106 The redevelopment of agricultural buildings provides opportunities visual enhancements to the areas as well as for biodiversity enhancement through habitat creation, landscaping and biodiversity net gain obligations. Landscape design will protect views and integrate development with the surrounding environment.

5.1107 The site lies within a sensitive historic environment adjacent to the Ellington Conservation Area and near listed buildings, including Manor Farm. Archaeological features associated with the historic settlement core may also be present. A heritage assessment, archaeological investigation and heritage-led design approach will protect significance and minimise adverse impacts. Residual effects are considered neutral.

5.1108 The allocation will provide approximately 35 dwellings and assist in meeting local housing needs. Redevelopment of underutilised land supports regeneration objectives while strengthening the local community.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1109 The site delivers significant housing benefits and regeneration opportunities. Heritage and archaeological constraints can be effectively managed through policy requirements, resulting in an overall positive sustainability outcome.

Ellington 2: Land West of Grafham Road

5.1110 The allocation lies mainly within flood zone 1 and experiences very low surface water risk. Development will incorporate SuDS, greenfield runoff rates and natural flood management measures. Culvert assessments and drainage design will further improve resilience to future climate change.

5.1111 Existing hedgerows and mature vegetation along site boundaries provide ecological value and contribute to local character. Retention and enhancement of these features together with biodiversity net gain requirements create positive opportunities for habitat improvement.

5.1112 The site forms part of the southern village edge and requires careful integration into the existing settlement. Comprehensive landscaping will maintain the rural approach to Ellington and mitigate visual impacts. Landscape effects are therefore considered neutral. Heritage constraints are minimal.

5.1113 The site will provide approximately 35 homes, including self-build opportunities, making a positive contribution to housing choice and community sustainability. Additional population growth will help sustain local facilities and services.

5.1114 Ellington 2 performs positively against housing objectives, while environmental impacts are capable of being mitigated through landscape, drainage and biodiversity requirements.

Grafham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close

5.1115 The site is within flood zone 1 and surface water flood risk very low. Surface water ponding areas will be incorporated into site design and managed through SuDS. Retention of natural drainage features and greenfield runoff rates supports positive climate resilience outcomes.

5.1116 Existing vegetation and a pond on the site provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and high-quality green infrastructure. Biodiversity net gain measures and landscape planting are expected to produce positive ecological effects.

5.1117 The allocation is located close to the Grade I listed All Saints Church and the Grade II Old Rectory. Although potential impacts on setting exist, intervening vegetation and the requirement for heritage assessment greatly reduce risk. Archaeological investigation will address identified medieval earthworks. Residual heritage effects are considered neutral.

5.1118 The site contributes around 20 new dwellings and supports the vitality of Grafham while helping meet housing needs. The housing benefits are expected to be long term and significant.

5.1119 The Sustainability Appraisal indicates a positive sustainability outcome, with housing and environmental enhancement opportunities outweighing manageable heritage considerations.

Grafham 2: South of Village Farm

5.1120 After the Preferred Options consultation, the site area was clarified as being 1.1ha rather than 1.6ha, this resulted in the capacity of the site being reduced to 25 houses in line with the LAA methodology of housing densities. This change is expected to provide further sustainability and integration benefits.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1121 The site is within flood zone 1 and surface water flood risk very low. A flood risk assessment, drainage strategy and SuDS are required, ensuring positive performance against flood and climate objectives.

5.1122 The retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows and trees will provide biodiversity benefits and strengthen ecological networks. Biodiversity net gain requirements contribute further positive effects.

5.1123 The site adjoins the Grade II listed Village Farm and contains historic ridge-and-furrow remains. Heritage assessment and sensitive design will be required to preserve significance and maintain local character. The resulting heritage effect is assessed as neutral.

5.1124 25 dwellings will contribute significantly to housing delivery and support the continued vitality of Grafham. The allocation strengthens housing choice and supports local services.

5.1125 Subject to heritage-led design and environmental mitigation, Grafham 2 is considered capable of delivering a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Great Staughton 1: East of B661

5.1126 The site is within flood zone 1 but contains a culverted watercourse along its eastern boundary. Detailed flood modelling, drainage assessment and climate change allowances will ensure that flood risks are appropriately managed. Residual effects are positive.

5.1127 The allocation offers opportunities to enhance biodiversity through retention of boundary trees and hedgerows and potential opening of culverted sections for ecological benefit. Biodiversity net gain obligations reinforce positive outcomes.

5.1128 The site occupies a visible edge-of-village location near listed buildings on The Green. Landscape retention and a proportionate heritage assessment will ensure that impacts on heritage assets and village character are minimised. Residual effects are neutral.

5.1129 The allocation provides approximately 15 dwellings within a Local Service Village, supporting local services, population retention and community vitality. Social effects are positive and long term.

5.1130 The site performs well across housing, biodiversity and climate objectives, with heritage constraints capable of being effectively mitigated.

Hail Weston 1: West of 5 High Street

5.1131 The site is small in scale and free from significant flood constraints. Sustainable drainage and water-efficient design can be readily incorporated, supporting positive climate resilience outcomes.

5.1132 Although the site contains limited existing ecological features, new landscaping and biodiversity enhancement measures can improve environmental performance.

5.1133 Situated on the village edge and exposed to open countryside, the allocation requires substantial planting and careful design to soften visual impacts. With mitigation, effects on landscape character are considered neutral.

5.1134 The provision of approximately 6 homes supports local housing needs and contributes to maintaining the sustainability of a small rural community. The social benefits are modest but positive.

5.1135 Hail Weston 1 is a small-scale allocation capable of delivering positive housing outcomes with limited environmental impacts that can be satisfactorily addressed through design and landscaping requirements.

Kimbolton 1: Brittens Farm

5.1136 The site includes areas affected by flood zones 2, 3a and 3b associated with the River Kym. The allocation adopts a sequential approach whereby built development is restricted to lower-risk land and flood-prone areas become open space and blue-green infrastructure. This approach supports positive residual flood risk effects.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1137 The allocation creates opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through river corridor management, open space provision and retention of existing hedgerows. Green infrastructure associated with flood mitigation is expected to contribute positively to ecological objectives.

5.1138 The site lies adjacent to listed farm buildings and contains ridge-and-furrow features of archaeological interest. Heritage assessment, archaeological investigation and landscape-sensitive design will be required to preserve significance. Residual heritage effects are considered neutral.

5.1139 The allocation provides approximately 25 new homes alongside open space and community benefits. Located within a Service Centre, the site performs well against accessibility and service provision objectives.

5.1140 Kimbolton 1 balances housing growth with flood risk management and heritage protection, resulting in a positive overall sustainability effect.

Kimbolton 2: South East of Bicton Industrial Estate

5.1141 The allocation delivers approximately 14,000sqm of employment floorspace through an extension of the existing Bicton Industrial Estate. It makes a direct contribution to local employment creation, business growth and economic diversification, generating substantial positive economic effects.

5.1142 The site lies predominantly within flood zone 1. Flood risk assessments, SuDS and blue-green infrastructure will manage surface water and support climate resilience objectives. Natural flood management opportunities will also be explored.

5.1143 The site adjoins a County Wildlife Site and therefore requires ecological assessment and mitigation. Biodiversity net gain, substantial landscape planting and protection of ecological features will ensure that environmental impacts are minimised and opportunities for enhancement are realised.

5.1144 Tree buffers and landscape screening along eastern and southern boundaries will reduce visual impacts and help integrate the employment development into the rural landscape. Residual landscape effects are considered neutral.

5.1145 Kimbolton 2 generates strong positive economic outcomes while environmental constraints can be effectively addressed through landscaping, ecological mitigation and drainage requirements. The residual sustainability effect is therefore significantly positive overall.

Summary of Impacts on Human Health and Inequalities

5.1146 In respect of SA Objective 10 (Healthy Communities and Reduced Inequalities), all ten allocations are assessed as generating positive residual effects once embedded mitigation and policy requirements are taken into account. Bythorn 1, Catworth 1, Ellington 1, Ellington 2, Grafham 1, Grafham 2, Great Staughton 1, Hail Weston 1 and Kimbolton 1 all contribute to the delivery of new homes in rural settlements, supporting population retention, housing choice and the continued viability of local services and community facilities. The provision of additional housing in accessible village locations helps maintain balanced communities, supports social cohesion and contributes towards meeting identified housing needs across Huntingdonshire. Several allocations also provide opportunities for enhanced access to green infrastructure, biodiversity improvements and landscape enhancements that can support physical activity, recreation and wider wellbeing outcomes. Requirements for sustainable drainage systems, climate-resilient design, open space provision, biodiversity net gain and landscape buffers will improve environmental quality and support long-term health benefits for future residents.

5.1147 Heritage-led regeneration opportunities at sites such as Bythorn 1 further contribute to local distinctiveness and community identity, which are recognised components of healthy and sustainable places. Kimbolton 2 delivers particularly strong benefits under this objective through the creation of additional employment land and opportunities for local job growth.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Increased employment opportunities can support economic inclusion, reduce the need for longer-distance commuting and contribute positively to health and wellbeing through improved access to work and economic security.

5.1148 The employment benefits generated by the allocation complement the social benefits arising from the residential allocations across the villages. Potential adverse effects associated with flood risk, landscape change, biodiversity constraints, traffic movements, amenity impacts or heritage sensitivity have been identified at several sites. However, the Sustainability Appraisal concludes that these issues can be effectively managed through allocation-specific mitigation measures, development management policies, environmental assessment requirements and statutory regulatory processes. No significant adverse effects on human health have been identified that cannot be mitigated. Consequently, when considered collectively, the ten allocations make a positive contribution towards improving health outcomes, supporting healthy communities, increasing housing choice, maintaining rural service provision, promoting access to employment opportunities and reducing social and economic inequalities across Huntingdonshire over the plan period to 2046.

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Bythorn

5.1149 Bythorn is a small rural village with very limited local services and facilities and a high degree of reliance on surrounding settlements, including Kimbolton and Thrapston, for retail, healthcare, employment and education needs. Development at Bythorn 1 would result in a modest increase in population and associated vehicle movements on the local highway network, with most journeys likely to be made by private car due to limited public transport provision. The scale of growth is unlikely to place significant pressure on local infrastructure, although there may be a small increase in demand for nearby schools and GP practices. There are heritage benefits to the allocation whereby a sensitive heritage-led development can remove agricultural buildings that detract from the local area and convert barns of heritage value into high quality new homes. Given the limited size of the

allocation, cumulative impacts are expected to be minor and capable of being accommodated within existing infrastructure. The additional housing would help support the long-term vitality of the village and contribute towards maintaining a balanced and sustainable rural community.

Catworth

5.1150 Catworth is a small village with limited local facilities and a reliance on neighbouring settlements for many day-to-day needs. Development at Catworth 1 would increase resident population and associated traffic movements, particularly to Kimbolton, St Neots and other higher-order centres for employment, healthcare and shopping. The cumulative effect of growth is likely to result in modest additional demand on education and healthcare infrastructure serving the wider rural area. However, the relatively small scale of development means that significant cumulative impacts are not anticipated. Additional housing would assist in supporting community vitality and help sustain existing services and facilities used by village residents.

Ellington

5.1151 Ellington is a village with a limited range of services and facilities and good strategic access via the A14 corridor. In combination, Ellington 1 and Ellington 2 would provide approximately 70 additional dwellings, representing a noticeable level of growth relative to the size of the settlement. This would increase vehicle movements and demand for services, particularly education and healthcare facilities in surrounding settlements. Cumulative effects are likely to include increased use of local roads and additional commuting journeys, although the village benefits from proximity to larger centres such as Huntingdon and St Neots. The combined growth would support the sustainability of the village through increased population and housing choice, but continued monitoring of school capacity, healthcare provision and transport impacts would be appropriate to ensure infrastructure remains adequate.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Grafham

5.1152 Grafham is a small rural village with a limited service base and strong links to surrounding settlements for employment, healthcare and secondary education. Development at Grafham 1 and Grafham 2 would together provide in excess of 50 new homes and contribute towards maintaining the settlement's population and vitality. Cumulative effects are likely to include additional traffic on local roads and increased demand for nearby schools and healthcare services. However, the overall scale of growth remains modest and is unlikely to exceed the capacity of existing infrastructure networks. The additional population could help support the viability of local facilities and community services while remaining consistent with the village's role within the settlement hierarchy.

Great Staughton

5.1153 Great Staughton is a Local Service Village that contains a broader range of facilities than many smaller villages and performs an important role serving surrounding rural communities. Development at Great Staughton 1 would contribute a modest level of housing growth that is broadly consistent with the settlement's function within the hierarchy. Cumulative impacts are likely to be limited and include a small increase in traffic movements and demand for education, healthcare and community facilities. Given the availability of local services and the modest scale of growth proposed, significant infrastructure constraints are not anticipated. Additional residents could help support the continued viability of local facilities and reinforce the sustainability of the settlement.

Hail Weston

5.1154 Hail Weston is a small village with limited facilities and a strong reliance on nearby St Neots for employment, retail, healthcare and secondary education needs. Development at Hail Weston 1 would deliver a very small amount of additional housing and would have only limited cumulative effects. The principal impacts are likely to relate to a modest increase in private vehicle trips and a small increase in demand on nearby services and facilities.

Given the scale of development, cumulative effects on infrastructure are expected to be negligible. The allocation would nevertheless contribute towards maintaining population levels and supporting the long-term sustainability of the village community.

Kimbolton

5.1155 Kimbolton is one of the district's Service Centres and benefits from a relatively strong range of retail, educational, community and employment facilities compared with surrounding villages. In combination, Kimbolton 1 and Kimbolton 2 would deliver both residential and employment growth, strengthening the settlement's role as a local service and employment hub. The cumulative effects are likely to include increased traffic movements on local roads, additional demand for primary healthcare and education services, and increased pressure on utility and drainage infrastructure. However, Kimbolton's existing service base and infrastructure place it in a stronger position than many villages to accommodate growth. The provision of additional employment land would help improve the balance between homes and jobs, reduce the need for longer-distance commuting and support economic resilience. Overall, the cumulative effect of both allocations is expected to be positive, reinforcing the sustainability and economic role of the settlement while requiring continued infrastructure planning and monitoring.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Central Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

5.1156 In total 10 sites are allocated within settlements in Central Huntingdonshire:

- Brampton 1: Wallis Land, Thrapston Road
- Brampton 2: Land off Huntingdon Road
- Godmanchester 1: Former RGE Engineering site and HDC Car Park, The Avenue
- Godmanchester 2: South of Godmanchester, off the A1198
- Godmanchester 3: Former A14 Compound, North of A1198 Roundabout
- Hemingford Abbots 1: The Lattenburys
- Huntingdon 1: Hinchingsbrooke Hospital Site

- Huntingdon 2: Amber Centre, Mayfield Road
- Offord Cluny 1: West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close
- Offord D'Arcy 1: West of Graveley Road

5.1157 There have been no material changes to the majority of site policies since the Preferred Options stage. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. No additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage.

5.1158 There are three sites that require SA re-assessment due to changes introduced at the Pre-Submission Stage. The table below demonstrates how site policy changed from the Preferred Options stage and the subsequent change in significant effect.

	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
Godmanchester 2 – South of Godmanchester	39.6ha, 520 dwellings , 5.1ha biodiversity land around Stoneyhill Brook. [	48ha, 550 dwellings , minimum 6.8ha natural green space/BNG land, cemetery extension, enhanced GI requirements and crossing infrastructure.	+30 dwellings (+6%), larger allocation and expanded green infrastructure.	Increased housing contribution but stronger green infrastructure and flood mitigation.	SA9 Housing SA5 Green Infrastructure	SA9 remains (++) SA5 improves from (+) (++)
Hemingford Abbots 1 – The Lattenburys	243ha site; 3,800 homes including 375 supported living homes, 150 extra-care homes and 160 care beds.	265ha site; still 3,800 homes but revised care provision wording and strengthened biodiversity requirements (minimum 10% BNG).	No housing change	Increased site area and stronger biodiversity and infrastructure requirements.	No change in overall significant effects; remains strongly positive for housing and services, and significantly adverse for landscape change due to strategic-scale growth. Biodiversity effect improves slightly through explicit BNG requirement but not enough to alter significance.	No material change to significant scores. SA6 and SA5 remain positive SA9 remains (++) SA10 remains (++)

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
Huntingdon 1 - Hinchingsbrooke Hospital	Mixed-use hospital redevelopment including healthcare uses, accommodation, training facilities and strategic GI.	Expanded policy requirements including affordable key worker housing, health-related R&D space, day nursery, public worship space, open space provision, SSSI mitigation, archaeology requirements and biodiversity mitigation.	No change in site area (22ha) or development quantum.	Stronger positive effects through enhanced healthcare, training, childcare, research activities and open space provision; reduced biodiversity risk through SSSI mitigation.	SA5 Green Infrastructure SA6 Biodiversity SA9 Housing SA10 Community Facilities, SA11 Economic Opportunities SA13 Economy	SA6: improves from (+) (++) SA9: improves from (+) (++) SA10 remains (++) SA11 remains (++) SA13: remains (++)

5.1159 Having reviewed the allocation in both the Preferred Options Local Plan and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, **Godmanchester 2** has not undergone a significant material change that would fundamentally alter the Sustainability Appraisal conclusions. The allocation remains a strategic residential-led urban extension with substantial green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement, cemetery provision and supporting transport improvements. The principal differences relate to increasing the site area to providing 30 additional homes and also land for enhanced landscaping on its southern edge which can also provide a more comprehensive approach towards managing flood risk from Stoneyhill Brook. Other refinements to the policy include stronger mitigation, infrastructure certainty and environmental requirements. The principal modifications strengthen biodiversity outcomes, green infrastructure delivery, flood resilience, sustainable transport provision, community infrastructure certainty, and design quality. The allocation remains strongly positive in housing and community terms, with environmental performance improved through stronger mitigation and implementation requirements. No new significant adverse effects arise and no existing significant effects materially worsen.

5.1160 Hemingford Abbots 1 is one of the largest strategic growth allocations in the Local Plan and functions as a proposed new community consisting of two new linked villages. The Pre-Submission version provides stronger commitments regarding local centre, healthcare, schools, community facilities, neighbourhood accessibility, phased infrastructure delivery, strategic green infrastructure, country park delivery, multifunctional open space, and landscape management. Some additional land has been included on its western edge around Woodgreen so that the allocation aligns with existing field boundaries and can also provide a more substantial landscaped edge on this side. Comparison of the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission versions indicates that while the allocation has evolved significantly in terms of policy detail, infrastructure requirements and implementation mechanisms, it has not fundamentally changed in terms of location, strategic role, land use mix or overall growth strategy. No new significant adverse effects arise and no existing significant effects materially worsen.

5.1161 Having reviewed the allocation in both the Preferred Options Local Plan and the Pre-Submission Local Plan, **Huntingdon 1** has undergone a moderate but meaningful enhancement in policy scope rather than a fundamental change in land use, site area or development quantum. The

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

most significant changes arise from the introduction of a broader mixed-use healthcare campus concept. The Pre-Submission Plan provides much greater certainty regarding the delivery of affordable key worker and medical student accommodation, healthcare-related training facilities, research and development activities, a day nursery and space for public worship. These additions strengthen social infrastructure provision and reinforce the site's role as a strategic health and employment hub for Huntingdonshire. The Pre-Submission policy introduces more explicit requirements for ecological assessment, SSSI mitigation, biodiversity enhancement and strategic green infrastructure provision. Consequently, SA6 (Biodiversity) shifts towards a clearer positive effect as ecological risks are more effectively managed and mitigation is embedded within the policy framework. The inclusion of

archaeology requirements, landscape assessments and more detailed heritage considerations also provides greater certainty regarding protection of the nearby historic environment, including assets associated with Hinchbrook House and the surrounding conservation setting. This supports a modest improvement in SA16 (Heritage). The introduction of affordable key worker housing and accommodation for healthcare professionals and students also improves performance against SA9 (Housing). No new significant adverse effects arise and no existing significant effects materially worsen.

5.1162 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10		SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	
Brampton 1	N	–	–	++	-	+	--	--	+	+	+	++	-	++	++	++	N+	++	++	++	N	N	+	-	
Brampton 2	N	+	-	--	-	--	--	-	++	--	+	-	-	+	++	+	+++	++	++	++	+	N	+	-	
Godmanchester 1	N	–	++	-	-	+	++	++	++	--	+	++	-	+	++	++	++++	++	++	++	N	N	++	-	
Godmanchester 2	N	+	-	+	-	+	--	--	++	++	-	+	+	++	++	+	N+	-	+	+	N	+	-	N	
Godmanchester 3	N	+	++	++	-	++	++	++	-	+	-	--	-	N	++	N	-	+	++	+	++	+	N	-	++
Hemingford Abbots 1	++	++		++	-	+	--	--	++	++	++	+	+	++	N	++	++	+	+		+	+	N	+	
Huntingdon 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	-	+	++	N	-	++	++	++	+	+	+	-	
Huntingdon 2	N	-	+	++	-	++	++	++	+	++	-	++	+	++	++	++	+++	++	++	++	N	N	+	++	
Offord Cluny 1	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	-	--	++	-	+	-	+	+	++	N+	+	-	++	N	N	+	-	
Offord D'Arcy 1	N	+	-	++	+	+	--	--	-	++	+	++	+	+	-	+	++	+	-	++	N	N	+	++	

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Brampton 1: Wallis Land, Thrapston Road

- 5.1163** The site lies predominantly within flood zone 1 and therefore performs positively against flood risk objectives. Site requirements include a detailed drainage strategy, SuDS, greenfield runoff rates and consideration of natural flood management measures. Whilst limited surface water ponding and groundwater considerations exist, these can be addressed through site design and climate change allowances, resulting in a positive residual effect.
- 5.1164** The site contains existing boundary vegetation that contributes to ecological connectivity. Ecological surveys and biodiversity enhancement measures are required, alongside biodiversity net gain. Ecological effects are therefore considered neutral to positive following mitigation.
- 5.1165** Part of the site is affected by a Scheduled Monument and areas of ridge-and-furrow archaeology. Development is confined to the eastern part of the site, whilst the sensitive heritage area will remain as open space. Heritage assessment, archaeological investigation and landscape mitigation are required. Residual effects are therefore considered neutral to positive.
- 5.1166** The allocation contributes approximately 10 dwellings in a sustainable Service Centre location close to Huntingdon and local services. Additional housing will support local service provision and community sustainability while remaining proportionate to the scale of Brampton.
- 5.1167** Following embedded mitigation, the site is considered capable of delivering a positive sustainability outcome with heritage, biodiversity and environmental constraints appropriately managed.

Brampton 2: Land off Huntingdon Road

- 5.1168** The allocation is principally for public open space and car parking associated with Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Significant areas lie within Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b, but no built development is proposed. An application must be

accompanied by a drainage strategy and flood mitigation measures. The site provides opportunities for natural flood management and flood storage enhancement, generating positive climate resilience effects.

- 5.1169** The site adjoins important ecological assets including Hinchingsbrooke Country Park County Wildlife Site and forms part of a wider green infrastructure network. Delivery of habitat enhancement, ecological surveys and sensitive landscaping offers opportunities for biodiversity gains and improved habitat connectivity.
- 5.1170** The site forms part of the setting of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Allocation requirements include a landscape-led masterplan and heritage assessment for nearby listed buildings and conservation area assets. The intended use as open space reinforces landscape character and results in broadly positive residual effects.
- 5.1171** Provision of additional country park infrastructure improves recreational access, health and wellbeing outcomes, visitor management and sustainable tourism. These benefits are expected to be significant and long term.
- 5.1172** The allocation delivers clear environmental, recreational and health benefits. With flood risk, heritage and ecological considerations addressed through policy requirements, the overall sustainability effect is positive.

Godmanchester 1: Former RGE Engineering Site and HDC Car Park, The Avenue

- 5.1173** The site contains areas at risk of flooding, however, built development is restricted to flood zone 1. Flood risk betterment, SuDS, climate change modelling and natural flood management measures are required. As a brownfield redevelopment opportunity, the site offers the potential to improve existing flood risk conditions.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1174 Redevelopment provides opportunities for urban regeneration, biodiversity improvements and additional amenity space. Measures are required to reduce recreational pressure on nearby designated ecological sites including Portholme Meadow. Biodiversity effects are assessed as neutral to positive.

5.1175 The site occupies a sensitive location between Huntingdon and Godmanchester with nearby conservation areas and heritage assets. Heritage-led design, landscape improvements and retention of key features are required. Residual heritage effects are considered neutral.

5.1176 Approximately 85 dwellings are proposed on a previously developed site within a highly sustainable location. It has excellent accessibility to services, employment, public transport and active travel networks results in significant positive social effects.

5.1177 The reuse of a brownfield site in a sustainable urban location, combined with flood risk betterment and housing delivery, leads to a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Godmanchester 2: South of Godmanchester, Off the A1198

5.1178 A key change from the Preferred Options stage was the introduction of an additional parcel of land off of Bluegate which increases the site capacity by 30 homes. This provides opportunity for more successful integration as an urban extension of Godmanchester.

5.1179 The site is largely located within flood zone 1, with Stoneyhill Brook representing the principal flood risk constraint. Extensive flood mitigation, SuDS, biodiversity areas and natural flood management measures are incorporated into the allocation. Residual effects are positive. A sequential approach is provided with built development only support on land within flood zone 1.

5.1180 A minimum of 6.8 hectares of biodiversity and natural greenspace provision is required, alongside strategic green infrastructure corridors. Significant opportunities exist for biodiversity net gain, habitat connectivity and enhancement of Stoneyhill Brook.

5.1181 The allocation requires strong landscape integration, retention of trees and hedgerows, protection of important views including St Mary's Church, and archaeological investigation. Sensitive design is expected to minimise adverse effects, resulting in neutral to positive residual effects.

5.1182 The site will provide approximately 550 homes together with cemetery expansion, open space and enhanced active travel connectivity. The scale of development delivers substantial long-term housing and community benefits within a sustainable Service Centre location.

5.1183 The allocation performs strongly against housing, health and green infrastructure objectives. Environmental effects are manageable through embedded mitigation, leading to a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Godmanchester 3: Former A14 Compound, North of A1198 Roundabout

5.1184 The allocation provides approximately 15,000sqm of employment floorspace for business, industrial and technology-based uses. It contributes directly to economic growth, job creation, investment attraction and diversification of the local economy.

5.1185 The previously developed nature of the site supports efficient use of land and reduces pressure on greenfield areas. Drainage strategies, SuDS and flood resilience measures are required to address remaining constraints. Residual effects are positive.

5.1186 Existing woodland buffers, landscape planting and habitat enhancements create opportunities for biodiversity gains and ecological connectivity. Biodiversity effects are assessed as neutral to positive following mitigation.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1187 Strong landscape buffers are required to screen development and protect the setting of the adjoining Lattenburys development and surrounding countryside. Heritage impacts are limited and can be managed through design and landscaping.

5.1188 The site's employment development and reuse of previously developed land represent significant positive sustainability benefit. Environmental impacts can be effectively mitigated, resulting in a strongly positive overall sustainability outcome.

Hemingford Abbots 1: The Lattenburys

5.1189 The new community is located predominantly within flood zone 1 and incorporates extensive blue-green infrastructure, natural flood management features, SuDS and water efficiency measures. Climate resilience forms a central component of the masterplan and delivers significant positive effects.

5.1190 The scheme includes extensive green infrastructure, a country park, biodiversity net gain, habitat corridors and landscape buffers. Opportunities for large-scale ecological enhancement substantially exceed likely habitat losses, resulting in significant positive effects.

5.1191 The site lies near sensitive heritage assets and the Hemingfords Conservation Area. Comprehensive heritage assessment, archaeological investigation, generous landscape buffers and separation from existing settlements are required. Residual effects are assessed as neutral to positive.

5.1192 The allocation delivers approximately 3,800 homes, employment land, schools, healthcare provision, local centres, sports facilities and community infrastructure. It makes a major contribution towards strategic housing and economic objectives and generates substantial positive effects for health and community wellbeing.

5.1193 The Lattenburys represents one of the most strategically important allocations in the Local Plan providing the opportunity to deliver two new linked villages served by new and upgraded infrastructure. With embedded mitigation, it delivers significant positive sustainability benefits across social, economic and environmental objectives.

Huntingdon 1: Hinchingsbrooke Hospital Site

5.1194 The site is located within flood zone 1 and can accommodate modern drainage and climate adaptation infrastructure. The redevelopment of the hospital campus provides opportunities to improve sustainability performance, energy efficiency and resilience.

5.1195 Landscape enhancement, retention of trees and green infrastructure provision are required. Although redevelopment will intensify land use, biodiversity improvements and green infrastructure opportunities reduce potential adverse effects.

5.1196 The allocation lies adjacent to important heritage assets including Hinchingsbrooke House and parts of the Huntingdon Conservation Area. Heritage assessment and landscape-led design are required to protect significance and setting. Residual effects are considered neutral.

5.1197 The allocation delivers substantial health, employment and social benefits through replacement and upgraded hospital facilities, healthcare research, training uses, key worker accommodation and associated community infrastructure. These represent significant long-term positive sustainability effects.

5.1198 Given its strategic healthcare role and associated employment benefits, the Hinchingsbrooke Hospital allocation generates a highly positive sustainability outcome, with environmental constraints capable of appropriate mitigation.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Huntingdon 2: Amber Centre, Mayfield Road

- 5.1199** The site lies within flood zone 1 and experiences very low flood risk. SuDS, drainage infrastructure and natural flood management measures are required to ensure resilience to future climate conditions. Residual effects are positive.
- 5.1200** Although a relatively small site, landscaping and tree retention requirements will contribute to local biodiversity enhancement. Biodiversity effects are generally neutral to positive.
- 5.1201** The site is surrounded by existing residential development and presents limited landscape or heritage constraints. Careful design and landscaping will ensure successful integration with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 5.1202** The redevelopment will provide approximately 12 homes in a highly sustainable urban location with excellent access to schools, services and active travel opportunities. The proposal contributes positively towards housing delivery and local community sustainability.
- 5.1203** The Amber Centre site represents an efficient redevelopment opportunity with minimal environmental constraints. The allocation delivers positive housing and community benefits and is assessed as having a positive overall sustainability effect.

Offord Cluny 1: West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close

- 5.1204** The site lies within flood zone 1 and therefore performs positively against flood risk objectives. Site requirements include a detailed drainage strategy, SuDS, greenfield runoff rates and consideration of natural flood management measures, resulting in a positive residual effect.
- 5.1205** The site contains existing boundary vegetation that contributes to ecological connectivity. Ecological surveys and biodiversity enhancement measures are required, alongside biodiversity net gain. Ecological effects are therefore considered neutral to positive following mitigation.

- 5.1206** The East Coast Mainline is to the immediate west of the site meaning it may be impacted by noise pollution. The policy requires noise assessments to be undertaken with mitigation measures incorporated.

- 5.1207** The site is located on a gateway approach on the edge of Offord Cluny so requires sensitive design to ensure effective integration and to reflect local character. Heritage constraints are limited and can be overcome through design.

- 5.1208** The allocation contributes approximately 45 dwellings in a sustainable Local Service Village location between Huntingdon and St Neots local services. Additional housing will support local service provision and community sustainability while remaining proportionate to the scale of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy.

- 5.1209** Following embedded mitigation, the site is considered capable of delivering a positive sustainability outcome with heritage, biodiversity and environmental constraints appropriately managed.

Offord D'Arcy 1: West of Graveley Road

- 5.1210** The site lies within flood zone 1 and therefore performs positively against flood risk objectives. Site requirements include a detailed drainage strategy, SuDS, greenfield runoff rates and consideration of natural flood management measures, resulting in a positive residual effect.

- 5.1211** The site contains existing boundary vegetation that contributes to ecological connectivity. Ecological surveys and biodiversity enhancement measures are required, alongside biodiversity net gain. Ecological effects are therefore considered neutral to positive following mitigation.

- 5.1212** The site is located on the southern edge of Offord D'Arcy so requires sensitive design to ensure effective integration and to reflect local character. Heritage constraints are limited and can be overcome through design.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1213 The allocation contributes approximately 70 dwellings in a sustainable Local Service Village location between Huntingdon and St Neots local services. Additional housing will support local service provision and community sustainability while remaining proportionate to the scale of Offord D'Arcy and Offord Cluny.

5.1214 Following embedded mitigation, the site is considered capable of delivering a positive sustainability outcome with heritage, biodiversity and environmental constraints appropriately managed.

Summary of Impacts on Human Health and Inequalities

5.1215 Across all eight allocations, positive residual effects are anticipated against the sustainability objective relating to healthy communities and reducing inequalities. Huntingdon 1 and The Lattenburys provide particularly substantial benefits through healthcare, education and community infrastructure. Godmanchester 1, Godmanchester 2, Brampton 1, Huntingdon 2, Offord Cluny 1 and Offord D'Arcy 1 improve housing supply in accessible locations, while Brampton 2 enhances recreational access and wellbeing. Godmanchester 3 supports employment and economic inclusion. Overall, no significant health effects have been identified that cannot be mitigated through site-specific requirements and wider Local Plan policies, resulting in a collectively positive contribution to health, wellbeing and social inclusion across Huntingdonshire.

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Brampton

5.1216 Brampton is a sustainable Service Centre with a primary school, local retail provision, healthcare facilities, employment opportunities and good connections to Huntingdon. The cumulative effect of growth from Brampton 1 and Brampton 2, together with existing commitments, is expected to be modest and proportionate to the settlement's role in the hierarchy. Brampton 1 would provide a small residential development, whilst Brampton 2 would primarily improve country park access and recreational infrastructure.

5.1217 In cumulative terms, development would increase demand for local services, including education, healthcare and recreational facilities, and would generate additional traffic movements on routes connecting Brampton to Huntingdon and the wider strategic road network. The settlement's relatively strong infrastructure base means that these effects are likely to be accommodated without significant adverse impacts, although healthcare capacity should continue to be monitored given existing pressures on GP provision.

5.1218 Collectively, the allocations would help reinforce Brampton's role as a Service Centre by supporting local facilities, improving access to green space and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the settlement.

Godmanchester

5.1219 Godmanchester is one of the district's most sustainable Service Centres, with a broad range of services, schools, healthcare provision, employment opportunities and close links to Huntingdon. The cumulative effect of growth from Godmanchester 1, Godmanchester 2 and Godmanchester 3 would represent a significant level of development within the settlement.

5.1220 Taken together, the allocations would substantially increase population and employment opportunities, generating additional demand for healthcare, education, community facilities and local services. The scale of residential growth, particularly at Godmanchester 2, is likely to increase pressure on primary and secondary school provision and local GP surgeries, requiring ongoing infrastructure planning and monitoring.

5.1221 Cumulative transport impacts are likely to be one of the most significant considerations, with increased vehicle movements on the A1198, local roads and connections into Huntingdon. However, the allocations also provide opportunities to enhance walking, cycling and public transport connections and to deliver new green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement and flood mitigation measures.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- 5.1222** Overall, the cumulative effect of growth is expected to strengthen Godmanchester's role as a sustainable Service Centre, although careful management of transport, healthcare and education infrastructure will be important to ensure development is supported by appropriate mitigation measures.

Hemingford Abbots

- 5.1223** The Lattenburys represents a strategic-scale new community rather than a conventional village allocation and would deliver substantial housing, employment opportunities, schools, local centres, open space and supporting infrastructure.
- 5.1224** In cumulative terms, development would fundamentally alter the scale and function of this part of the district and create significant new demands on transport infrastructure, healthcare services, utilities and community facilities. However, unlike smaller village allocations, much of this infrastructure is intended to be delivered as part of the development itself, including schools, local services, active travel infrastructure and extensive green infrastructure provision.
- 5.1225** The scale of the development means that cumulative effects would extend beyond Hemingford Abbots and Godmanchester, influencing travel patterns, education catchments and service provision across neighbouring settlements including Godmanchester, Huntingdon and St Ives. There would also be cumulative landscape, environmental and transport considerations that would require phased delivery and long-term infrastructure planning.
- 5.1226** Overall, the cumulative effect of The Lattenburys is expected to be transformative, creating a new sustainable community that significantly expands the district's housing and infrastructure capacity whilst requiring substantial mitigation and coordinated infrastructure delivery.

Huntingdon

- 5.1227** Huntingdon is one of the district's most sustainable settlements and principal market town, providing extensive retail, employment, educational, healthcare and transport infrastructure. Development at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and the Amber Centre would contribute to the ongoing regeneration and growth of the town utilising previously developed land.
- 5.1228** The cumulative effect of these allocations is expected to be relatively modest in comparison with the scale of Huntingdon and existing planned growth elsewhere in the town. Additional residential development would increase demand for local services and infrastructure, whilst redevelopment and enhancement of the hospital site would strengthen Huntingdon's strategic healthcare role and support key worker accommodation and specialist housing provision.
- 5.1229** Cumulative transport impacts are likely to be localised, particularly around Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and key corridor routes. However, Huntingdon benefits from an extensive transport network and has greater capacity to absorb growth than most settlements in the district. Pressure on healthcare and education services is likely to increase, but these impacts are expected to be more readily accommodated due to the town's substantial infrastructure base.
- 5.1230** Overall, the cumulative effect of growth is expected to be positive, supporting regeneration objectives, reinforcing Huntingdon's role as the district's principal service centre and helping to meet identified housing and healthcare needs.

The Offords (Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy)

- 5.1231** The Offords are identified in the settlement hierarchy as a combined Local Service Village, reflecting the close relationship between Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy and their shared community facilities. Development at Offord Cluny 1 and Offord D'Arcy 1 would collectively deliver around 125 dwellings and represent a moderate level of growth for the settlement.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1232 In cumulative terms, the allocations would increase demand for local facilities, primary education and healthcare services. Additional residents are likely to generate increased travel demand, particularly to Huntingdon, St Neots and other higher-order centres for employment, retail and secondary education. Given the limited public transport options available, a proportion of these journeys are likely to be undertaken by private vehicle.

5.1233 The cumulative impact on local schools and GP services is expected to be manageable but would require monitoring, particularly as healthcare providers across the district are experiencing wider capacity pressures. Additional housing would also contribute to supporting the viability of local facilities and helping maintain the sustainability of the settlement.

5.1234 Overall, the cumulative effects are consistent with the role of the Offords as a Local Service Village. While growth will create additional pressure on infrastructure and transport networks, the scale of development is not expected to overwhelm existing provision and should assist in maintaining the long-term vitality of the settlement.

Eastern Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

5.1235 In total eight sites are allocated within settlements in Eastern Huntingdonshire.

- Bluntisham 1: Land off 18 Holliday's Road
- Bluntisham 2: West of Colne Road
- Colne 1: Ramadie, Earith Road
- Fenstanton 1: Galley Hill
- Houghton and Wyton 1: Ruddles Lane
- Needingworth 1: Giffords Park, East of B1040
- Needingworth 2: North of Bluntisham Road
- St Ives 1: North of Houghton Road

5.1236 There have been no material changes to most site policies since the Preferred Options stage. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. No additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage. Site Bluntisham 1: South of Rectory Road was initially allocated at the Preferred Option stage but later removed from the Pre-Submission Plan, this resulted in the remaining Bluntisham sites to be re-numbered. Following a review of comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cited concern regarding heritage and impact on the Grade II* Bluntisham House as well as potential impact to ridge and furrow land, alongside concerns about the cumulative impact of development on services and infrastructure within Bluntisham, the site was removed as a draft allocation.

Site	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
Needingworth 2: North of Bluntisham Road	290 dwellings	Western parcel removed due to consultation responses citing concerns in relation to traffic	Loss of 190 homes.	Smaller scheme capable of integration with existing village.	SA7 Landscape and Townscape SA15 Integration	SA7: (-) (+) SA15: (+) (++)

5

Site	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
		impacts, flood risk, coalescence with neighbouring settlements, landscape concerns and scale.				

5.1238 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
Bluntisham 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	++	-	++	N	N	+	-
Bluntisham 2	N	+	-	++	-	+	--	--	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	++	+	++	++	-	++	N	N	+	++
Colne 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	+	--	--	+	-	+	+	++	-	--	+	+	++	-	++	N	N	+	++
Fenstanton 1	N	-	-	--	-	--	--	-	-	+	+	+	-	N	++	N	-	++	+	--	++	++	N	+	-
Houghton and Wyton 1	++	+	-	++	+	+	--	-	+	+	+	+	+	N	N	N	N	N	+	+	+	N	N	+	++
Needingworth 1	+	+	-	-	-	-	--	-	+	++	+	+	-	++	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	+	++	+	+
Needingworth 2	N	+	-	++	-	+	--	--	-	++	+	+	-	++	++	+	+	+	++	-	++	+	++	++	++
St Ives 1	+	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	++	+	-	-	-	++	++	+	N	+	++	++	++	N	++	--	-

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Bluntisham 1: Land off 18 Holliday's Road

- 5.1239** The site is located within flood zone 1 and is therefore sequentially suitable for residential development. While a localised surface water depression is present within the north-eastern part of the site, allocation requirements include a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Residual effects are considered positive.
- 5.1240** The site lies close to the RSPB Ouse Fen reserve and Berry Fen SSSI, creating potential for recreational pressure on sensitive habitats. Allocation requirements include biodiversity net gain, retention of landscape features, enhancement of ecological connectivity and provision of on-site green infrastructure. Recreational mitigation measures are specifically required to avoid adverse effects on designated sites. Consequently, biodiversity effects are considered neutral to positive following mitigation.
- 5.1241** The site occupies a sensitive village-edge location close to Grade I listed St Mary's Church and the historic core of Bluntisham. The allocation requires a proportionate heritage assessment, archaeological investigation and substantial landscaping to soften the settlement edge and preserve key views. With these safeguards in place, potential impacts on heritage significance and landscape character can be effectively managed, resulting in neutral residual effects.
- 5.1242** The allocation provides approximately 35 homes within a Local Service Village, contributing positively to local housing supply and supporting the viability of village services and facilities. The site benefits from access to community facilities, education provision and employment opportunities in the wider area. Social effects are therefore considered positive and long term.
- 5.1243** Bluntisham 1 performs positively against housing, climate resilience and community objectives. Potential biodiversity and heritage effects can be satisfactorily addressed through the allocation requirements, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Bluntisham 2: West of Colne Road

- 5.1244** The site is wholly within flood zone 1 with only limited areas of surface water risk. Allocation requirements include a detailed drainage strategy, groundwater investigations, greenfield runoff rates and opportunities for natural flood management. Residual effects against flood risk and climate adaptation objectives are assessed as positive.
- 5.1245** The allocation includes approximately 3 hectares of public open space specifically intended to mitigate recreational pressure on the Ouse Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar site and Berry Fen SSSI. Retention of trees and hedgerows, biodiversity net gain requirements and landscape enhancement measures create significant opportunities for ecological improvement. Biodiversity effects are therefore neutral to positive.
- 5.1246** Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment requirements and extensive boundary planting will help contain development and reinforce the village edge. No significant heritage constraints are identified, although the development must respond sensitively to local character and maintain landscape quality. Residual impacts are assessed as neutral.
- 5.1247** The allocation will deliver approximately 85 homes together with open space and parking provision for St Helen's Primary School staff. These benefits support housing delivery, local education infrastructure and community wellbeing. The site's location adjoining the existing settlement promotes social integration and accessibility.
- 5.1248** The site delivers substantial housing and community benefits while providing opportunities for ecological enhancement and recreation mitigation. Subject to the embedded safeguards, the overall sustainability effect is positive.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Colne 1: Ramadie, Earith Road

- 5.1249** The site is within flood zone 1 and free from significant flood constraints. Allocation requirements include sustainable drainage, wastewater capacity assessment and water management measures to ensure climate resilience. Residual flood risk effects are positive.
- 5.1250** It benefits from existing hedgerow boundaries and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Allocation requirements include retention and strengthening of hedgerows, biodiversity net gain and ecological mitigation where necessary. Biodiversity effects are considered neutral to positive after mitigation.
- 5.1251** The site contains previously developed elements including existing buildings and paddock land. Development has the potential to introduce less characteristic backland development, however allocation requirements for landscape-sensitive design, boundary retention and integration with surrounding development help reduce adverse effects. There are no significant heritage constraints. Residual effects are neutral.
- 5.1252** The allocation provides approximately 15 dwellings and contributes towards maintaining the sustainability of Colne. Additional housing will support local services and provide modest benefits to the village economy and housing supply. Effects are positive but proportionate to the small scale of development.
- 5.1253** Colne 1 is a relatively unconstrained site capable of delivering housing growth with limited environmental effects. With mitigation in place, the site achieves a positive sustainability outcome.

Fenstanton 1: Galley Hill

- 5.1254** Fenstanton 1 is a major employment allocation providing approximately 25 hectares of development land and around 100,000sqm of industrial, logistics and commercial floorspace. It is adjacent to the Lakes Business Park. The

site supports business growth, inward investment and significant employment creation, making it one of the strongest performing allocations against economic sustainability objectives.

- 5.1255** The northern part of the site is affected by significant flood risk, but the allocation adopts a sequential approach by restricting built development to land within flood zone 1 and reserving approximately 36 hectares for flood mitigation and open space. Detailed flood modelling, drainage strategies and natural flood management measures are required. Residual effects are positive following mitigation.
- 5.1256** The site lies within the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area and is close to several County Wildlife Sites. Allocation requirements include ecological surveys, habitat enhancement, biodiversity net gain and retention of hedgerows and green infrastructure. The extensive open space component creates opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and habitat connectivity. Residual ecological effects are neutral to positive.
- 5.1257** Potential impacts on nearby listed farm buildings and the rural landscape are identified. However, requirements for landscape strategies, visual impact assessment, heritage assessment and substantial buffers provide a framework for minimising harm. Residual landscape and heritage effects are considered neutral.
- 5.1258** Fenstanton 1 delivers significant economic and employment benefits while managing environmental constraints through a comprehensive mitigation strategy. The overall sustainability outcome is strongly positive.

Houghton and Wyton 1: Ruddles Lane

- 5.1259** The site provides ground mounted solar panels assisting the diversification of energy supply across the district and transitioning to a lower carbon future. The site performs positively against climate change and resilience objectives.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1260 The site lies predominantly within flood zone 1 with some parts at higher risk. A sequential approach has been taken by restricting solar panels development to land within flood zone 1. Allocation requirements include detailed drainage design, natural flood management and integration of sustainable drainage systems. These measures support adaptation to climate change and safeguard both the site and surrounding areas. Residual effects are positive.

5.1261 The allocation includes substantial areas of open space and landscaping and requires ecological surveys, biodiversity enhancement and retention of important landscape features. Green infrastructure and habitat creation opportunities support biodiversity net gain and ecological connectivity. Biodiversity effects are assessed as positive following mitigation.

5.1262 The site occupies a prominent location between St Ives and Houghton and Wyton, creating sensitivity in relation to landscape character and settlement separation. The allocation requires a comprehensive landscape strategy, heritage assessment and archaeological investigation to protect nearby conservation areas and listed buildings. These requirements reduce residual effects to neutral.

5.1263 Ruddles Lane provides ground mounted solar panels incorporating extensive landscape, heritage and ecological safeguards. The overall sustainability effect is positive.

Needingworth 1: Giffords Park, East of B1040

5.1264 The site is located in Holywell-cum-Needingworth parish but adjoins the eastern edge of St Ives, effectively forming an urban extension to the market town.

5.1265 A key strength of the allocation is the sequential approach to site layout. Built development is restricted to flood zone 1, whilst areas affected by higher flood risk are retained as open space, flood mitigation areas and environmental enhancement land. The allocation requires a site-specific

Flood Risk Assessment, drainage strategy, maintenance strips and ongoing management of watercourses. Consequently, the residual flood risk effect is positive and demonstrates a clear application of the sequential approach.

5.1266 The development includes approximately 65.5 hectares of green infrastructure, open space and landscaping, ecological surveys and biodiversity enhancement measures. Mitigation is also required to address recreational impacts on sensitive habitats. These measures provide opportunities for biodiversity net gain and enhancement of green infrastructure networks. Residual ecological effects are positive.

5.1267 The site is located on the edge of St Ives and has the potential to affect the gateway into the town when approaching from east. Allocation requirements include heritage assessment, archaeological investigation, landscape mitigation and careful masterplanning to avoid settlement coalescence. Heritage and landscape effects are therefore assessed as neutral after mitigation.

5.1268 The allocation will deliver approximately 1,750 homes and 4.6ha of employment floor space as well as retail, health and community uses. As well as provide new facilities, it will also improve access to recreation, active travel routes and local services. Growth in this highly sustainable market town location supports housing delivery objectives and contributes positively to community wellbeing and economic vitality.

5.1269 Needingworth 1 performs strongly against housing, accessibility and climate resilience objectives. Environmental constraints can be effectively managed through the allocation requirements, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Needingworth 2: North of Bluntisham Road

5.1270 The site is located predominately within flood zone 1 and benefits from a sequentially preferable location for development. Allocation requirements include detailed flood modelling, sustainable drainage systems, natural flood management and integrated water management measures. The

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

allocation includes provision of open space to safeguard against flooding. These requirements result in a positive performance against flood risk and climate resilience objectives.

5.1271 Retention of trees and hedgerows, biodiversity net gain requirements and landscape enhancement measures create significant opportunities for ecological improvement. Biodiversity effects are therefore neutral to positive.

5.1272 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment requirements and extensive boundary planting will help contain development and mitigate potential noise, light and air pollution impacts arising from its proximity to the A1123 on its northern edge. No significant heritage constraints are identified, although the development must respond sensitively to local character and maintain landscape quality. Residual impacts are assessed as neutral.

5.1273 The allocation will deliver approximately 100 homes together with open space and community retail facilities. These benefits support housing delivery, local education infrastructure and community wellbeing. The site's location adjoining the existing settlement promotes social integration and accessibility.

5.1274 The site delivers substantial housing and community benefits while providing opportunities for ecological enhancement and recreation mitigation. Subject to the embedded safeguards, the overall sustainability effect is positive.

St Ives 1: North of Houghton Road

5.1275 The site is located within flood zone 1 and benefits from a sequentially preferable location for development. Allocation requirements include detailed flood modelling, sustainable drainage systems, natural flood management and integrated water management measures. These requirements result in a positive performance against flood risk and climate resilience objectives.

5.1276 The development includes approximately 12 hectares of open space and landscaping, ecological surveys and biodiversity enhancement measures. Mitigation is also required to address recreational impacts on sensitive

habitats. These measures provide opportunities for biodiversity net gain and enhancement of green infrastructure networks. Residual ecological effects are positive.

5.1277 The site is located on the edge of St Ives and has the potential to affect the setting of the Houghton and Wyton Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. Allocation requirements include heritage assessment, archaeological investigation, landscape mitigation and careful masterplanning to avoid settlement coalescence. Heritage and landscape effects are therefore assessed as neutral after mitigation.

5.1278 The allocation will deliver approximately 350 homes and improve access to recreation, active travel routes and local services. Growth in this highly sustainable market town location supports housing delivery objectives and contributes positively to community wellbeing and economic vitality.

5.1279 St Ives 1 performs strongly against housing, accessibility and climate resilience objectives. Environmental constraints can be effectively managed through the allocation requirements, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Summary of Impacts on Human Health and Inequalities

5.1280 Across all six allocations, the residual effects against health, wellbeing and inequality objectives are considered positive. Bluntisham 1, Bluntisham 2, Colne 1, Needingworth 1, Needingworth 2 and St Ives 1 increase housing choice and improve access to services, green infrastructure and active travel opportunities. Fenstanton 1 delivers substantial employment and economic inclusion benefits. Embedded mitigation measures relating to flood risk, environmental quality, biodiversity and amenity ensure that no significant adverse health effects are anticipated. Houghton and Wyton 1 provides solar panels assisting in the district transitioning to a lower carbon future. Consequently, the six allocations collectively contribute positively towards creating healthier communities and reducing social and economic inequalities across Huntingdonshire.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Bluntisham

5.1281 Bluntisham is a Local Service Village with a primary school, local convenience facilities and access to community services, but residents continue to rely on St Ives, Huntingdon and other larger settlements for a wider range of employment, retail, healthcare and secondary education opportunities. The combined delivery of Bluntisham 1 (approximately 35 homes) and Bluntisham 2 (approximately 85 homes) would represent a notable level of growth for the village and would increase demand on local infrastructure and services.

5.1282 In cumulative terms, development is likely to generate additional vehicle movements along the B1040, Colne Road and routes towards St Ives and Huntingdon, reflecting the village's continued role as a commuter settlement. Whilst both sites benefit from opportunities for walking and cycling connections into the village, many higher-order trips are likely to remain car-based. The cumulative effect of both allocations may increase pressure on local education provision, particularly at St Helen's Primary School, although Bluntisham 2 includes land to assist with school-related parking provision.

5.1283 The combined growth would also increase demand on GP services and other healthcare facilities serving the wider area, which already experience capacity pressures. From an environmental perspective, cumulative recreational pressure on nearby nationally and internationally important ecological sites, including the Ouse Washes and Berry Fen, will require appropriate mitigation through open space provision and green infrastructure. Notwithstanding these considerations, the additional housing would help support the vitality of village services, sustain community facilities and contribute towards maintaining the long-term sustainability of Bluntisham as a Local Service Village.

Colne

5.1284 Colne is a small rural village with a limited range of day-to-day services and a relatively high reliance on neighbouring settlements such as Bluntisham, Somersham and St Ives for employment, retail, healthcare and secondary education needs. Development at Colne 1 would represent modest growth that is proportionate to the settlement's position within the hierarchy.

5.1285 The site would generate additional vehicle movements on Earith Road and local rural routes, with most residents expected to travel to higher-order settlements to access services and employment opportunities. Consequently, cumulative traffic effects are likely to be limited but would contribute incrementally to traffic growth across the wider eastern Huntingdonshire road network.

5.1286 The allocation would increase demand on education and healthcare services serving Colne and nearby settlements. However, given the relatively small scale of development, cumulative pressures are unlikely to be significant. The principal cumulative consideration relates to maintaining village vitality. Additional residents would support the long-term sustainability of local facilities, community organisations and services that can be vulnerable to decline within smaller rural settlements. Overall, the cumulative impacts are expected to be modest and generally positive in supporting the continued viability of the village.

Fenstanton

5.1287 Fenstanton is a Service Centre and one of the district's more sustainable rural settlements, benefiting from access to local services, employment opportunities, public transport and close proximity to St Ives, Huntingdon and the strategic road network. Fenstanton 1 is a significant employment allocation providing approximately 100,000sqm of employment floorspace and has the potential to reinforce the settlement's economic role within the district.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1288 In cumulative terms, the allocation would operate alongside other growth proposals within Fenstanton, St Ives and the wider A14 corridor, contributing to increased traffic movements on the A1307, A14 junctions and surrounding local road network. Whilst this could increase congestion pressures at key junctions, the site's strategic location adjacent to the primary road network makes it well suited to employment use and reduces the need for heavy goods vehicles to travel through residential areas.

5.1289 The development has the potential to generate substantial employment opportunities, reducing the need for longer-distance commuting and supporting a more balanced jobs-to-homes relationship across the western part of the district. There may also be indirect increases in demand for local services, retail facilities and healthcare provision arising from workforce growth. Environmental considerations include cumulative impacts on landscape character, flood management infrastructure and designated ecological assets in the area, which will require mitigation through green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement and flood management measures.

5.1290 Overall, the cumulative effect of Fenstanton 1 is expected to be positive, strengthening the economic function of the settlement and supporting wider district growth objectives, subject to appropriate transport and environmental mitigation.

Houghton and Wyton

5.1291 The site provides ground mounted solar panels assisting the diversification of energy supply across the district and transitioning to a lower carbon future. The site performs positively against climate change and resilience objectives. The scale of development is unlikely to detrimentally impact landscape character and mitigations are put in place within the policy.

Needingworth

5.1292 Needingworth is local service village with a range of day-to-day services and a relatively high reliance on neighbouring settlements such as St Ives for employment, retail, healthcare and secondary education needs.

Development at Needingworth 2 would represent modest growth that is proportionate to the settlement's position within the hierarchy. Needingworth 1 is a much larger development located on the edge of St Ives further westwards along the A1123. The urban extension will provide enhanced services and facilities to meet the needs of residents. Both sites will generate additional vehicle movements on local rural routes and within St Ives. Consequently, cumulative traffic effects are likely to be limited but would contribute incrementally to traffic growth across the wider A1123 road network.

5.1293 The allocations would increase demand on education and healthcare services serving Needingworth and nearby settlements. However, given the scale of development at Needingworth 1 and the infrastructure that will be provided, cumulative pressures are mitigated. Overall, the allocations would make a positive contribution to supporting the long-term vitality, housing supply and sustainability of St Ives and Needingworth.

St Ives

5.1294 St Ives is one of Huntingdonshire's most sustainable market towns, providing a comprehensive range of retail, employment, education, healthcare, leisure and public transport facilities. Development at St Ives 1 (approximately 350 homes) would contribute to the town's role as a key focus for growth within the district.

5.1295 In combination with existing commitments and nearby allocations, including growth proposed in Houghton and Wyton, the allocation would result in additional traffic movements on the A1123 corridor, local distributor roads and routes connecting to Huntingdon and Cambridge. However, St Ives benefits from an established transport network, including guided bus services, active travel routes and a broad range of services within accessible distances, helping to moderate cumulative transport effects.

5.1296 The cumulative impact of growth will increase demand for education, healthcare, leisure and community facilities across the town. Although St Ives has a stronger infrastructure base than most villages, ongoing growth

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

is likely to require continued monitoring of school capacity, healthcare provision and supporting infrastructure. Investment associated with development is expected to contribute towards maintaining and enhancing these facilities over time.

5.1297 From an environmental perspective, cumulative growth around the northern edge of St Ives increases the importance of landscape buffering, flood risk management and protection of the setting of nearby heritage assets and surrounding villages. Nevertheless, given the town's role within the settlement hierarchy and its existing infrastructure provision, the cumulative effects of St Ives 1 are expected to be manageable. Overall, the allocation would make a positive contribution to supporting the long-term vitality, housing supply and sustainability of the market town.

Southern Huntingdonshire Site Allocations

5.1298 In total nine sites are allocated within settlements in Southern Huntingdonshire.

- Abbotsley 1: North of Wintringham Hall
- Great Gransden 1: Land South of Caxton Road
- Great Paxton 1: West of High Street
- Great Paxton 2: Land North of Harley Industrial Park
- Little Paxton 1: Land North of St James Road
- Little Paxton 2: Land West of Great North Road
- St Neots 1: Land East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm Extension)
- St Neots 2: Land South West of Potton Road, Eynesbury
- Waresley 1: Land between West Lodge and Home Farm

5.1299 There have been no material changes to the majority of site policies since the Preferred Options stage. The previously reported SA results therefore remain valid, and no further SA re-assessment is required for these sites. No additional sites have been allocated since the Preferred Options stage in the Southern Huntingdonshire area. The existing site allocation of St Neots East from the Local Plan to 2036 has been identified as a retained allocation. The site has planning permission is building out and is expected to do so into the the new Local Plan period. The rational of including a retained policy in the Local Plan to 2036 is to provide guidance for the determination of any future planning applications which are primarily expected to be reserved matters providing detailed information to enhance that provided through the outline planning permissions.

5.1300 There was one site that require SA re-assessment due to changes introduced at the Pre-Submission Stage. The table below demonstrates how site policy changed from the Preferred Options stage and the subsequent change in significant effect.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Site	Preferred Options Allocation	Submission Allocation	Housing / Development Change	Policy Change Relevant to Sustainability	SA Objective(s) with Significant Effect Change	Change in Significant Effect
Little Paxton 2 – West of Great North Road	220 dwellings.=	410 dwellings. Strengthening of ecological mitigation requirements; stronger references to recreational impacts on nearby designated sites; additional requirements relating to minerals safeguarding; stronger wastewater and infrastructure requirements; greater clarity on transport integration and active travel.	+190 dwellings	Larger scheme capable of delivering wider housing mix and tenures; scale exceeds 200-home threshold in SA framework.	SA9 Housing	SA9: (+) (++)

5.1301 The changes to **Little Paxton 2** are material but not significant in sustainability appraisal terms. The primary modification is the increase in dwelling numbers from approximately 220 to approximately 410 homes. While this strengthens the site's contribution to meeting district housing requirements, it does not fundamentally alter the allocation's role, location, development form or strategic purpose. The Pre-Submission modifications do not introduce any new significant adverse effects and do not alter the overall sustainability conclusions previously reached for Little Paxton 2. The revised allocation performs slightly better in housing delivery terms while maintaining broadly the same environmental and social sustainability profile.

5.1302 A summary of the appraisal findings for the allocated sites, assessed against the 16 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, is provided below:

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

SA Objectives	SA1			SA2	SA3		SA4		SA5	SA6		SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10			SA11		SA12		SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16
Abbotsley 1	N	+	+	++	-	++	--	--	--	++	-	-	-	N	++	N	-	++	+	++	+	+	N	-	-
Great Gransden 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	+	++	-	+	+	+	+	++	N	++	+	-	++	+	N	+	+
Great Paxton 1	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	-	+	+	+	++	-	++	++	++	+	+	++	-	++	N	N	+	+
Great Paxton 2	N	+	-	++	+	++	--	--	+	+	+	+	-	N	++	N	-	++	++	-	--	+	N	+	+
Little Paxton 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	++	++	+	+	+	-	+	++	+	++	+	++	++	++	N	N	+	++
Little Paxton 2	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	+	+	+	-	-	++	++	+	+	+	++	++	++	N	N	+	++
St Neots 1	N	+	-	+	-	++	-	--	-	++	-	+	-	++	++	+	-	++	-	++	++	N	N	+	-
St Neots 2	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	--	+	++	-	+	-	+	++	++	-	++	++	++	-	N	N	+	++
Waresley 1	N	+	-	++	-	++	--	-	-	++	-	+	+	++	+	-	+	+	+	-	--	N	N	+	-

Abbotsley 1: North of Wintringham Hall

5.1303 The site is located within flood zone 1 and small areas are affected by surface water flooding and development would require a site-specific drainage strategy, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and climate resilience measures. Whilst wastewater infrastructure upgrades may be necessary, climate adaptation objectives can be achieved through policy requirements and integrated water management.

5.1304 The site is greenfield grade 2 agricultural land and therefore development would result in the loss of productive farmland. However, the site offers significant opportunities for green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and habitat creation through green space provision. There are no designated ecological sites within the site and strategic ecological impacts are considered manageable through mitigation and enhancement measures.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1305 The site occupies a prominent countryside location on the eastern edge of St Neots. Development has potential landscape impacts and may alter the rural setting between St Neots and the surrounding countryside. There are no significant heritage constraints within the site itself, although careful design will be required to protect local character and maintain appropriate landscape buffers. Considering the other development sites to the west and the changing context of the site with the A428/A421 upgrades and East West Rail, these impacts are minimised.

5.1306 The allocation performs positively through provision of employment floorspace along a transport corridor providing opportunities for sustainable connections.

5.1307 The site offers significant employment benefits. Although landscape and agricultural land impacts are notable, mitigation measures are capable of reducing these effects, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome. The residual sustainability effect is considered positive overall.

Great Gransden 1: Land South of Caxton Road

5.1308 The site is in flood zone 1 and is not significantly affected by surface water flooding and would require mitigation. Site-wide drainage infrastructure, SuDS and flood management measures are capable of addressing these constraints and supporting climate resilience objectives.

5.1309 No designated ecological sites are located within the site and strategic biodiversity impacts are limited. The proposal creates opportunities for biodiversity net gain and ecological connectivity. The policy identifies it is within the conservation zone of the Eversden and Wimpole SAC and requires appropriate assessment on impacts of bats.

5.1310 Development would have some landscape change given the site's size and rural setting. No significant heritage assets are present within the allocation, although landscape integration and careful design will be essential to manage visual impacts.

5.1311 The allocation performs positively through provision of employment floorspace. The site adjoins the Sand Road Industrial Estate (an Established Employment Area) providing an expansion to an Established Employment Area and presenting opportunities for local businesses.

5.1312 The site offers significant employment benefits and has capacity to deliver an extension to an existing Established Employment Area. Although landscape and agricultural land impacts are notable, mitigation measures are capable of reducing these effects, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Great Paxton 1: West of High Street

5.1313 A change from the Preferred Options stage was that the boundary has been amended to remove the land used for car parking at the nearby football field. This follows concerns from residents. This amends the site area down to 0.4ha and the capacity to 9 dwellings, these are not considered to be significant changes.

5.1314 The site is in flood zone 1 and is not significantly affected by surface water flooding which can be addressed through appropriate drainage solutions and SuDS, resulting in positive effects against climate resilience objectives.

5.1315 The site is situated within the Great Ouse Valley green infrastructure network and offers opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and habitat connectivity. Ecological constraints are relatively limited and biodiversity net gain can be achieved through landscaping and habitat creation measures.

5.1316 As a small-scale site located behind existing development, landscape impacts are localised. There are some heritage constraints but effects on local character can be mitigated through sensitive design and landscaping. The site is located close to the East Coast Mainline Railway so there is potential for noise pollution which the policy requires assessment and mitigation.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1317 The site makes a positive contribution to housing choice through provision of self-build and custom-build opportunities. It benefits from reasonable access to local facilities, services and employment opportunities in Great Paxton and St Neots, supporting community sustainability.

Great Paxton 2: Land North of Harley Industrial Park

5.1318 The site is within flood zone 1 with limited areas of surface water flooding capable of mitigation through site design and drainage infrastructure.

5.1319 Whilst development would result in the loss of grade 2 agricultural land, the site provides opportunities for landscaping and biodiversity enhancement. It lies close to the Great Ouse Valley strategic corridor and has potential to support ecological connectivity and biodiversity net gain.

5.1320 The site occupies an exposed countryside location adjacent to Harley Industrial Park. Development would alter the landscape character of the settlement edge and require substantial landscaping. Heritage constraints are limited and can be addressed through appropriate design.

5.1321 The allocation performs positively through provision of employment floorspace. The site adjoins Harley Industrial Estate to the south (an Established Employment Area) providing an expansion to an Established Employment Area and presenting opportunities for local businesses. Its proximity to St Neots supports access to employment opportunities and services, although sustainable transport opportunities remain relatively limited.

5.1322 The site offers significant employment benefits and has capacity to deliver an extension to an existing Established Employment Area. Although landscape and agricultural land impacts are notable, mitigation measures are capable of reducing these effects, resulting in a positive overall sustainability outcome.

Little Paxton 1: Land North of St James Road

5.1323 The site is within flood zone 1 and has nominal surface water flood risk and can be managed through SuDS and integrated water management measures.

5.1324 The site lies close to the Great Ouse Valley Priority Area being south of the Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and SSSI. The site provides opportunities to strengthen green infrastructure and habitat connectivity. Biodiversity net gain, retention of vegetation and creation of ecological corridors would contribute positively to environmental objectives.

5.1325 Development would affect a greenfield site on the edge of Little Paxton and would therefore alter local landscape character. However, generous green infrastructure provision and landscape-sensitive design can reduce visual impacts. Heritage constraints are limited.

5.1326 The site benefits from good access to local facilities, schools, community services and employment opportunities.

5.1327 Despite the loss of greenfield land and some landscape change, the site's accessibility, housing benefits and ecological enhancement opportunities result in a positive sustainability outcome.

Little Paxton 2: Land West of Great North Road

5.1328 The site performs positively against flood risk objectives, with the site being in flood zone 1 with only some surface water flood risk. Surface water and drainage issues can be addressed through SuDS, green infrastructure and flood attenuation measures.

5.1329 The site is located within the Great Ouse Valley green infrastructure corridor and has strong potential to contribute towards biodiversity objectives through habitat enhancement, ecosystem connectivity and biodiversity net gain measures.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1330 The site forms part of an important landscape wedge between Little Paxton and the A1 corridor. Development would therefore require careful masterplanning, extensive landscaping and retention of key green infrastructure features to avoid significant adverse effects. Its location could give rise to noise, air and light pollution which the policy requires appropriate assessment and mitigation to overcome.

5.1331 The allocation is accessible to schools, employment areas, recreation facilities and community services. It supports housing growth in a sustainable service centre and contributes to meeting housing needs across the district.

5.1332 The social and accessibility benefits are considerable and the potential for ecological opportunities are significant. Whilst landscape effects and amenity considerations require careful mitigation, the residual sustainability effects are judged to be positive overall.

St Neots 1: Land East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm Extension)

5.1333 The site is located in flood zone 1, with only limited areas affected by surface water flood risk. Allocation requirements relating to flood mitigation, drainage design, water efficiency and climate adaptation ensure positive performance against climate resilience objectives.

5.1334 The site provides opportunities to deliver biodiversity net gain, strategic green infrastructure and habitat connectivity alongside the existing development at St Neots East. Ecological impacts are limited and can be mitigated through integrated landscape and environmental design.

5.1335 Development represents a natural extension to Loves Farm and can be integrated with existing and planned communities. The presence of Tithe Farm, a series of listed buildings, requires sensitive heritage-led design and protection of its significance. With appropriate mitigation, heritage impacts can be managed effectively and integrated into the wider development.

5.1336 The site performs strongly in sustainability terms due to its relationship with the existing urban area of St Neots, employment opportunities, schools, services and public transport. The allocation contributes significantly to housing delivery and supports delivery of associated infrastructure. The policy also identifies land that falls within the safeguarding zone for East West Rail so that the site can be delivered alongside wider infrastructure projects.

5.1337 As an urban extension adjoining an existing growth area, the site performs well against housing, accessibility and community objectives. Heritage considerations can be successfully managed through policy requirements, producing a positive overall sustainability outcome.

St Neots 2: Land South West of Potton Road, Eynesbury

5.1338 The site is located in flood zone 1, with only limited areas affected by surface water flood risk and is capable of accommodating development while managing surface water and drainage constraints through site-specific flood mitigation measures. Climate adaptation objectives can be incorporated within the allocation.

5.1339 The allocation provides opportunities for green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancement. Habitat creation, landscape buffers and integration of natural flood management measures can result in positive residual biodiversity effects.

5.1340 Potential impacts arise from development at the edge of Eynesbury and the wider countryside setting. Appropriate landscape mitigation, retention of key features and sensitive design will be necessary to avoid adverse landscape effects. Heritage impacts are limited and manageable.

5.1341 The site is surrounded by the A248, B1046 and the East Coast Mainline meaning the site may be impacted by noise, air and light pollution. The policy requires noise and air quality assessments to be undertaken with mitigation measures incorporated.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1342 The site offers significant housing delivery in a highly sustainable market town location with access to schools, healthcare, employment and recreation facilities. It supports healthy communities, housing choice and the continued vitality of St Neots. The site is located adjacent to the southern boundary of Wintringham Park so there are opportunities for integration.

5.1343 The site performs strongly across social, economic and accessibility objectives. Environmental constraints are capable of mitigation through the allocation requirements and wider Local Plan policies, resulting in an overall positive sustainability outcome.

Waresley 1: Land between West Lodge and Home Farm

5.1344 The site is located in flood zone 1, with only limited areas affected by surface water flood risk and is capable of accommodating development while managing surface water and drainage constraints through site-specific flood mitigation measures. Climate adaptation objectives can be incorporated within the allocation.

5.1345 There are two distinct parts to the site, the eastern part (1ha) consists of amenity grassland and the western a densely wooded area (0.66ha). The allocation states development is only supported on the eastern part so that the woodland can be retained. The allocation provides opportunities for enhancements to biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancement. Habitat creation, landscape buffers and integration of natural flood management measures can result in positive residual biodiversity effects. The policy identifies it is within the conservation zone of the Eversden and Wimpole SAC and requires appropriate assessment on impacts of bats.

5.1346 Appropriate landscape mitigation, retention of key features and sensitive design will be necessary to avoid adverse landscape effects. It is sensitively located to listed buildings and the conservation area, heritage assessments will be required and are considered to be manageable through design.

5.1347 The allocation is a very small-scale development of approximately six dwellings. Consequently, its direct cumulative effects are expected to be limited. It makes a positive contribution to housing choice through provision of self-build and custom-build opportunities.

5.1348 There are limited services within Waresley itself so relies on most services in St Neots and other surrounding settlements. Public transport is limited so development will likely result in private car usage. It benefits from reasonable access to local facilities, services and employment opportunities in Great Paxton and St Neots, supporting community sustainability.

5.1349 Overall, the allocation represents infill growth that supports the continued vitality of the village without generating significant additional infrastructure requirements.

Summary of Impacts on Human Health and Inequalities

5.1350 In respect of SA Objective 10 (Healthy Communities and Reduced Inequalities), all eight allocations are considered likely to generate positive residual effects. The St Neots and Little Paxton sites perform particularly strongly due to their proximity to services, employment, education and healthcare provision. Great Paxton 1, Great Paxton 2, Great Gransden 1 and Waresley 1 support housing and employment choice and community sustainability within village settlements, whilst Abbotsley 1 contributes significant employment opportunities along a strategic transport corridor. Collectively, the allocations support housing delivery, access to green infrastructure, active lifestyles, economic opportunity and social inclusion, with no significant health impacts identified that cannot be mitigated through site-specific requirements and the wider planning policy framework. Consequently, the overall contribution of these allocations towards improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities is considered positive.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Cumulative effects in relation to wider settlement

Abbotsley

- 5.1351** Although located within Abbotsley parish, Abbotsley 1 functions strategically as part of the wider eastern expansion of St Neots. Together with St Neots East (Loves Farm and Wintringham Park) and the proposed Tithe Farm Extension (St Neots 1), development at this site would contribute to further economic opportunity. The site could provide additional employment floorspace and support local economic growth, helping to increase opportunities for residents to work closer to home.
- 5.1352** The principal cumulative effects are likely to relate to transport, landscape character and infrastructure provision. Development would increase traffic movements on the A428, Cambridge Road and surrounding junctions, adding to pressures arising from existing commitments in the eastern growth area. The site is not particularly well connected by public transport and is likely to generate a significant proportion of journeys by private car unless supported by enhanced active travel and public transport links. Future delivery of East West Rail and associated infrastructure alongside nearby strategic development may further influence movement patterns and connectivity in this area.
- 5.1353** In combination with other planned growth around St Neots, development would increase demand for water and wastewater infrastructure. The St Neots Water Recycling Centre catchment is already identified as requiring ongoing investment to accommodate growth. Whilst these pressures would need to be managed through infrastructure planning and developer contributions, the site could contribute towards the delivery of additional employment opportunities and green infrastructure. Overall, cumulative effects are mixed, with economic and housing benefits balanced against increased transport, infrastructure and landscape pressures.

Great Gransden

- 5.1354** Great Gransden is a relatively sustainable village with a primary school, convenience shopping and a range of community facilities, although residents remain reliant on St Neots, Cambourne and Cambridge for higher-order services, employment and secondary education. Development at Great Gransden 1 would represent a notable proportionate increase in employment provision and reinforce the vitality and viability of the Sand Road Industrial Established Employment Area.
- 5.1355** The cumulative effect of growth would include additional traffic movements along Caxton Road, Fox Street and routes towards Cambourne, Cambridge and St Neots. Public transport provision remains limited and therefore much of the additional travel demand is likely to be car-based. Whilst the site is relatively accessible to village services on foot, cumulative growth would increase pressure on local roads and parking within the settlement.
- 5.1356** Additional development would also increase demand on utility infrastructure. However, the village already contains a range of facilities that would benefit from additional population support. Subject to appropriate infrastructure investment, growth could help sustain local services, shops and community facilities over the long term. Overall, cumulative effects are expected to be generally positive in supporting village sustainability, although transport and infrastructure pressures would require careful management.

Great Paxton

- 5.1357** Great Paxton is closely linked to St Neots and benefits from access to local services, employment opportunities and strategic transport connections available in the nearby market town. Development at Great Paxton 1, when considered alongside other allocations and commitments within Great Paxton and the wider St Neots area, would contribute to incremental growth of the village whilst maintaining its relationship with St Neots.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1358 Cumulative impacts are likely to include increased use of local roads, particularly High Street. Given the limited frequency of public transport services, additional residents would be expected to rely heavily on private vehicles for commuting, secondary education, healthcare and retail needs. The cumulative transport impact is likely to be moderate rather than significant due to the relatively modest scale of development.

5.1359 Growth would also contribute towards increased demand on primary education, healthcare and community services. Additional housing would help support local facilities within Great Paxton and contribute to maintaining the vitality of the settlement. Overall, cumulative effects are expected to be broadly positive, subject to continued investment in sustainable transport and local infrastructure.

5.1360 In combination with Great Paxton 1 and existing employment activities at Harley Industrial Park Established Employment Area, development north of the industrial estate would strengthen Great Paxton's role as a location supporting local employment opportunities. The site has the potential to expand the existing employment area and contribute to a better balance between homes and jobs within the wider St Neots area.

5.1361 The main cumulative effects are likely to arise from additional traffic associated with employment uses, particularly along Paxton Hill, High Street and connections to the A1 and St Neots. Given existing levels of car dependency within the settlement, employment growth may increase peak-hour vehicle movements and freight traffic. Nevertheless, concentrating employment alongside an existing industrial estate would reduce the need to establish new employment locations elsewhere.

5.1362 The site is unlikely to place significant additional pressure on education facilities but may indirectly increase demand for local services and healthcare through workforce growth. It could also support economic resilience and help retain employment opportunities close to existing residential communities. Overall, cumulative effects are expected to be positive from an economic perspective, although transport impacts would require mitigation.

Little Paxton

5.1363 Little Paxton is one of the district's more sustainable service centres and already functions as part of the wider St Neots urban area. Development at Little Paxton 1, together with other planned growth in Little Paxton and St Neots, would reinforce the settlement's role as an important residential location supported by a relatively good range of local facilities.

5.1364 The cumulative effects of growth would include additional traffic on St James Road, High Street, Great North Road and routes into St Neots. Whilst walking and cycling opportunities exist, a significant proportion of trips are still likely to be made by car. Growth may also increase recreational pressures on the nearby Paxton Pits area and other green infrastructure assets, highlighting the importance of managing public access and biodiversity impacts.

5.1365 Additional housing would increase demand for education, healthcare and utility infrastructure. The settlement already benefits from proximity to schools, healthcare services and employment opportunities in St Neots, helping to reduce the significance of cumulative pressures. Growth could support the viability of local facilities and improve the sustainability of the settlement over the long term. Overall, cumulative effects are considered to be positive, provided environmental assets and infrastructure capacity are appropriately managed.

5.1366 When considered alongside Little Paxton 1 and wider growth around St Neots, development at Little Paxton 2 would represent a substantial expansion of the settlement. Due to the scale of potential growth, cumulative effects are likely to be more pronounced than those associated with smaller sites elsewhere in the district.

5.1367 The principal cumulative impacts relate to transport, landscape character and environmental assets. Significant additional traffic movements would be expected on Great North Road, the A1 corridor and routes into St Neots.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

The scale of growth may also increase recreational pressures on nearby nature sites such as Little Paxton Wood SSSI, requiring comprehensive green infrastructure planning and mitigation.

5.1368 Growth at this scale would generate substantial demand for education, healthcare, utility and community infrastructure. However, it could also provide opportunities to deliver new facilities directly as part of development and improve the long-term sustainability of the settlement. Overall, cumulative effects are mixed; while the site could deliver significant housing and infrastructure benefits, it would also place considerable pressure on transport networks, the landscape and sensitive environmental assets.

St Neots

5.1369 As part of the eastern growth area of St Neots, St Neots 1 would contribute to the ongoing expansion of Loves Farm and Wintringham Park (retained allocation at St Neots East) and forms an important component of the town's planned growth strategy. In cumulative terms, the site would consolidate development along the eastern edge of the town and help accommodate a significant proportion of Huntingdonshire's housing needs.

5.1370 The cumulative effects of growth include increased travel demand along Cambridge Road, the A428 and local distributor roads. However, because the site adjoins existing and planned urban areas, there are greater opportunities to integrate active travel routes, public transport and local services than at more isolated sites. The cumulative impact on the road network will nevertheless be significant and reinforces the importance of strategic transport improvements.

5.1371 Development would increase pressure on schools, healthcare facilities, utilities and recreational infrastructure. However, the scale of development also provides opportunities for new education, community and local centre facilities to be delivered as part of the wider eastern St Neots growth area. Whilst cumulative demands on infrastructure will be substantial, the site's integration with existing strategic growth areas means these impacts are

capable of being planned for comprehensively. Overall, cumulative effects are expected to be largely positive in supporting the sustainable growth of St Neots.

5.1372 St Neots 2 would extend development around the Eynesbury area and contribute further to the growth of St Neots, alongside committed developments elsewhere in the town. Cumulatively, the site would help address housing needs while reinforcing St Neots' role as the district's largest settlement and key service centre. The site is located adjacent to the southern boundary of Wintringham Park so there are opportunities for integration.

5.1373 The principal cumulative impacts relate to transport, environmental quality and infrastructure provision. Additional traffic movements would affect Potton Road, local distributor roads and wider connections across the town. Combined with other allocations, growth is likely to place increasing demands on junction capacity and strategic highway infrastructure. Opportunities to enhance walking, cycling and public transport connections will therefore be important.

5.1374 The cumulative effect of growth would also increase demand for education, healthcare, community facilities and wastewater infrastructure. St Neots already accommodates a substantial proportion of district growth, and the addition of this site would reinforce the need for coordinated infrastructure delivery. Nevertheless, as a market town with extensive facilities, employment opportunities and public services, St Neots is better placed than most settlements to absorb these cumulative demands. Overall, the cumulative effect of St Neots 2 is expected to be positive, supporting the long-term sustainability and growth of the wider town.

Waresley

5.1375 Waresley has limited services and facilities itself so residents are reliant on St Neots, Cambourne and Cambridge for higher-order services, employment and secondary education. Development at Waresley 1 would

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

represent a notable proportionate increase in housing development, specifically self and custom building, therefore diversifying the housing stock in the village and providing some growth to support services.

5.1376 The cumulative effect of growth would include additional traffic movements along Waresley Road and Manor Farm Road. Public transport provision remains limited and therefore much of the additional travel demand is likely to be car-based. Whilst the site is relatively accessible to village services on foot, cumulative growth would increase pressure on local roads and parking within the settlement.

5.1377 Waresley 1 is a very small-scale development of approximately six dwellings. Consequently, its direct cumulative effects are expected to be limited. Additional residents would be largely accommodated within the existing service and infrastructure networks centred on St Neots. Demand on local schools, GP practices and community facilities would increase only marginally.

Cumulative Effects of the Pre-Submission Local Plan

5.1378 The cumulative effects of the Pre-Submission Local Plan should be considered as the combined impact of the spatial strategy, development management policies, infrastructure requirements and site allocations operating together over the period to 2046. The Sustainability Appraisal framework identifies climate change, environmental protection, housing, health and wellbeing, and socio-economic inclusion as the principal dimensions against which cumulative effects should be assessed. The overall conclusion is that the Local Plan is likely to generate significant positive cumulative effects across most sustainability themes, subject to effective mitigation of pressures relating to water resources, flood risk, biodiversity, transport, infrastructure and environmental capacity.

Climate Change and Climate Resilience

5.1379 The Local Plan is expected to have a strongly positive cumulative effect on climate change mitigation and adaptation. The strategy directs more than 80% of growth to market towns, service centres and strategic growth locations where access to services, employment and public transport is greatest. This reduces reliance on private vehicles and supports active travel, public transport use and lower-carbon lifestyles. The Plan is further reinforced by policies promoting energy-efficient construction, renewable energy generation, electric vehicle infrastructure, sustainable design, water efficiency and carbon sequestration through nature-based solutions.

5.1380 At a strategic level, the Local Plan aligns growth with a pathway towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and supports significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from buildings and transport. Expansion of green infrastructure, woodland creation, habitat restoration and peatland conservation are expected to contribute to long-term carbon capture and climate adaptation benefits working alongside other strategic documents such as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1381 However, cumulative adverse effects may arise from the scale of planned development, particularly through construction emissions, increased energy demand and traffic generation during early phases of growth. These effects are expected to be moderated over time through policy requirements and technological improvements. The Habitats Regulations Assessment assess the cumulative impact of growth not just of the Local Plan but also in combination with other plan and programs providing mitigations which have been not only shaped the strategy for growth but also fed into policies and site allocation policies in the Local Plan.

Housing and Communities

5.1382 The Plan delivers substantial positive cumulative effects in relation to housing need. Provision is made for at least 32,200 homes and a wide range of housing tenures, including affordable housing, accessible and adaptable homes, specialist accommodation, self-build opportunities and provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and boat dwellers. This represents a significant response to affordability pressures, demographic change and projected population growth specific to Huntingdonshire and the wider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough housing market areas.

5.1383 The concentration of development within sustainable settlements supports the delivery of schools, healthcare, community facilities, green spaces and local services alongside housing growth. New communities and major urban extensions offer opportunities to maximise placemaking by creating mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods that reduce social isolation and support lifetime communities. It also aligns growth with the infrastructure and growth aspirations of the Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan supporting the delivery of these sites. Additionally, the inclusion of some more dispersed rural growth supports the sustainability of services, facilities and infrastructure of smaller settlements across the district as well as provide housing options for people who wish to live in these settlements.

5.1384 Potential cumulative adverse effects relate to the ability of infrastructure delivery to keep pace with development. Without timely provision of transport, education, healthcare, wastewater and utility infrastructure, growth could create pressure on existing communities. The Plan seeks to manage these effects through infrastructure planning, masterplanning and developer contributions and is supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Study as well as various Statements of Common Ground with key infrastructure providers (such as Anglian Water and UK Power Networks and the NHS) to provide greater certainty.

Environment, Biodiversity and Natural Resources

5.1385 The Plan is likely to generate significant positive cumulative environmental effects through its commitment to biodiversity recovery, green and blue infrastructure enhancement and nature-based climate solutions. Strategic priority areas including the Great Fen, Great Ouse Valley, Nene Valley and Nature Recovery Network corridors provide a framework for habitat restoration and ecological connectivity across the district working alongside the adopted Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy. These are important in balancing out built development and supports Huntingdonshire's rich networks of habitats and landscapes.

5.1386 Policies requiring biodiversity enhancement, protection of designated sites, improved green infrastructure networks and habitat creation are expected to contribute to long-term ecosystem resilience. Increased access to natural greenspace will also provide wider environmental and social benefits. The Local Plan in its infrastructure delivery, requires higher standards of natural greenspace by adopting the Fields in Trust plus Allotments standard.

5.1387 Nevertheless, cumulative environmental pressures remain. The scale of housing and employment growth will inevitably increase recreational pressure on sensitive habitats, place additional demands on water resources and result in the loss of some greenfield land. While the strategy seeks to avoid the most sensitive environmental locations and reduce impacts on best and most versatile agricultural land where possible, residual effects on biodiversity, landscape character and environmental capacity may still

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

occur in some locations, but the policies in the Local Plan seek to mitigate these. The Habitats Regulations Assessment and Ecological Constraints Assessment are principle documents that have shaped policies.

5.1388 Water resource availability and wastewater infrastructure are identified as particularly important cumulative issues requiring ongoing monitoring and investment throughout the plan period. The Water Cycle Study and Infrastructure Delivery Study as well as Statement of Common Ground with water bodies such as Anglian Water demonstrate how we have worked collaboratively in addressing cumulative impacts.

Human Health and Wellbeing

5.1389 The Plan is expected to have substantial positive cumulative effects on physical and mental health. The vision and objectives place health and wellbeing at the centre of growth, supported through delivery of quality housing, active travel infrastructure, accessible open space, recreation opportunities and investment in community services. It builds on the strong positive vision of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy providing a joined up approach to development and placemaking across Council strategies.

5.1390 Expansion of green and blue infrastructure networks, improvements in walking, cycling and wheeling routes, and the creation of healthier environments are likely to encourage physical activity and support improved mental wellbeing. Reduced exposure to air pollution and greater opportunities for social interaction within mixed-use communities provide additional long-term health benefits. The Plan has several design policies focusing on high quality sustainable design that require high levels of amenity for people as well as creating places that are well designed.

5.1391 There are, however, potential cumulative risks associated with increased population growth if healthcare capacity, education provision and recreational infrastructure do not expand in line with development. The Plan's emphasis on infrastructure-led growth and strategic infrastructure

provision is intended to mitigate these risks. Additionally, design policies require development to respond to their context ensuring greater opportunities for integration.

Inequality, Social Inclusion and Economic Opportunity

5.1392 The cumulative effects of the Local Plan on equality and inclusion are expected to be predominantly positive. Growth is directed towards locations with better access to employment, services and public transport, helping to reduce barriers to opportunity. Affordable housing requirements, specialist housing provision, investment in community infrastructure and support for accessible design should benefit groups most at risk of exclusion, including older people, lower-income households and those with mobility needs.

5.1393 Economically, the Plan provides for approximately 15,400 additional jobs and a substantial supply of employment land. This supports economic diversification, inward investment, innovation-led growth and higher-value employment opportunities and aligns with the Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan. Strengthening town centres, supporting rural businesses and improving digital connectivity further enhance inclusive growth potential. This also responds to the various economic sectors that make up Huntingdonshire's economy supporting jobs across a range of sectors in a range of locations. The Local Plan emphasises Huntingdonshire's strategic location in terms of local and regional economic activity and works alongside the Local Growth Plan to support housing, employment and mixed-use developments in sustainable locations.

5.1394 The principal cumulative challenge is ensuring that the benefits of growth are distributed across both urban and rural communities. Some rural locations may continue to experience accessibility constraints and reliance on private transport. However, the settlement hierarchy, rural economy policies and support for local services are intended to moderate these effects by directly some growth through site allocations and also policies that support development in such locations, subject to certain criteria being met. This balances and compliments the overall strategy.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Conclusion

5.1395 Taken as a whole, the Pre-Submission Local Plan is expected to result in significant positive cumulative effects across climate change mitigation, housing delivery, community wellbeing, economic opportunity and social inclusion. The integrated approach of concentrating growth in sustainable locations, supporting infrastructure delivery and enhancing green and blue infrastructure provides a coherent framework for sustainable development to 2046.

5.1396 The most significant cumulative risks relate to water resources, wastewater capacity, flood risk, pressure on designated habitats, loss of greenfield land and infrastructure delivery timing. Subject to implementation of the mitigation measures embedded within the Plan and its evidence base as well as continued monitoring through the Sustainability Appraisal framework, these effects are not expected to outweigh the substantial long-term sustainability benefits arising from the Local Plan's overall strategy.

Mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities

5.1397 For Examination purposes, it is helpful to demonstrate not only that mitigation is proposed, but also how specific policies and strategic interventions within the Pre-Submission Local Plan directly address identified cumulative effects. It does not identify every potential mitigation measure but identifies key ones to demonstrate how interventions are embedded across the Local Plan.

Climate Change and Net Zero Carbon

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1398 Growth of 32,200 homes and 15,400 jobs could increase energy consumption, transport emissions and overall carbon emissions if unmanaged.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.1399 Policy approach to climate resilience and net zero:

- The Plan commits to a district-wide pathway towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050 through alignment with the Climate Change Committee's Balanced Pathway
- Policies require energy-efficient buildings adopting a "fabric first" approach and support renewable energy generation and low-carbon infrastructure
- Growth is concentrated in market towns, service centres and strategic growth locations where active travel and public transport opportunities are greatest, reducing travel-related emissions
- Strategic policies support carbon capture through woodland creation, habitat restoration and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure networks

Specific example(s) from the Local Plan

5.1400 Mixed-use urban extensions at Tithe Farm, Giffords Park and those within the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster as well as new communities at Wyton Airfield and The Lattenburys are planned around integrated infrastructure, active travel and public transport provision, reducing dependency on private vehicles and supporting long-term emissions reduction. This approach reduces the need to travel to key services on a daily basis, reduces out commuting and supports a modal shift away from private car usage.

Housing and Communities

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1401 Rapid housing growth could place pressure on infrastructure, community cohesion and service provision if growth is not accompanied by facilities and affordable housing.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- Provision for at least 32,200 dwellings with a mix of tenures, types of housing and affordable housing
- Policies requiring accessible and adaptable homes and specialist housing to address ageing population needs
- Large strategic allocations include expectations for schools, community facilities, open space and healthcare infrastructure
- Infrastructure delivery will be secured through masterplanning, Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 agreements

Specific example(s) from the Local Plan

5.1402 The Wyton Airfield new community and wider North Huntingdon Growth Cluster are intended to function as comprehensively planned settlements containing housing, employment, education and community infrastructure, helping mitigate pressure on existing settlements.

Biodiversity and Natural Environment

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1403 Growth could increase recreational pressure on protected nature conservation sites and habitats, fragment ecological networks and result in biodiversity losses.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

- Establishment of Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas across the district
- Protection and enhancement of designated biodiversity sites through specific environment policies
- Delivery of biodiversity net gain and habitat connectivity through strategic allocations
- Requirement for development proposals within Priority Areas to contribute to Nature Recovery Network objectives

Specific example(s) in the Local Plan

5.1404 The Plan identifies nine Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas including the Great fen, Great Ouse Valley, Nene Valley and various other nature and river corridors. Development within or adjacent to these areas must demonstrate positive contributions to nature recovery objectives and habitat connectivity.

5.1405 The Local Plan requires application of the Fields in Trust plus Allotments standards for greenspace in its planning obligations and strategic provision of green infrastructure is required in larger site allocations.

Landscape and Environmental Quality

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1406 Strategic urban extensions and new settlements have potential to alter landscape character, settlement setting and local distinctiveness.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

- Policies requiring protection of landscape character and townscape quality
- High design standards and placemaking requirements
- Strategic landscaping and green infrastructure integrated into major developments
- Specific protection for the Great Fen's landscape and visual setting

Specific example(s) in the Local Plan

5.1407 Within the Great Fen area, proposals must demonstrate consistency with the Great Fen Master Plan and avoid impacts on tranquillity, visual quality and landscape setting.

Water Resources and Flood Risk

Potential Cumulative Effect

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1408 Additional development could increase flood risk, water demand and pressure on wastewater infrastructure. These are identified as key risks throughout both the Plan and Sustainability Appraisal.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

- Strategic policies on flood risk, wastewater management, surface water management and water efficiency standards that exceed national requirements
- Sequential approach favouring development in Flood Zone 1
- Requirement for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
- Alignment of development phasing with wastewater infrastructure upgrades informed by the Water Cycle Study and Infrastructure Delivery Study

Specific example(s) from the Local Plan

5.1409 The Sustainability Appraisal framework specifically assesses whether sites are served by existing wastewater infrastructure, whether infrastructure upgrades are required and whether sites are located in Flood Zone 1.

Human Health and Wellbeing

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1410 Population growth can increase demand for healthcare, recreation facilities and open spaces while potentially exacerbating health inequalities.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

- Health and wellbeing embedded as a core strategic theme
- Policy requiring Health Impact Assessments on certain scales of development
- Delivery of accessible green space and recreational infrastructure
- Active travel policies promoting walking, cycling and wheeling

- Policies requires high standards of design, amenity and addressing air pollution
- Infrastructure requirements for healthcare facilities where growth generates demand

Specific example(s) from the Local Plan

5.1411 Policy objectives require investment in healthcare, public open spaces, community buildings and active travel infrastructure so that healthy lifestyles become achievable for all residents.

Inequality and Social Inclusion

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1412 Without intervention, housing affordability pressures and unequal access to services may increase social exclusion, particularly for older people, lower-income households and rural communities.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

- Affordable housing provision
- Accessible and adaptable housing standards
- Specialist housing for older people and vulnerable groups
- Settlement hierarchy directing growth towards locations with services, public transport and employment opportunities
- Protection and support of local services in villages and rural communities

Specific example(s) from the Local Plan

5.1413 The settlement categories of Service Centres, Local Service Villages and Villages specifically support modest growth in these more rural settlements to maintain population levels, sustain local services and reduce the risk of social isolation and service decline.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Economy and Employment

Potential Cumulative Effect

5.1414 Economic growth could increase transport demand and land take but is required to support housing growth and reduce out-commuting.

Specific Mitigation Measures in the Plan

- Provision for approximately 15,400 additional jobs and 922,000 sqm of employment floorspace
- Support for innovation-led growth, defence industries, logistics and high-value employment sectors
- Protection of Established Employment Areas, market towns and local centres
- Integration of housing and employment growth to reduce commuting distances

Specific example(s) from the Local Plan

5.1415 The North Huntingdon Growth Cluster combines major mixed-use housing allocations with substantial employment land, including logistics and manufacturing development associated with Alconbury Weald and the Hinchingsbrook Logistics Park, helping balance jobs and housing growth.

5.1416 Three site allocations extend existing Establish Employment Areas (Kimbolton 2, Yaxley 1 and Great Paxton 2).

Conclusion

5.1417 The Plan adopts a layered approach whereby strategic growth locations, infrastructure planning, climate policies, green and blue infrastructure networks, biodiversity policies, housing requirements, employment and health-focused placemaking collectively mitigate adverse cumulative effects while maximising the Plan's positive social, economic and environmental

outcomes. The mitigations measures highlighted here and the examples provided demonstrate how impacts, including cumulative ones, can be overcome.

Assessing Significant Effects of the Plan on Human Health and Inequality

5.1418 The Sustainability Appraisal framework integrates health and inequality considerations throughout the assessment process rather than treating them as standalone topics. Following baseline analysis, the SA identified several key challenges relevant to health and social equity, including an ageing population, housing affordability pressures, unequal access to healthcare and community facilities, concentrations of deprivation in parts of the district, rural isolation, limited public transport accessibility, and health impacts associated with air pollution and inactivity.

5.1419 These issues were translated into a set of sustainability objectives and decision-aiding questions which ensured that all strategic policies, development management policies and site allocations were assessed against health and equality outcomes. The most directly relevant objectives are:

- **SA9:** All people have access to high quality affordable homes that meet their needs across their lifetime.
- **SA10:** Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities to promote social inclusion, particularly amongst those most at risk of discrimination, poverty and social exclusion.
- **SA12:** Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure.

5.1420 Health considerations are also embedded within objectives addressing green infrastructure, pollution reduction, accessibility, placemaking and community cohesion, reflecting the interrelationship between environmental quality, physical health, mental wellbeing and social equality.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1421 The SA testing of the Local Plan Vision and Objectives concluded that health-related objectives performed strongly, with significant positive effects identified for housing provision, community wellbeing, social inclusion and accessibility to services. The appraisal found that health and inequality considerations are woven through the Plan's strategic approach rather than being limited to individual policies.

Appraisal of Health Impacts

Positive Effects on Physical and Mental Health

5.1422 The Pre-Submission Plan places health and wellbeing at the centre of its vision for growth. One of the Plan's five overarching themes is "Health Embedded", which seeks to ensure that physical and mental wellbeing becomes a fundamental consideration in planning and development. The Plan explicitly promotes healthy lifestyles, access to open space, opportunities for physical activity and improved social interaction.

5.1423 The SA identifies significant positive effects arising from:

- delivery of high-quality housing;
- increased access to public open space;
- enhancement of green and blue infrastructure networks;
- provision of active travel infrastructure;
- investment in healthcare and community facilities;
- creation of walkable mixed-use neighbourhoods.

5.1424 A notable example is the strategic emphasis on walking, cycling and wheeling. Objective 11 of the Plan seeks investment in healthcare, open spaces, community buildings and active travel infrastructure to make healthy lifestyles achievable for all residents. Objective 16 seeks realistic alternatives to private car use through walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport. These measures are expected to contribute positively to physical activity levels and reduce health inequalities associated with limited mobility and accessibility.

5.1425 The Plan's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy provides another important health benefit. The extensive network of priority areas, including the Great Fen, Great Ouse Valley, Nene Valley, as well as others across the district, is intended not only to support biodiversity but also to improve access to nature, recreation and mental wellbeing. The SA identifies these provisions as contributing positively to healthy lifestyles and community wellbeing.

Housing and Health Outcomes

5.1426 The SA baseline identified affordability pressures, ageing demographics and changing housing needs as key determinants of health and wellbeing. The Plan responds through provision for at least 32,200 homes, alongside policies promoting affordable housing, accessible and adaptable homes, specialist accommodation and housing for older people.

5.1427 This approach is expected to generate significant positive health effects by:

- reducing housing insecurity;
- improving housing quality;
- enabling older residents to remain independent for longer;
- supporting vulnerable groups through appropriate accommodation;
- reducing overcrowding and homelessness pressures.

5.1428 An example is Objective 10 which supports high quality homes that meet the needs of all of Huntingdonshire's residents, whether this is affordable housing, specialist housing or a specific form of housing such as self and custom build plots, moorings or gypsy and traveller pitches. The Sustainability Appraisal assessed the housing-related objectives as strongly positive, concluding that the Plan would help meet the needs of all sectors of the community and support wellbeing throughout different life stages.

Appraisal of Inequality and Social Inclusion

Positive Effects on Social Equality

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1429 The Local Plan is expected to have a predominantly positive effect on reducing inequality. The SA recognised that social exclusion can arise from poor housing affordability, limited access to services, rural isolation and unequal access to employment opportunities. The growth strategy responds by directing over 80% of development towards market towns, service centres and strategic growth locations where services, facilities and public transport are already concentrated.

5.1430 The Plan's strategic objectives seek to:

- reduce social exclusion;
- support community cohesion;
- improve access to services;
- increase housing choice;
- create inclusive communities;
- support participation in daily life for all residents. Particular benefits are expected for:
 - lower-income households through affordable housing provision;
 - older people through accessible housing policies;
 - people with disabilities through adaptable housing and improved accessibility;
 - rural communities through measures supporting local services and facilities.

5.1431 The Plan also supports approximately 15,400 additional jobs and significant employment growth. By improving access to economic opportunities and supporting higher-value employment sectors, the strategy is expected to contribute positively to reducing economic inequalities across the district.

Rural Inequality Considerations

5.1432 The SA identifies some residual concerns regarding inequality between urban and rural communities. Although the settlement hierarchy supports growth in villages and local service villages, many rural communities remain dependent upon private vehicles and have limited access to healthcare, education and employment opportunities. The SA notes that some rural areas may continue to experience accessibility challenges despite the Plan's interventions.

5.1433 However, policies supporting local services, rural exceptions housing, digital connectivity and modest growth within villages are intended to maintain community viability and reduce social isolation.

Adverse Effects and Mitigation Measures

5.1434 While the overall appraisal is strongly positive, several potential adverse effects were identified.

Pressure on Healthcare and Community Infrastructure

5.1435 Population growth may increase demand for GP services, schools, community facilities and recreational infrastructure. If infrastructure delivery lags behind housing development, health outcomes and community cohesion could be adversely affected.

5.1436 Mitigation measures include:

- infrastructure-led growth principles;
- Infrastructure Delivery Plans;
- Section 106 obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy funding;
- masterplanning requirements for strategic developments;
- phased delivery linked to infrastructure provision.

Air Quality and Environmental Health

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1437 Growth may generate additional traffic and expose residents to air pollution unless transport impacts are managed. The SA identified traffic-related air pollution as a continuing health concern.

5.1438 Mitigation measures include:

- prioritising active travel and public transport;
- electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
- green and blue infrastructure enhancement;
- policies to prevent and reduce air pollution as well as other forms of pollution;
- concentration of growth in sustainable locations.

Social Exclusion in Rural Areas

5.1439 Some rural settlements may continue to experience limited accessibility and reliance on private transport.

5.1440 Mitigation measures include:

- supporting modest organic growth in local service villages and villages;
- maintaining local services and facilities;
- investment in digital connectivity;
- rural exceptions housing schemes;
- enhanced active travel and public transport links where feasible.

Conclusion

5.1441 The Sustainability Appraisal demonstrates that the Pre-Submission Local Plan is expected to generate significant positive effects on both human health and inequality. Through its focus on affordable and adaptable housing, healthy placemaking, green infrastructure, active travel, community facilities and economic opportunity, the Plan addresses many of the key health and social challenges identified in the baseline evidence. While adverse effects relating to infrastructure capacity, air quality and rural accessibility remain possible, the Plan incorporates a comprehensive suite

of mitigation measures designed to ensure that growth contributes to healthier, more inclusive and more resilient communities across Huntingdonshire up to 2046.

Changes to the Local Plan from Preferred Option stage

5.1442 This section sets out how the Local Plan has evolved from the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan to Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan.

Vision

5.1443 The Vision shifts from broad thematic outcomes to a clearer structure aligned with the five Huntingdonshire Futures themes. Objectives increase from 15 to 18, adding climate resilience, infrastructure, health inequalities, defence sector growth and water management. This results in improved internal consistency and a stronger link between Vision, objectives and policies, moving beyond “aspirational statements” to a clearer strategic framework.

Growth Strategy

5.1444 The hybrid growth strategy is retained but justified more robustly through SA, climate, infrastructure, economic and water evidence. Pre-Submission Plan emphasises that over 80% of growth will be directed to sustainable locations, with reduced reliance on dispersed growth and stronger integration of transport, climate resilience and infrastructure needs.

Spatial Alternatives

5.1445 Pre-Submission Plan transitions from exploration to justification. Alternatives are clearly explained, rejected options are evidenced, and the audit trail is strengthened. The Plan demonstrates that “reasonable alternatives were considered; alternatives were assessed; preferred options were selected through evidence”.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Strategic Policies

5.1446 Key strategic shifts include:

- Net zero broadened to whole-system climate resilience, with integrated adaptation measures such as flooding, overheating and water stress
- Infrastructure elevated as a core driver, covering water, wastewater, transport, health, education and energy
- Stronger alignment with economic evidence, including defence and innovation sectors
- Dedicated health-focused objectives and clearer treatment of inequalities

5.1447 These changes create a more integrated and mutually reinforcing strategic suite of policies.

Development Management Policies

5.1448 Policies are reorganised and expanded, with strengthened requirements for:

- Water management (flood risk, wastewater, surface water, efficiency)
- Climate resilience (embodied/operational carbon, retrofit, renewables, sequestration)
- Health (HIAs, active lifestyles, accessibility)
- Biodiversity (BNG, nature recovery networks, strategic GI)
- Heritage (more developed strategy)
- Infrastructure delivery (clearer links to CIL, S106 and the Infrastructure Delivery Study)

Site Allocation Policies

5.1449 The Submission Plan largely retains the spatial strategy established at Regulation 18, with the overwhelming majority of allocations carried forward. Amendments are targeted and proportionate, removing a small number of sites where further evidence, environmental constraints, deliverability

considerations or consultation responses indicated that alternative sites would perform better against the sustainability objectives of the Local Plan. The additions and substitutions help maintain the overall housing land supply while improving the Plan's environmental performance and deliverability.

5.1450 Wording amendments made to policies or additional criteria to refine, clarify and strengthen mitigation measures, particularly regarding infrastructure, water capacity and heritage matters.

Conclusion

5.1451 The transition from the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan to the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Plan represents a process of **refinement, strengthening and evidential consolidation rather than a fundamental change in strategy**. The core spatial approach, housing and employment growth objectives, settlement hierarchy and principal strategic allocations have been retained throughout plan preparation.

5.1452 The Pre-Submission Plan demonstrates a clear and proportionate response to consultation representations, Sustainability Appraisal findings and the expanded evidence base prepared since the Regulation 18 stage. In particular, the Pre-Submission Plan introduces a stronger focus on climate resilience, infrastructure delivery, health and wellbeing, water resource management, flood risk adaptation, green and blue infrastructure, affordable housing and economic competitiveness. These changes improve the clarity, effectiveness and deliverability of the Plan while maintaining consistency with the strategic framework previously consulted upon.

5.1453 The evolution of the Vision and Objectives has strengthened the alignment between the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy, other strategically important documents such as the Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy, strategic policies, site allocations and development management policies. The result is a more coherent policy framework that provides a clearer route from strategic aspirations to implementation and monitoring.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1454 From a sustainability perspective, the Pre-Submission Plan performs more strongly than the Regulation 18 version. Environmental sustainability has been enhanced through the integration of climate resilience, biodiversity recovery, carbon sequestration, renewable energy, flood management and water efficiency measures. Social sustainability has been improved through stronger policies on affordable housing, accessible housing, health outcomes and community infrastructure. Economic sustainability has been reinforced through clearer support for strategic employment growth, innovation sectors, defence-related industries, logistics and infrastructure-led growth.

5.1455 Overall, the Pre-Submission Plan presents a more mature, evidence-led and internally consistent planning framework. The changes made between Regulation 18 and Pre-Submission Plan materially improve the Plan's justification, effectiveness and deliverability, whilst preserving the broad development strategy that has been subject to public consultation. Accordingly, the evolution of the Plan supports a conclusion that the Pre-Submission version is better positioned to satisfy the tests of soundness by being **positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy**.

How HRA has influenced the Local Plan

5.1456 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has informed the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046 throughout the plan-making process and has directly influenced the spatial strategy, strategic policy framework and site allocation requirements. The HRA was undertaken iteratively alongside Local Plan preparation and tested the potential for likely significant effects on European sites arising from growth proposed within the district. Screening identified potential impact pathways relating to air quality, water quality, water quantity, recreational pressure and urbanisation effects. These matters were subsequently taken forward through Appropriate Assessment and addressed through policy safeguards, infrastructure requirements and site-specific mitigation measures incorporated into the Local Plan.

5.1457 The HRA considered potential effects on a range of internationally important sites, including Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, Fenland SAC, Nene Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar, Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar, Portholme SAC, Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar, Woodwalton Fen Ramsar and The Wash European sites. The assessment concluded that, with the mitigation and safeguards embedded within the Local Plan, implementation of the Plan would not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Influence on the Spatial Strategy

5.1458 The HRA played an important role in shaping the overall development strategy. Growth is concentrated within Huntingdonshire's market towns, service centres and strategic growth locations, particularly the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster, where infrastructure delivery, environmental mitigation and sustainable transport measures can be coordinated effectively. This approach reduces pressure for dispersed development in environmentally sensitive areas and allows cumulative impacts to be managed through masterplanning and infrastructure provision.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1459 The HRA findings align directly with Policy LP 2 "Our Strategy for Change", which seeks to concentrate development in sustainable locations, enhance green and blue infrastructure, improve biodiversity, support climate resilience and promote sustainable travel. These strategic objectives reflect the key avoidance and mitigation principles identified through the HRA process.

Strategic Policies Introduced or Strengthened Through the HRA Process

5.1460 The HRA findings informed numerous strategic and development management policies that now provide the overarching mitigation framework for all development proposals. Policy LP 52 Protecting our nature conservation sites directly relates to HRA. The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's approach to protecting sites that are protected under international, national and local conservation designations and requires proposals to undertake HRA if triggered.

Water Quality and Water Resources

5.1461 Water quality and water quantity emerged as the most extensive potential impact pathways, particularly for:

- Fenland SAC
- Woodwalton Fen Ramsar
- Nene Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar
- Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar
- Portholme SAC
- The Wash SAC/SPA/Ramsar.

5.1462 In response, the Plan incorporates strategic policies regarding the management of waste water, managing surface water, promoting water efficiency and managing flood risk. These policies require development to:

- demonstrate sufficient wastewater treatment capacity;
- avoid deterioration in water quality;
- incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS);

- minimise flood risk;
- deliver high standards of water efficiency; and
- ensure adequate water resources are available without adverse effects on protected habitats.

5.1463 The policies draw directly from the findings of the Integrated Water Management Strategy and Stage 1 and Stage 2 Water Cycle Studies, which formed a key part of the HRA evidence base.

Recreational Pressure

5.1464 The HRA identified potential recreational impacts on:

- Ouse Washes SPA/Ramsar;
- Nene Washes SPA/Ramsar;
- Portholme SAC;
- Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar;
- Fenland SAC; and
- Woodwalton Fen Ramsar.

5.1465 These findings informed strategic policies including designating green and blue priority areas aligning with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy, promoting green and blue infrastructure within developments by requiring the Fields in Trust plus allotments standards, also supporting carbon capture through nature, protecting nature conservation sites and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity.

5.1466 Policy LP 4 specifically identifies strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas including the Great Fen, Great Ouse Valley, Nene Valley, Fen-edge Woodlands; River Corridors and West Cambridgeshire Hundreds. These areas help provide accessible natural greenspace, biodiversity enhancement opportunities and recreational resources that reduce pressure on internationally designated sites.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Urbanisation Effects

5.1467 The HRA identified possible effects from noise, lighting, disturbance and impacts on functionally linked habitats associated with:

- Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC;
- Ouse Washes SPA/Ramsar;
- Nene Washes SPA/Ramsar;
- Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar; and
- Portholme SAC.

5.1468 Mitigation was incorporated through policies on protecting our nature conservation sites, enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity, creating high quality places and spaces, ensuring high standards of amenity and protecting trees, orchards, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows. These policies establish requirements for ecological assessment, habitat retention, green buffers, biodiversity net gain and mitigation of lighting and disturbance effects.

Air Quality

5.1469 The HRA identified Portholme SAC as the principal European site requiring further consideration regarding air quality because of its proximity to the strategic road network, including the A1307.

5.1470 This led to strengthening policies relating to facilitating transport, travel and connectivity at local and strategic levels, supporting active and sustainable travel, electric vehicle charging points and preventing and reducing air pollution. These policies seek to reduce transport emissions by prioritising walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicle infrastructure.

Site Allocations Influenced by the HRA

5.1471 The most visible impact of the HRA is within the allocation policies themselves. Major sites are required to provide mitigation and safeguards that directly address the impact pathways identified through the HRA.

North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield

5.1472 Wyton Airfield is one of the largest allocations in the Plan and forms a key component of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone. Due to its scale and contribution to long-term housing growth, the HRA identified the need to address cumulative impacts relating to water resources, recreation and ecological connectivity. As a result, the allocation is expected to deliver:

- substantial green infrastructure networks;
- strategic open space;
- habitat creation;
- biodiversity enhancement;
- sustainable drainage systems;
- surface water management measures; and
- recreational opportunities within the development.

5.1473 These measures are intended to ensure that demand for recreation generated by the new community is accommodated on site and does not result in increased pressure on sites such as Portholme SAC, Ouse Washes or Woodwalton Fen.

North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse

5.1474 The Huntingdon Racecourse allocation forms part of the wider strategic growth area around Huntingdon. The HRA identified the need for:

- green infrastructure provision;
- ecological mitigation;
- water management measures;
- sustainable travel infrastructure; and
- biodiversity enhancement.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1475 The allocation therefore incorporates requirements for integrated environmental infrastructure as part of comprehensive masterplanning. These requirements directly reflect the HRA findings regarding cumulative recreational, ecological and hydrological impacts associated with growth around Huntingdon.

North Huntingdon 2: Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307

5.1476 This allocation is particularly important from an HRA perspective because of its relationship with the strategic road network and proximity to Portholme SAC. Mitigation measures incorporated into the allocation include:

- walking and cycling infrastructure;
- public transport connections;
- landscape corridors;
- green infrastructure provision; and
- measures supporting modal shift from private car use.

5.1477 These requirements help respond to the HRA's air quality assessment and wider sustainability objectives.

North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm

5.1478 Although not specifically highlighted to the same degree as Wyton Airfield or the Racecourse, this allocation contributes to cumulative growth within the Opportunity Zone. Consequently, it remains subject to the same package of strategic HRA mitigation measures relating to water management, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable transport and green infrastructure provision.

St Neots 1: East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm)

5.1479 The HRA specifically identifies Tithe Farm as an example of an allocation whose design has been influenced by recreational pressure considerations. The allocation requires:

- substantial public open space;
- green corridors;
- strategic landscaping;
- biodiversity enhancement;
- habitat connectivity; and
- recreational facilities integrated into the development.

5.1480 The intention is to create high-quality local recreational opportunities and reduce the likelihood of additional visitor pressure being directed to internationally designated habitats.

Needlingworth 1: Giffords Park, East of B1040

5.1481 Giffords Park represents another allocation directly requiring mitigation. Requirements include:

- green infrastructure frameworks;
- habitat creation;
- ecological connectivity measures;
- open space provision;
- drainage infrastructure; and
- biodiversity enhancement.

5.1482 Because of its proximity to St Ives and the Ouse Washes, the allocation formed part of the cumulative impact assessment and therefore incorporates safeguards addressing recreation, water management and ecological protection.

Godmanchester 2: South of Godmanchester

5.1483 South of Godmanchester represents another allocation directly cited within HRA evidence as requiring extensive mitigation. Requirements include:

- green infrastructure frameworks;
- habitat creation;

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- ecological connectivity measures;
- open space provision;
- drainage infrastructure; and
- biodiversity enhancement.

5.1484 Because of its proximity to Huntingdon and Portholme SAC, the allocation formed part of the cumulative impact assessment and therefore incorporates safeguards addressing recreation, water management and ecological protection.

Other Allocations Influenced by HRA Findings

5.1485 Other smaller allocations across Huntingdonshire were influenced by HRA recommendations through the application of allocation criteria and strategic policies:

- Bluntisham 1 and Bluntisham 2 were identified as requiring provision of open space to mitigate potential impact on Berry Fen SSSI and Ouse Washes SSSI.
- The HRA process identified Bythorn 1 as being within 10km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site located in North Northamptonshire and therefore requires consideration of its impact on the importance of functionally linked habitats to the nature site.
- The HRA process also identified Great Gransden and Waresley 1 as being within 10km from the Eversden and Wimpole Wood SAC located in South Cambridgeshire. Considering their proximity to the SAC, the policies require ecological assessment to assess potential impacts on bats and provide appropriate mitigation.
- The cluster of allocations at Sawtry are expected to provide ecological mitigation, biodiversity net gain, habitat connectivity; and strategic landscaping.
- Given their relationship with the Great Fen, Fenland SAC and Woodwalton Fen Ramsar, allocations in and around Bury and Ramsey are subject to plan-wide water management, biodiversity and green

infrastructure policies designed to protect hydrologically sensitive habitats and support nature recovery objectives.

- The proximity of Little Paxton to the Great Ouse Valley and associated ecological networks means that development is expected to contribute positively to green infrastructure and ecological connectivity in accordance with Plan policies informed by the HRA.

How the HRA Was Ultimately Embedded into the Plan

5.1486 The HRA influenced the Local Plan through a clear hierarchy of mechanisms:

- Site Selection - potential allocations were assessed against environmental constraints, ecological evidence, flood risk information and HRA findings before decisions were made regarding allocation.
- Strategic Policy Framework - the Plan incorporates policies specifically intended to manage water quality, water resources, biodiversity, recreation and transport impacts identified through the HRA process.
- Allocation-Specific Requirements - major site allocations include explicit requirements for:
 - green infrastructure;
 - open space;
 - biodiversity enhancement;
 - sustainable drainage;
 - ecological assessment;
 - habitat retention;
 - recreational mitigation; and
 - transport improvements.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Project-Level Assessment

5.1487 The Plan recognises that further ecological assessment and project-level HRA may be necessary at planning application stage for individual developments where detailed proposals could affect European sites.

Conclusion

5.1488 The Habitats Regulations Assessment has not simply accompanied the Pre-Submission Local Plan; it has materially shaped its content. The assessment influenced the distribution of growth, informed strategic environmental policies and directly affected the requirements attached to major allocations and other smaller sites across the district where they are in close proximity to internationally protected sites. Through the incorporation of measures addressing water resources, wastewater treatment, recreational pressure, biodiversity enhancement, ecological connectivity, air quality and sustainable transport, the HRA findings have been fully integrated into the Local Plan framework. The resulting package of strategic and site-specific mitigation enabled the Appropriate Assessment to conclude that the Local Plan can be implemented without adverse effects on the integrity of internationally protected sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

How SA has influenced the Local Plan

5.1489 The Sustainability Appraisal was not a separate exercise undertaken after policy development. Rather, it formed an integral and iterative component of the preparation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 from the earliest stages of plan-making. We undertook the SA in-house specifically to ensure that sustainability considerations were embedded throughout the development of the Plan and that the appraisal findings could directly influence the evolution of the strategy, policies and site allocations. The SA and Local Plan were therefore developed alongside one another, allowing environmental, social and economic considerations to shape decision-making throughout the process.

5.1490 The Council's approach has been consistent with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and national planning guidance. The SA process was used to identify sustainability issues, establish objectives against which options could be tested, assess reasonable alternatives, identify likely significant effects, recommend mitigation measures and refine the emerging plan.

Establishing the Sustainability Framework

5.1491 The influence of the SA began at the scoping stage. Through review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies, collection of baseline information and identification of sustainability issues, we established an evidence-based framework for assessing all aspects of the emerging Local Plan. Key issues identified included:

- High transport-related carbon emissions
- Climate resilience and adaptation needs
- Flood risk and water resource pressures
- Protection of biodiversity, designated sites and green infrastructure
- Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land
- Housing affordability challenges

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

- Health inequalities and access to services
- Sustainable transport and accessibility
- Economic resilience and employment growth
- Protection of heritage and landscape character

5.1492 These issues directly informed the development of the 16 Sustainability Appraisal objectives that subsequently became the principal framework against which all options, policies and allocations were assessed. The SA objectives covered climate change, flood risk, biodiversity, landscape, pollution, housing, health, accessibility, economic growth, town centres, design quality and heritage conservation.

5.1493 The Local Plan's vision and objectives demonstrate a clear alignment with this sustainability framework. The Plan's emphasis on climate resilience, environmental innovation, green infrastructure, health, sustainable travel, economic inclusion and high-quality placemaking closely reflects the themes established through the SA process.

Influence on the Development Strategy

5.1494 One of the most significant ways in which the SA influenced the Plan was through the appraisal of strategic options during the Further Issues and Options stage and subsequent refinement into the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission strategy.

5.1495 The SA assessed options relating to:

- The Local Plan vision and objectives
- Settlement hierarchy
- Growth strategy
- Housing requirements
- Employment strategy
- Green and blue infrastructure
- Climate change
- Flooding and water

- Housing mix and tenures
- Transport and connectivity

5.1496 The appraisal consistently favoured options which concentrated development in locations with better access to jobs, services, facilities and public transport. This helped shape the Plan's overarching spatial strategy which focuses most growth on the district's larger settlements and key growth locations rather than dispersing development widely across smaller villages. The Local Plan acknowledges that concentrating development in sustainable locations supports reduced car dependency, better infrastructure provision and improved accessibility to services, all matters identified as priorities through the SA framework. It also recognises that some growth across more rural parts of the district is beneficial to support village services and provide greater market choice for homes and jobs, the proportionality of this approach as part of a wider strategy support social, economic and environmental objectives.

5.1497 The SA therefore provided a key justification for the settlement hierarchy and distribution strategy that underpins the Pre-Submission Local Plan.

Influence on Climate Change Policies

5.1498 One of the strongest area of influence can be seen in relation to climate change. The SA identified climate change mitigation and adaptation as fundamental sustainability challenges facing Huntingdonshire. Baseline evidence identified transport as the district's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, alongside significant challenges relating to buildings, agriculture, land use and flood risk.

5.1499 As a consequence, the Plan contains a substantial suite of climate-related policies to build climate resilience, including:

- Promoting climate resilience
- Reducing embodied and operational carbon
- Energy efficiency and retrofitting
- Renewable and low-carbon energy generation

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

- Water efficiency
- Flood risk management
- Carbon sequestration through nature
- Sustainable transport and active travel
- Electric vehicle infrastructure

5.1500 The linkage between the SA findings and these policy responses is clear. The SA objective framework includes direct objectives relating to achieving net zero emissions, climate adaptation and sustainable water management. Those objectives were subsequently used to assess and refine both strategic and development management policies.

Influence on Environmental Protection and Green Infrastructure

5.1501 The SA highlighted the importance of biodiversity, strategic green infrastructure, landscape character and environmental connectivity. It identified vulnerabilities affecting designated habitats, ancient woodland, strategic green infrastructure corridors and the district's distinctive landscapes.

5.1502 These findings influenced the Plan through:

- Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas
- Biodiversity protection and enhancement policies
- Biodiversity net gain requirements
- Carbon capture through nature policies
- Protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows
- Open space and recreational policies
- Landscape-sensitive site allocation requirements

5.1503 The Plan's objective of creating an extensive network of green and blue infrastructure, wildlife habitats and corridors reflects the sustainability priorities established in the SA framework. It also works towards conserving Huntingdonshire's specific landscapes that are integral to the identity and history of the district and its communities.

Influence on Site Selection

5.1504 The SA exerted direct influence on site allocation decisions. Site appraisals were undertaken throughout the plan-making process using the SA decision-aiding framework for sites. Initially, during the Further Issues and Options stage, site appraisal findings were fed back into the Land Availability Assessment process to determine whether sites were suitable for further consideration and to inform indicative capacities.

5.1505 For the Preferred Options stage, the SA included individual assessments of:

- The North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone
- Strategic growth locations
- Market town allocations
- Service centre allocations
- Local service village allocations
- Village allocations

5.1506 Appraisals considered matters including:

- Flood risk
- Agricultural land quality
- Biodiversity impacts
- Accessibility
- Public transport opportunities
- Access to community facilities
- Heritage assets
- Landscape effects
- Climate resilience
- Opportunities for active travel

5.1507 The site selection process therefore incorporated sustainability considerations from the outset rather than relying solely on land availability or deliverability considerations.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Influence through Mitigation and Policy Refinement

5.1508 The SA was designed not merely to identify effects but also to recommend improvements. The methodology specifically required consideration of mitigation measures and opportunities to maximise beneficial effects.

5.1509 This iterative approach meant that appraisal findings informed policy drafting and refinement. The Preferred Options SA states that the appraisal process was undertaken specifically so that "findings can inform and shape the way that all parts of the plan evolve in a meaningful way" and that technical evidence, consultation feedback and appraisal findings together helped shape the preferred strategy now carried forward into the Pre-Submission Plan.

5.1510 The resulting Plan includes numerous policy safeguards and mitigation measures addressing:

- Flood risk and drainage
- Wastewater capacity
- Biodiversity impacts
- Pollution
- Heritage settings
- Transport connectivity and capacity
- Green and blue infrastructure provision
- Climate adaptation and mitigation

Influence of Consultation and Ongoing Appraisal

5.1511 The SA process was itself subject to consultation. Comments from Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency informed revisions to the SA framework. Public consultation on the Scoping Report and subsequent SA stages generated further amendments and improvements.

5.1512 Importantly, the Council has continued the appraisal process through each consultation stage, ensuring that evolving evidence, consultation responses and policy changes were reassessed and incorporated into later iterations of the Plan. This demonstrates that the SA was a live and iterative process rather than a retrospective evaluation.

Conclusion

5.1513 Overall, the Sustainability Appraisal has had a substantial and demonstrable influence on the preparation of the Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046. It established the sustainability issues facing Huntingdonshire, created the framework through which options were tested, influenced the vision and objectives, shaped the spatial strategy, guided climate change and environmental policies, informed site selection decisions and secured mitigation measures throughout the Plan.

5.1514 The evidence shows that the SA was fully integrated into plan preparation and operated as a continual mechanism for refining choices and improving outcomes. Consequently, the Pre-Submission Local Plan represents not simply a strategy that has been assessed for sustainability, but a strategy that has been actively shaped by sustainability appraisal from the outset of its preparation through to submission.

Evolution of the Local Plan and its sustainability benefits

5.1515 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 has evolved through a structured and evidence-led process, progressing from the 2023 Issues Stage, to the 2024 Further Issues and Options stage, then through to the Preferred Options (Regulation 18) consultation stage, eventually to the Pre-Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) in 2026. At each stage the Council has assessed reasonable alternatives, considered consultation responses, updated its technical evidence base and refined the strategy to achieve sustainable development in accordance with national planning policy. This process demonstrates that the Submission Plan is both justified and positively prepared.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1516 The Further Issues and Options consultation represented the key stage at which alternative approaches were explored. Rather than presenting predetermined solutions, the Council sought views on fundamental components of the future strategy, including the vision, settlement hierarchy, housing requirement, employment strategy, growth distribution, climate change response, green infrastructure, transport, flooding and housing mix. A range of reasonable alternatives were tested for each topic, allowing stakeholders to influence the direction of the emerging plan.

5.1517 A significant theme throughout the evolution of the plan has been the increasing integration of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy into the Local Plan framework. The Issues and Options document presented alternative visions ranging from a climate-led approach, a sustainability-led approach, retention of the existing Local Plan vision, and a place-based vision derived from the Futures Strategy. Consultation responses demonstrated strong support for a vision based on the Place Strategy principles of Pride in Place, Inclusive Economy, Health Embedded, Environmental Innovation and Travel Transformed. Consequently, the Preferred Options Plan adopted these themes as the foundation of its vision and objectives, while the Pre-Submission version further refined them into a comprehensive framework supported by eighteen strategic objectives.

5.1518 The settlement hierarchy also evolved through evidence-led refinement. At the Issues and Options stage the Council considered whether to retain the existing hierarchy, create additional categories, rely strictly on sustainability scores, or elevate particular settlements. During plan preparation the Sustainability of Settlements Assessment demonstrated substantial variation in access to services, transport, employment and community facilities across the district. This evidence supported a more nuanced hierarchy. The Submission Plan therefore adopts a six-tier structure comprising Market Towns, Service Centres, Local Service Villages, Villages, Hamlets and Countryside, replacing the simpler hierarchy currently operating under the adopted Plan to 2036. This approach updates the hierarchy to reflect current levels of sustainability and better aligns development opportunities with settlement sustainability credentials.

5.1519 The approach to housing growth became increasingly ambitious as national policy and evidence evolved. The Issues and Options stage assessed three principal alternatives comprising the standard method housing figure, a 5% uplift, and a 10% uplift. Consultation responses highlighted support for additional flexibility, improved affordability, economic growth aspirations and resilience against future changes in national methodology. Subsequent amendments to national housing requirements significantly increased the standard method figure for Huntingdonshire. The Preferred Options Plan therefore moved towards a strategy based upon meeting objectively assessed needs in full together with additional flexibility. By the Preferred Options stage the Local Plan made provision for at least 32,200 homes, reflecting both the standard method requirement and a 10% flexibility allowance, which was taken forward into the Pre-Submission Local Plan. This approach provides a robust supply, supports affordability objectives and reduces the risk of speculative development undermining the plan-led strategy.

5.1520 The spatial strategy similarly evolved through consideration of alternative growth options and evidence base testing. The Further Issues and Options consultation explored a spectrum of distribution approaches ranging from concentration within market towns, dispersal across villages, transport corridor-focused growth, urban extensions, proportionate growth and the development of strategic new communities. Supporting climate change evidence examined the carbon implications of different spatial strategies and demonstrated that concentrating growth in the most sustainable locations would deliver superior sustainability outcomes compared with dispersed development patterns. Other technical evidence base documents including the Water Cycle Study, Infrastructure Delivery Study and Habitat Regulations Assessment shaped the eventual strategy. Consequently, the Preferred Options Plan identified a concentrated growth strategy focused on the district's most sustainable settlements and strategic growth opportunities. This approach was retained and strengthened in the Pre-Submission Plan.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

5.1521 One of the most significant introduction to the Preferred Options Local Plan was the emergence of the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone as a major strategic focus for growth with several strategic allocations in this zone. This emerged through the Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan. Evidence relating to employment opportunities, infrastructure provision, accessibility and long-term development capacity demonstrated that this location could support substantial housing and economic development integrated with new infrastructure. The Pre-Submission Plan therefore carries this forward through a series of strategic allocations which not only meet identified needs but also establish a framework for development extending beyond the plan period. This reflects national guidance which supports longer-term planning horizons where major strategic developments are involved.

5.1522 The employment strategy also became more focused and evidence-based during plan preparation. At the Issues and Options stage alternatives ranged from limited growth to ambitious growth linked to innovation sectors and economic clusters. Consultees generally supported a balanced but ambitious approach capable of capitalising on the district's strategic location between Cambridge, Peterborough and the wider Oxford-Cambridge corridor. Subsequent economic evidence from the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment identified opportunities in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, logistics, knowledge-intensive industries and innovation-led sectors. As a result, the Submission Plan moves decisively towards a growth-supportive strategy that protects established employment areas, enables innovation-led clusters and provides opportunities for approximately 15,400 additional jobs.

5.1523 Perhaps the most notable strengthening of the plan through its evolution concerns climate change and environmental sustainability. The Issues and Options stage explored alternative carbon reduction pathways ranging from business-as-usual trajectories to ambitious decarbonisation scenarios. New climate evidence supporting the Local Plan demonstrated that a balanced pathway consistent with Climate Change Committee recommendations could reduce emissions by around 76% by 2050 with offsetting providing

a net loss. Consultation responses showed strong support for ambitious climate action, provided measures remained practical and deliverable. This resulted in the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission Plans embedding climate change throughout the strategy rather than treating it as a standalone topic. These include a suite of climate-related policies addressing energy efficiency, embodied carbon, renewable energy, carbon sequestration, water efficiency, flood resilience, sustainable transport and green infrastructure networks. These measures significantly exceed the scope considered at the Issues and Options stage and demonstrate the progressive strengthening of environmental outcomes through plan preparation.

5.1524 Development management policies have similarly matured between stages. At Issues and Options stage much discussion focused on whether local policies would remain necessary alongside potential national development management policies. As uncertainty surrounding national reform became clearer, the Council chose to develop a comprehensive local policy framework covering design quality, climate resilience, biodiversity enhancement, housing needs, heritage protection, rural development and economic growth. The Pre-Submission Plan therefore provides greater certainty and clearer decision-making criteria than were available at earlier stages.

5.1525 Overall, the evolution of the Local Plan demonstrates a consistent progression from broad strategic alternatives towards a focused, evidence-based spatial strategy. The Pre-Submission Plan reflects consultation feedback, Sustainability Appraisal findings, climate evidence, housing and employment assessments, infrastructure planning and transport modelling. It selects the most sustainable elements from the alternatives considered and integrates them into a coherent framework that balances growth, environmental enhancement, climate resilience and community wellbeing. The plan therefore demonstrates that reasonable alternatives have been properly assessed and that the chosen strategy represents the most sustainable and deliverable approach for Huntingdonshire to 2046.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Table 8 Summary Table: Evolution of the Plan and Sustainability Benefits

Theme	Further Issues & Options (2024)	Preferred Options Reg 18	Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Plan	Sustainability Benefits of Final Strategy
Vision & Objectives	Four alternative vision models including climate-led, sustainability-led, Futures Strategy-led and modified existing vision.	Vision based strongly on Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy.	Refined vision supported by 18 strategic objectives.	Integrates social, economic and environmental objectives in a balanced framework.
Settlement Hierarchy	Considered retaining existing hierarchy, expanding categories or using settlement sustainability scores.	New six tier hierarchy informed by Sustainability of Settlements evidence.	Six-tier hierarchy retained and fully embedded in policy.	Directs growth towards locations with greatest access to services and public transport, reducing travel demand.
Housing Requirement	Standard method, +5%, or +10% uplift options.	Target emerging following revised national methodology with 10% uplift to allow for flexibility in supply.	32,200 homes with flexibility allowance in excess of 5% retained.	Meets needs in full with flexibility, improves affordability, supports economic growth and plan resilience.
Spatial Strategy	Considered dispersed growth, market-town focus, transport corridor growth, urban extensions and strategic communities.	Concentrated growth towards sustainable settlements and major strategic locations.	Retains established spatial strategy focused on sustainable settlements and strategic growth clusters.	Minimises carbon emissions and infrastructure costs while conserving wider rural character.
Strategic Growth Locations	Strategic options still under consideration.	Major growth concentrated in North Huntingdon and sustainable settlements including strategic allocations on the edge of St Neots and St Ives.	North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone retained as the strategic focus with other strategic developments spread in sustainable locations linked to known infrastructure projects.	Enables infrastructure-led growth, mixed-use communities and long-term delivery.
Employment & Economy	Low, medium and high growth options considered.	Evidence-based growth strategy emerging.	Support for 15,400 jobs, innovation clusters and established employment areas.	Creates local jobs, reduces commuting and supports higher-value economic sectors.
Climate Change	Alternative decarbonisation pathways assessed.	Net zero pathway embedded in vision and policies.	Comprehensive climate framework across the plan.	Significant contribution to emission reduction, climate adaptation and resilience.
Green & Blue Infrastructure	Strategic options for biodiversity, landscape and nature recovery considered.	Stronger Green Infrastructure network proposed.	Priority Green and Blue Infrastructure Areas designated.	Biodiversity enhancement, improved well-being, carbon sequestration and climate adaptation.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Theme	Further Issues & Options (2024)	Preferred Options Reg 18	Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Plan	Sustainability Benefits of Final Strategy
Flooding & Water	Options focused on flood management, water supply and wastewater.	Strategic policies developed from Integrated Water Management Study evidence.	Comprehensive flood risk, wastewater and water efficiency policies.	Reduced flood risk, improved water resilience and sustainable water management.
Transport & Connectivity	Focus on public transport, active travel and reducing travel demand.	Infrastructure and accessibility strategy emerging.	Integrated transport and active travel policies.	Reduces transport emissions and promotes healthier travel choices.
Design & Placemaking	High-level discussion of design and national policy changes.	Draft design and placemaking policies introduced.	Full suite of design, carbon reduction and healthy place-making policies.	Higher-quality development, reduced energy demand and improved community wellbeing.
Development Management Policies	Alternative approaches under consideration due to uncertainty around national policies.	Extensive draft Development Management policies introduced with local focus.	Comprehensive locally-specific policy framework adopted.	Greater certainty, stronger environmental protection and improved implementation.

Overall Sustainability Conclusion

5.1526 The Pre-Submission Plan demonstrates a clear evolution from broad strategic alternatives towards a coherent and evidence-supported strategy. Relative to the options considered at Issues and Options stage, the final plan delivers:

- Greater concentration of growth in sustainable locations
- Higher levels of housing delivery with enhanced flexibility
- Stronger climate change mitigation and adaptation measures
- Better integration of infrastructure with growth
- Enhanced biodiversity and green infrastructure outcomes
- More employment opportunities close to residential growth
- Reduced need to travel and lower transport-related carbon emissions
- Stronger protection of environmental, heritage and landscape assets

5.1527 These changes collectively demonstrate that the Pre-Submission Plan represents the most sustainable option when compared with the reasonable alternatives considered throughout plan preparation and provides a sound basis for Examination in Public.

SA recommendations and iterations tracker

5.1528 The Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken as an iterative process throughout the preparation of the Local Plan to 2046. The SA has informed plan-making from the identification of issues and options through to the development of preferred policies and site allocations and finally the Pre-Submission Plan. The process has sought to avoid, minimise and mitigate adverse environmental, social and economic impacts while maximising positive effects.

5.1529 The SA framework was structured around sixteen sustainability objectives covering climate emergency, environmental and socio-economic themes, including carbon reduction, climate resilience, water management, biodiversity, housing, health, transport, economy and heritage. These objectives formed the basis of assessment and refinement throughout plan preparation.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

Theme 1: Climate Change and Net Zero

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options (2024)	Strong support for ambitious climate action. SA identified that a business-as-usual pathway would be insufficient to achieve meaningful emissions reductions and recommended stronger decarbonisation measures.	The Preferred Options Plan adopted a net zero trajectory aligned to the Climate Change Committee's Balanced Pathway and introduced climate-focused objectives.
Preferred Options (2025)	SA recommended stronger links between growth strategy, transport, energy efficiency and carbon reduction. Positive scores were achieved but further opportunities existed to embed climate resilience across the plan.	The Pre-Submission Plan strengthens climate resilience throughout the strategy. A dedicated chapter establishes climate resilience as a core organising principle alongside policies on renewable energy, energy efficiency, carbon sequestration, sustainable transport and water efficiency.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Climate objectives now influence the overall spatial strategy, development management policies and site allocation requirements, ensuring climate change mitigation and adaptation are embedded in development decisions.

5.1530 The SA identified climate change as one of the most significant sustainability challenges facing Huntingdonshire, particularly given transport emissions account for approximately 36% of district-wide emissions. The Pre-Submission Plan directly responds through spatial concentration of growth, active travel policies, Electric vehicle infrastructure, renewable energy support and requirements for energy efficient development.

Theme 2: Flood Risk, Water Resources and Climate Resilience

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	Flooding, water supply and wastewater capacity emerged as significant concerns from consultation responses and baseline evidence.	Further evidence commissioned through Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and Water Cycle Studies.
Preferred Options	SA identified need for stronger policy mechanisms to avoid flood risk and manage cumulative impacts. Site assessments highlighted infrastructure and drainage requirements.	New strategic policies introduced on managing flood risk, wastewater, surface water and water efficiency. Additional site-specific mitigation requirements incorporated into allocations.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Policy framework now requires drainage infrastructure, water efficiency measures, flood mitigation and alignment with Integrated Water Management Strategy recommendations.

5.1531 The SA findings have directly informed policy wording and allocation criteria. Significant development is now contingent on demonstrating flood resilience, wastewater capacity and sustainable drainage solutions.

Theme 3: Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure and Nature Recovery

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	SA highlighted risks to designated sites, habitat fragmentation and biodiversity	Green and blue infrastructure identified as a strategic priority.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
	loss. Opportunities identified for strategic green infrastructure expansion.	
Preferred Options	SA recommended greater emphasis on nature recovery, connectivity and biodiversity enhancement.	Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas introduced. Policies strengthened regarding biodiversity enhancement and habitat connectivity.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Dedicated policies require protection of nature conservation sites, biodiversity enhancement, tree and woodland protection and carbon capture through nature.

5.1532 The Pre-Submission Plan moves beyond impact avoidance and adopts a positive enhancement approach consistent with Local Nature Recovery Strategy aspirations and SA recommendations.

Theme 4: Sustainable Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	Assessment of spatial strategy options demonstrated that concentrating growth in more sustainable locations would perform better against climate, accessibility and service provision objectives.	Directed growth toward market towns, service centres and larger sustainable settlements.

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Preferred Options	SA supported growth focused on locations with service access while cautioning against dispersed unsustainable development patterns.	Spatial strategy refined following site assessment, transport evidence and consultation responses.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Growth is concentrated within the settlement hierarchy and major growth clusters where infrastructure investment can be aligned with development delivery.

5.1533 The Pre-Submission strategy reflects the SA recommendation that growth should be directed to locations capable of supporting sustainable travel patterns and infrastructure provision.

Theme 5: Housing, Health and Inclusive Communities

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	SA identified affordability pressures, ageing population and need for accessible housing.	Evidence base expanded through Housing Needs Assessment and specialist accommodation studies.
Preferred Options	SA findings emphasised housing mix, affordability, healthy place-making and accessible environments.	Policies developed for affordable housing, accessible homes, specialist housing and healthy place-making.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Enhanced housing policies, stronger health and wellbeing framework and placemaking requirements incorporated throughout the plan.

5 Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan

5.1534 The Pre-Submission Plan demonstrates a clear response to SA objectives relating to social inclusion, healthy communities and lifelong housing needs.

Theme 6: Transport, Connectivity and Air Quality

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	SA identified transport emissions as the largest carbon source and highlighted dependence on private vehicles.	Strategic Transport Assessment commissioned.
Preferred Options	SA recommended stronger active travel and public transport provisions together with reduced travel demand through spatial planning.	Policies introduced for active travel, connectivity and electric vehicle infrastructure.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Strengthened policies supporting sustainable travel, digital infrastructure, local accessibility and transport mitigation linked to major allocations.

5.1535 The evolution of transport policy demonstrates a direct response to SA concerns regarding traffic impacts, carbon emissions, accessibility and air quality.

Theme 7: Economy and Employment

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	SA supported economic growth but highlighted need to balance employment growth with environmental objectives and sustainable accessibility.	Economic evidence commissioned and strategic employment locations reviewed.
Preferred Options	SA supported innovation-led growth and diversification while identifying opportunities to reduce commuting patterns.	Policies developed around innovation, key clusters, logistics and rural economic diversification as well supporting market towns and local centres.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Employment strategy aligned more closely with the settlement hierarchy and infrastructure planning, improving sustainability performance.

5.1536 The Pre-Submission Plan demonstrates a clear response to SA objectives relating to the economy to meet economic needs and support economic diversification.

Theme 8: Heritage, Landscape and Local Character

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Further Issues and Options	SA identified risks to landscape character, conservation areas and heritage assets from future growth.	Heritage and landscape evidence informed site selection and policy drafting.

Stage D - Consultation and development of the Plan 5

Evolution Stage	Sustainability Appraisal Findings	Response in Pre-Submission Plan
Preferred Options	SA recommended stronger protection and clearer mitigation measures for allocations affecting heritage settings.	Heritage impact assessments undertaken and allocation criteria refined.
Pre-Submission Outcome	Mitigation incorporated.	Enhanced design, placemaking and heritage policies introduced together with site-specific mitigation requirements.

5.1537 The Pre-Submission Plan demonstrates a clear response to SA objectives relating to heritage and landscape incorporating policies that conserve and enhance Huntingdonshire's unique heritage and landscape character.

Conclusion

5.1538 The Sustainability Appraisal actively informed the Plan evolution. Throughout the Further Issues and Options, Preferred Options and Pre-Submission stages, identified mitigation measures were incorporated into policy drafting, strategic growth options, infrastructure planning and site selection. This is evidenced by stronger climate resilience policies, enhanced flood and water management requirements, expanded biodiversity and green infrastructure provisions, refined spatial distribution of growth, strengthened transport measures, improved housing and health policies and enhanced heritage safeguards. Collectively these changes demonstrate that the Sustainability Appraisal has been an iterative and influential component of plan preparation and has significantly shaped the content of the Pre-Submission Local Plan to 2046.

D3: Making decisions and providing information

5.1539 The sections above that make up Stage D provide the information about the tasks that have been undertaken to move the Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal to the Final Sustainability Appraisal that will support the Local Plan. The Final Sustainability Appraisal informs the Council's decision about how to proceed with the Local Plan.

5.1540 A report will be taken through the Council's committee cycle in September 2026 as follows:

1. Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) on 2 September 2026
2. Cabinet on 9 September 2026, to be followed by
3. Full Council on 9 September 2026

5.1541 The report will recommend approval of the Local Plan for the Proposed Submission stage (Regulation 19) when the plan moves from the informal preparation stage to the formal testing phase. The Plan and will be available for a minimum period of 6 weeks during which representations on its soundness and legal compliance can be made. The Sustainability Appraisal will also be available for comment. The representations received will be sent with the plan and supporting documentation to the Planning Inspectorate for the formal Submission of the plan, which is scheduled for December 2026 in accordance with the transitional arrangements.

6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan

6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan

E:	Monitoring the implementation of the plan.	The purpose of this stage is to establish ways of considering whether or not to review the plan and to enable sustainability appraisal processes for future plans.
-----------	--	--

- 6.1** Monitoring allows the actual significant environmental effects of implementing the Local Plan to be tested against those predicted and so helps to ensure that any problems which arise during implementation, whether or not they were foreseen, are identified and future predictions made more accurately.
- 6.2** Monitoring can help provide the baseline information for future plans and programmes, and in preparing information which will be needed for EIAs of projects. Monitoring and evaluation of progress towards objectives and targets can form a crucial part of the feedback mechanism. Feedback from the monitoring process helps to provide more relevant information that can be used to pinpoint specific performance issues and significant effects, and ultimately lead to more informed decision-making.
- 6.3** This stage consists of the following two tasks:
- E1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring
 - E2: Responding to adverse effects

E1: Developing aims and methods for monitoring

- 6.4** Monitoring is a key process in assessing the impacts of planning policy and whether planning policy is having the desired impact and can form part of evidence for future Local Plan reviews.
- 6.5** Measures to monitor the implementation of the Local Plan would be largely based on the existing monitoring arrangements and published in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (the timetable for production of the Local Plan), and the extent to which policies set out in development plan documents are being achieved and targets being met.
- 6.6** The purpose of the AMR is to make data and information available on the performance of the policies within the Local Plan and how and where growth is being delivered. This shares the performance and achievements of the planning service with the public, as well as showing historic trends through the framework of policy indicators.
- 6.7** Each policy in the Pre-Submission Local Plan has at least one monitoring indicator to monitor their implementation and will be recorded in the AMR. Each policy and their monitoring indicator are set out in the following table which has been updated following the Preferred Options consultation to include new policies and update some monitoring criteria.
- 6.8** The progress of residential development sites (including mixed use with residential elements) will be monitored through the production of a housing trajectory which will also be set out in the AMR.

Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan 6

Table 9 Monitoring Framework

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 1	How much development do we expect?	- Number of additional homes completed within the district - Amount of additional employment floorspace completed within the district	7, 10	9, 11	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 2	Our Strategy for Change	- Amount and type of employment land available - Number and % of housing completions by settlement and tenure type (including the North Huntingdon Growth Cluster) - Amount and % of employment development by settlement type - CIL receipts/expenditure monitoring - Gross number and % new dwellings on previously developed land - Amount and % of employment floorspace developed on previously developed land - Progress on neighbourhood plans	2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 11	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 3	Distribution of Growth				
LP 4	Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas	- Losses to biodiversity habitat - Additions to biodiversity habitat - Total change in biodiversity habitat	3, 12, 13	5, 6, 7	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough biodiversity Environmental Records Centre (CPERC)
LP 5	Settlement Hierarchy	Distribution of planning permissions across the district	4, 6, 7, 10	4, 9, 11	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 6	Market Towns	- Number and percentage of housing completions by settlement type - Amount and percentage of employment development completed by settlement type	4, 6, 7, 10	4, 9, 11	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 7	Service Centres				
LP 8	Local Service Villages				

6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 9	Villages				
LP 10	Hamlets and the Countryside	Number of planning permissions granted on unallocated sites on grade 1 and 2 agricultural land	12	4	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 11	Placemaking for larger scale developments	- Number of planning applications granted for large scale development supported by a masterplan and parameter plan - Number of planning applications for large scale major development supported by a masterplan and parameter plan	1, 9, 11, 12	7, 15	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 12	How will infrastructure be provided	- Annual CIL receipts/ expenditure monitoring S106 monitoring - Completion of A428 upgrade - Commencement/ completion of A141 upgrade - Provision of additional capacity at water recycling centres as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	2, 5, 11, 15, 16, 18	10, 12, 15	- Huntingdonshire District Council - National Highways - Anglian Water - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
LP 13	Securing infrastructure provision				
LP 14	Supporting and Enabling Strategic Infrastructure				
LP 15	Facilitating Transport, Travel and Connectivity	- Progress made on strategic transport projects including the A141 and East West Rail - Number of CIL payments for travel and connectivity improvements	2, 15, 16, 18	10, 12	- Huntingdonshire District Council - National Highways - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
LP 16	Approach to renewable energy schemes	- Number of planning applications for energy schemes permitted - Permitted renewable energy capacity in MW - Completed renewable energy capacity in MW	1, 3, 9, 14, 17	1, 2	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)

Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan 6

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 17	Health and well-being	Number and % of planning permissions granted for large scale development for residential or employment use with a supporting health impact assessment	2, 4, 9, 11	10, 15	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 18	Providing affordable homes	Number and percentage of affordable homes completed	4, 10	9	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 19	Green and Blue Infrastructure	- Losses to biodiversity habitat in hectares - Additions to biodiversity habitat in hectares - Total change in biodiversity habitat in hectares - Open space managed to Green Flag award standard	3, 12, 13	5, 6, 7	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough biodiversity Environmental Records Centre (CPERC)
LP 20	Supporting carbon capture through nature	Number of applications refused based on impact on carbon stores	1, 3, 9, 13, 14	1, 2, 5, 6	- Huntingdonshire District Council - Natural England - Great Fen
LP 21	Managing Flood Risk	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency	2, 11, 12, 13, 18	1, 2, 3, 15	Environment Agency
LP 22	Managing Waste Water	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to water service providers	2, 12, 13	1, 2, 3, 15	- Anglian Water - Environment Agency - Middle Level Commissioners - Local Lead Flood Authority
LP 23	Managing Surface Water	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of a responsible agency on flooding or water quality grounds	2, 12, 13, 18	1, 2, 3, 15	- Anglian Water - Environment Agency - Middle Level Commissioners - Local Lead Flood Authority
LP 24	Water Efficiency	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the l/p/d	1, 2, 9, 14	1, 2, 3, 15	Huntingdonshire District Council

6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 25	Design context and character	Number of planning applications refused where the grounds of refusal were based on their adverse impact on their surroundings	1, 4, 9, 11, 12	7, 15, 16	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 26	Creating high quality places and spaces	Number of planning applications refused where the grounds of refusal was based on failure to create high quality places and spaces	1, 4, 9, 11, 12	7, 15, 16	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 27	Ensuring amenity for new buildings and neighbours	Number of applications refused where grounds of refusal included detriment to neighbouring properties	1, 9	8, 15	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 28	Minimising embodied and operational carbon in new buildings	- Number of applications refused based on non-compliance with national energy efficiency standards - Amount and % of housing and employment floorspace developed on previously developed land - Amount and % of new homes and employment floorspace created via conversion or change of use	1, 9, 12, 14	1, 2	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 29	Making existing buildings more energy efficient	Number of applications where this policy applies	1, 9, 14	1, 2	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 30	Supporting active and sustainable travel	- Number and % of housing completions by settlement type - Number and % of planning permissions granted for major development supported by a Transport Assessment, Transport Statement and/or Travel Plan	2, 11, 16, 17, 18	9, 12	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council

Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan 6

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 31	Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement	- Number of new homes permitted with no off street parking - Number of cycle storage spaces permitted per dwelling/ per non-residential unit	1, 9, 12, 17	15	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 32	Providing electric vehicle charging points	Number of applications that provided new electric vehicle charging points	1, 9, 12, 17	1, 2	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 33	Preventing and reducing air pollution	- Number of planning applications refused in an AQMA based on air quality impacts - Number of planning permissions granted which require a low emissions strategy	1, 9	7, 8, 15	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 34	Preventing and reducing ground contamination and groundwater pollution	- Number of planning permissions granted with an agreed contamination mitigation strategy - Number of planning permissions for the specified development types granted in a SPZ 1 where adequate safeguards against possible contamination have not been agreed	1, 9	8	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 35	Protecting and enhancing Established Employment Areas	- Amount and type (use class) of development completed within EEAs - Amount of development completed or committed on land well-related and capable of being integrated with an Established Employment Area for uses E(g)(i to ii), B2, and B8	4, 5, 6	11, 13	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 36	Expansion and diversification of rural businesses	Amount and type (use class) and type and floorspace of development completed within the countryside	6, 7, 8	11, 13	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)

6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 37	Shaping new businesses in the countryside				
LP 38	Enabling key clusters and innovation-led growth	Amount and type (use class) of development completed as approved through this policy, including the identification of cluster typologies	6, 7, 8	11, 13	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 39	Enabling logistics and distribution	Amount and type (use class) of development completed for B8 (storage and distribution)	6, 7, 8	11, 13	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 40	Helping tourism and recreation in the countryside	Number of permissions granted for tourism, sport and recreation in the countryside by use	6, 12, 13	11, 13	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 41	Defining our Retail Hierarchy	Use class and amount of retail floorspace gained or lost within defined Town Centres and Local Centres	8	13, 14	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 42	Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability	Use class and amount of retail floorspace gained or lost within defined Town Centres	8	13, 14	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 43	Supporting Local Centres	Use class and amount of retail floorspace gained or lost within defined Local Centres	8	13, 14	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 44	Services and facilities outside Designated Centres	- Use class and amount of retail, community and hot food takeaway floorspace gained or lost within defined Local Centres - Use class and amount of community floorspace gained or lost within defined Local Centres	8	13, 14	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 45	Promoting a mix of housing	Numbers of homes completed of each of 1, 2, 3 and 4(+) bedrooms	4, 9, 10	9	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)

Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan 6

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 46	Ensuring accessible and adaptable homes	- Proportion of homes built to standard M4(2) accessible and adaptable homes - Proportion of homes built to standard M4(3) wheelchair user homes	4, 9, 10	9	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 47	Facilitating self and custom build homes	Number of self and custom build CIL exemptions granted	4, 10	9	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 48	Supporting specialist housing	- Number of self-contained (C3) specialist homes permitted by tenure - Number of bedspaces in C2 residential institutions permitted	4, 9, 10	9	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 49	Supporting houses in multiple occupation	Number of bedspaces granted through construction or conversion of housing into licenced houses in multiple occupation	4, 9, 10	9	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 50	Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing	Number of affordable homes completed on rural exceptions schemes	4, 9, 10	9	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 51	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	- Number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches permitted - Number of Travelling Showpeople plots permitted	4, 10	9	Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team)
LP 52	Protecting our nature conservation sites	- Losses to biodiversity habitat in hectares - Total Change in habitats in hectares % of SSSIs in favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, destroyed/part destroyed condition	3, 12, 13	6, 7, 8	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough biodiversity Environmental Records Centre (CPERC)
LP 53	Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Number of applications refused based on non-compliance with biodiversity net gain	3, 12, 13	6, 7, 8	Huntingdonshire District Council

6 Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan

Reg 19 Policy no.	Reg 19 Policy	Indicator	Related Local Plan objective	Related SA objective	Date Source
LP 54	Protecting our trees, orchards, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows	Number of applications refused on the basis of impact on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows	3, 12, 13	6, 7, 8	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 55	Protecting our open spaces, outdoor sport and recreational facilities	- Number of applications resulting in the loss or gain of open space, sports and recreational buildings(s) or land - Number of LGS designations made in neighbourhood plans	2, 3, 11	5, 10	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council
LP 56	Heritage Assets and their Settings	- Number and % of planning applications refused on grounds of impact on heritage assets - Number of conservation area statements reviewed - Number of heritage assets on the heritage at risk register	12	7, 16	- Huntingdonshire District Council - Historic England Heritage at Risk Register
LP 57	Water related Development	- Number of moorings granted permission for leisure and residential use - Number of applications where this policy was applied	12, 13	6, 15	- Cambridgeshire County Council (Policy and Insight Team) - Huntingdonshire District Council

6.9 The monitoring framework is reflected in the Local Plan with information following each policy for the implementation and monitoring of that policy.

Stage E - Monitoring and implementation of the Plan 6

E2: Responding to adverse effects

- 6.10** The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) will form the basis for ascertaining the extent to which policies set out in the Local Plan are being achieved and targets being met and whether any adverse effects are being identified. The AMR will include data on the number of new homes being completed annually and a trajectory of anticipated future provision.
- 6.11** The housing target for the Local Plan that this Plan provides for is 32,200 new homes between 2021 and 2046, this equates to an average of 1,237 new homes per year. The level of delivery achieved will be monitored annually to ensure that sufficient housing is being brought forward.
- 6.12** An adverse effect may arise from under-delivery of housing. Therefore, the latest government procedures on any housing delivery test will be followed. In the absence of national procedures the following local test will be applied. A review of allocations will be triggered if housing delivery is more than 20% below the residual annual average target over a rolling 3 year period and the housing trajectory at that point indicates that expected housing completions over the next 5 years will not make up the deficit. Should this situation arise we will work through the following sequence until housing delivery is appropriately increased:
1. Work with partners to overcome constraints and expedite the delivery of allocated sites; then
 2. Work with partners to overcome constraints and expedite the delivery of alternative sites identified as suitable within the Land Availability Assessment (or successor documents); then
 3. Review the capacity of sites to ascertain whether additional homes could be delivered within sites already allocated within this Plan; then
 4. Initiate a partial or full review of the Local Plan as appropriate
- 6.13** Jobs growth is complex and very difficult to predict and the potential adverse effects arising from policies set out in Local Plan are harder to determine. Employment growth will be affected as much by successes in winning contracts, gaining investment or the availability of potential employees with the right skills as by the availability of land and buildings. For the retail sector new trends can emerge quickly and can be influenced by decisions about investment at a national level.
- 6.14** The North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zone will play a significant part in delivering the jobs growth over the plan period as well as the delivery of strategic employment and mixed use sites. We will continue to work in partnership with the site owners Urban & Civic, who are master developers to two strategic developments in the district (Alconbury Weald and St Neots East) as well as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to ensure the growth within the North Huntingdon corridor proceeds as planned in the Local Plan and the Local Growth Plan. If monitoring shows that there will be insufficient land for business development over the next 5 years taking account of preceding development trends and all available land and buildings then a review of allocations will be triggered. Should this situation arise the Council will follow the same sequence as listed above for housing delivery.

Appendix 1 - SA Framework

Appendix 1 - SA Framework

Table 10 SA framework

	SA Objective	Decision aiding questions for use in appraising options for		
		The Strategy and alternatives (inc. new settlement and strategic expansion location proposals)	Sites	Development Management policies
		Will the approach/ option help to:	Will allocation of the site:	Will the option/ proposed policy:
	Climate emergency			
SA 1	Contribute to achieving the district's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040.	- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with, or exceeding, nationally or locally set targets? - Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants?	- Promote low and zero carbon technologies? - Not contain, and be at least 200m from an air quality management area? - Support the circular economy through the reuse and recycling of existing land, buildings or materials?	- Promote energy efficient design? - Increase the amount of CO₂ captured by plants and trees?
SA 2	Improve adaptability and resilience to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency.	- Concentrate new development in locations that maximise opportunities to adapt and be more resilient to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency? - Support habitats in adjusting to the impacts of the climate emergency?	Is the site located in an area with lower resilience to the predicted impacts of climate change?	- Help protect against the increased extremes of weather anticipated from the climate emergency? - Promote opportunities for adaptation to unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency?
SA 3	Manage Huntingdonshire's water resources in a sustainable manner and reduce the risk from all potential sources of flooding to people, properties and the environment.	- Maintain and where possible improve the quality and availability of water resources? - Minimise the risk of flooding from all sources?	- Be served by existing waste water infrastructure or will it require infrastructure upgrades to facilitate growth? - Use land in flood zone 1 (unless the proposed use is water compatible)	- Reduce or help prevent water resource pollution from all sources? - Promote efficient use of water resources? - Reduce the risk of flooding from all sources?

Appendix 1 - SA Framework

	SA Objective	Decision aiding questions for use in appraising options for		
		The Strategy and alternatives (inc. new settlement and strategic expansion location proposals)	Sites	Development Management policies
		Will the approach/ option help to:	Will allocation of the site:	Will the option/ proposed policy:
			taking into account the impact from surface water flood risk?	
	Environmental			
SA 4	Make efficient use of land by maximising development on previously developed land where this is not of high biodiversity value and minimising that on the best and most versatile agricultural land.	- Enable the use of land that has previously been developed in preference to greenfield land? - Promote development in locations that are grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land) in preference to higher grades?	- Prioritise development of previously developed land? - Prioritise development on land of agricultural land grade 3 or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land)?	- Promote the use of previously developed land in preference to greenfield land? - Promote the use of land of agricultural land grade 3 or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land) in preference to grade 1 or 2 agricultural land?
SA 5	Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible natural green space and enhance the strategic green and blue infrastructure network and links to it.	- Focus development in areas which are either well served by publicly accessible open and natural green space or have the capacity to provide additional such space? - Ensure current strategic blue and green infrastructure networks are not compromised and future extensions or improvements are not prejudiced?	- Promote new development with opportunities to participate in leisure and recreation using publicly accessible natural green space? - Could development contribute towards enhancing or increasing the strategic green or blue infrastructure network or linkages to it?	- Support the provision, retention or enhancement of publicly accessible areas of open and natural green space? - Support the provision or enhancement of the strategic green or blue infrastructure network? - Encourage greater participation in healthy lifestyles through nature based or outdoor leisure activities? - Promote access to natural greenspace?
SA 6	Promote conservation, enhancement, recovery and connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance.	- Protect sites of designated biodiversity or geodiversity significance? - Promote opportunities for the recovery and enhanced connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	- Impact on a designated site of biodiversity or geodiversity significance? - Ensure current strategic ecological networks are not compromised, and future improvements in strategic	- Support the protection, recovery or enhancement of sites of designated biodiversity or geodiversity significance? - Promote opportunities for enhanced connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?

Appendix 1 - SA Framework

	SA Objective	Decision aiding questions for use in appraising options for		
		The Strategy and alternatives (inc. new settlement and strategic expansion location proposals)	Sites	Development Management policies
		Will the approach/ option help to:	Will allocation of the site:	Will the option/ proposed policy:
			habitat connectivity are not prejudiced?	
SA 7	Conserve and enhance the special qualities and integrity of our landscape and townscape character and the local distinctiveness of settlements.	- Promote opportunities to protect and enhance valued landscape and townscape characteristics? - Reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place?	Make efficient use of land whilst also protecting the form and character of the local area?	- Protect or enhance landscape and/ or townscape character? - Promote local distinctiveness?
SA 8	Contribute to the minimisation and reduction of all forms of pollution.	- Promote actions to reduce contributions to air pollution? - Facilitate the minimisation of light, noise and odour pollution, in particular on the rural environment	Be unlikely to cause or suffer from widespread light, noise, odour or visual pollution?	- Support proposals that contribute to the reduction of air pollution? - Support proposals that minimise or contribute to the reduction of light, noise, odour and visual pollution?
	Socio-economic			
SA 9	All people have access to high quality affordable homes that meet their needs across their lifetime.	Facilitate the delivery of the district's housing needs in sustainable locations that meet the community's needs?	- Contribute to meeting a wide range of the types, sizes and tenures of housing needed across the district? - Meet the needs of specific housing groups such as gypsies and travellers or older people? - Contribute to diversification of the housing supply by being no more than 1 ha in size?	- Support provision of market and affordable homes to meet identified needs and support the district's economic growth aspirations? - Support construction of accessible, adaptable homes with potential to meet the lifetime needs of occupiers? - Support provision of accommodation to meet specific needs?

Appendix 1 - SA Framework

	SA Objective	Decision aiding questions for use in appraising options for		
		The Strategy and alternatives (inc. new settlement and strategic expansion location proposals)	Sites	Development Management policies
		Will the approach/ option help to:	Will allocation of the site:	Will the option/ proposed policy:
SA 10	Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of social and community services and facilities to promote social inclusion particularly amongst those most at risk of experiencing discrimination, poverty and social exclusion.	- Support and enhance the more deprived areas of the district? - Maximise opportunities for access to existing or proposed social and community facilities and services?	- Minimise the distance people need to travel to access town centres and local convenience shops - Minimise the distance people need to travel to access education facilities? - Minimise the distance people need to travel to access leisure and cultural facilities?	- Contribute towards promoting community cohesion? - Reduce the potential for social exclusion and isolation particularly among disadvantaged and protected groups? - Retain or enhance accessibility to retail, education, health, leisure or cultural facilities?
SA 11	Enhance the quality, range and accessibility of economic opportunities for all communities.	- Contribute to regeneration activities? - Enhance and diversify economic opportunities with the district?	- Facilitate access to a range of employment opportunities? - Be in a location with high quality digital infrastructure?	- Contribute towards economic opportunities for local residents? - Improve digital infrastructure provision?
SA 12	Reduce the need to travel by car and promote active travel and public transport infrastructure.	Support development in locations with good active travel and public transport links and services or provide opportunities for significant improvements?	- Benefit from access to public transport infrastructure? - Benefit from access to active travel infrastructure for practical and social activities?	- Support the provision of infrastructure for public transport? - Support the provision of infrastructure for active travel?
SA 13	Strengthen, modernise and diversify the local economy and promote opportunities for growth of indigenous companies as well as encouraging sustainable inward investment.	- Attract new investment and provide opportunities to improve the resilience of the local economy? - Contribute to a balanced portfolio of employment land in sustainable locations throughout the district? - Support retention and growth of indigenous companies? - Encourage sustainable tourism?	- Provide opportunities for the creation of new businesses beyond supporting people working from home? - Facilitate retention or expansion of existing businesses? - Support provision of tourism facilities or services appropriate to the sustainability of its location?	- Support jobs in high knowledge or skill sectors? - Facilitate retention or expansion of existing businesses? - Retain or create rural or tourism employment opportunities? - Assist in increasing the viability of the agricultural economy?

Appendix 1 - SA Framework

	SA Objective	Decision aiding questions for use in appraising options for		
		The Strategy and alternatives (inc. new settlement and strategic expansion location proposals)	Sites	Development Management policies
		Will the approach/ option help to:	Will allocation of the site:	Will the option/ proposed policy:
SA 14	Support the successful response of town, local and village retail centres to changing shopping and social trends.	Facilitate modernisation of existing town centres to meet current and anticipated needs?	Reinforce the role of town, local and village centres in serving their communities?	- Promote enhancement of town centres? - Support the retention or creation of local scale retail or social facilities?
SA 15	Promote high quality design and placemaking that enables attractive, safe and resilient communities.	- Strengthen a local sense of place? - Retain the character of existing settlements?	- Provide high quality development sensitive to the character of the local environment? - Promote sustainable design solutions? - Provide opportunities to incorporate crime reduction measures?	- Contribute to the construction of well designed and sustainably constructed buildings and places? - Promote innovation whilst respecting local character and context? - Facilitate enhancement of the public realm? - Minimise opportunities for crime and help reduce the fear of crime?
SA 16	Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting(s).	Conserve and where possible enhance sites, features and area of archaeological value throughout the district?	Impact on any heritage assets or their settings?	Promote the conservation or enhancement of heritage assets and their settings?

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

- 8.1** Each option will be assessed against the following classification of the potential effect as appropriate for each objective (see the SA Framework). The scoring matrix will be used to judge each item in the SA Framework to assess the relative performance of each option. This is refined to consider the level of significance of the impact either positively or negatively. A neutral category is included where there may no clear relationship, the outcome is uncertain or it may depend on details on delivery or implementation mechanisms unknown at the time of assessment.
- 8.2** The supporting commentary to each assessment will consider whether any identified impact is likely to be long or short term and permanent or temporary.

Table 11 Scoring matrix

Score	Effect of the approach
++	Contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective
+	Contributes to the achievement of the objective
N	No clear relationship to achieving the objective, the outcome is uncertain or the outcome may depend on delivery specific factors
	The objective is not relevant to the proposal
-	Detracts from achievement of the objective
--	Significantly detracts from achievement of the objective

- 8.3** The proposed scoring system/matrix consists of a mixture of qualitative and quantitative measures. How each objective will be assessed are shown in Table 23.
- 8.4** For objectives SA10 and SA11 measurements will taken from the centre point of the site frontage to calculate the distance from the site on foot by roads and public footpaths to services and facilities. For objectives SA1 and SA6 these will be calculated as the crow flies.

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

Table 12 Site decision aiding questions supporting criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question Will allocation of the site:	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
SA1	Promote provision and use of low and zero carbon technologies?	The scheme is for renewable energy generation or a large site with renewable energy provision that is proposed to meet the majority of the needs of the development.	++
		Clear renewable energy provision/ building standards to contribute to meeting the site's needs/ significantly enhanced building standards; or The site is proposed solely for biodiversity net gain opportunities.	+
		Build to building regulations at the time of development.	N
	Not contain, and be at least 200m from an air quality management area?	Beyond 200m of an AQMA	+
		Within 200m of an AQMA	-
		Within an AQMA	--
	Support the circular economy through the reuse and recycling of existing land, buildings or materials?	The site has significant existing structures with potential for recycling and reuse on site. Change of use of existing building	++
		The site has some existing structures with potential for recycling and reuse on site. Change of use or retention of existing building with some redevelopment	+
		There are no existing structures	-
SA2	Is the site located in an area with lower resilience to the predicted impacts of climate change?	The scheme is for entirely biodiversity net gain, flood mitigation, open space or renewable energy generation Or there is no fluvial flood risk with climate change	++

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
		There is risk of fluvial flooding with climate change at 1 in 100 (Design Flood) which is not more than 20% of the site area	+
		Risk of fluvial flooding with climate change at 1 in 100 (Design Flood) is greater than 20% and not more than 50% of the site area	-
		Risk of fluvial flooding with climate change at 1 in 100 (Design Flood) is greater than 50% of the site area	--
SA3	Be served by existing waste water infrastructure or will it require infrastructure upgrades to facilitate growth?	More than 10% of the flow permit for the water recycling centre catchment is remaining after existing committed growth is taken into account.	+
		Development in this location may require an increase in the water recycling centre catchment flow permit and/or upgrades to the treatment process to accommodate further growth.	-
		The water recycling centre catchment has significant constraints in providing upgrades to the WRC to accommodate future growth. or The site is a new settlement and will most likely require a new water recycling centre to serve the population.	--
	Use land in flood zone 1 (unless the proposed use is water compatible) taking into account the impact from surface water flood risk?	100% of the site in flood zone 1 and none or minimal recorded risk of surface water flooding; or Proposal is for water compatible development	++
		50-99% of the site in flood zone 1 and none or minimal risk of surface water; or 100% of the site in flood zone 1 but with significant risk of surface water flooding	+
		50-99% of the site in Flood zone 1 with significant risk of surface water flooding <50% of the site flood zone 1, mainly flood zone 2 irrespective of surface water flood risk	-

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
		<50% of the site flood zone 1, mainly flood zone 3 irrespective of surface water flood risk	--
SA4	Prioritise development of previously developed land?	>60% of the site is previously developed land	++
		1-59% of the site is previously developed land	+
		The site is proposed solely for biodiversity net gain opportunities	N
		The site is technically classified at greenfield but includes substantial built structures such as agricultural barns	-
		The site is wholly greenfield land with no existing structures	--
	Prioritise development on land of agricultural land grade 3 or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land)?	The site is classified as urban or non-agricultural land	++
		The site is grades 4 and/or 5	+
		The site is grade 1 but the proposed uses are for greenspace, biodiversity net gain or flood mitigation	N
		The site is predominantly grade 3	-
		The site is predominantly grade 2	--
SA5	Promote new development with opportunities to participate in leisure and recreation using publicly accessible natural green space? Could development contribute towards enhancing or increasing the strategic green or blue infrastructure network or linkages to it?	The site meets at least 3 of the following: - is within 1 km of a 10 ha area of natural green space - is within 300 m of a 2 ha natural green space - is within 200 m of a 0.5 ha area of greenspace - has direct opportunities to link to the strategic green or blue infrastructure network the site has capacity for 200 or more new homes or 1,000 sqm or more of non-residential built development with natural green space included within the site	++
		The site meets 1 of the above criteria is within 1 km of a 10 ha area of natural green space	+

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:	- is within 300 m of a 2 ha natural green space - is within 200 m of a 0.5 ha area of greenspace	
		The site meets none of the above criteria but has some capacity for linkages to the existing strategic green or blue infrastructure network	-
		The site meets none of the above criteria and has no/ very limited capacity for linkages to the existing strategic green or blue infrastructure network	--
SA6	Impact on a designated site of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	The site meets all of the following: - is more than 2 kms from a Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area - is more than 1 km from a Site of Special Scientific Interest - is more than 200 m from a County Wildlife Site - is more than 200 m from a Local Geological Site	++
		The site meets at least 2 of the following: - is more than 2 kms from a Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area - is more than 1 km from a Site of Special Scientific Interest - is more than 200 m from a County Wildlife Site - is more than 200 m from a Local Geological Site	+
		The site meets at least 3 of the following: - contains or is within 2 kms of a Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Area - contains or is within 1 km from a Site of Special Scientific Interest - contains or is within 200 m from a County Wildlife Site - contains or is within 200 m from a Local Geological Site	--
	Ensure current strategic ecological networks are not compromised, and future improvements in strategic habitat connectivity are not prejudiced?	The site is located within one of Natural Cambridgeshire's Priority Landscapes and has potential to contribute to improvements strategically in habitat connectivity.	+
		The site is located outside any of Natural Cambridgeshire's Priority Landscapes and has limited potential to contribute towards improvements strategically in habitat connectivity.	-
SA7	Make efficient use of land whilst also protecting the form and character of the local area?	The scale and/ or location of the site: relate well to the existing settlement;	++

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:	- the amount of development would contribute to protecting the form and character of the surrounding townscape and landscape; - the density is similar to or slightly higher than surrounding properties.	
		The scale and/ or location of the site: - relate well to the existing settlement; - the amount of development would contribute to protecting the form and character of the surrounding townscape and landscape; - the proposed density would not make efficient use of land.	+
		The scale and/ or location of the site: - do not relate well to the existing settlement; - the proposed density would make efficient use of land.	-
		The scale and/ or location of the site: - do not relate well to the existing settlement; - would not contribute to protecting the form and character of the surrounding townscape and landscape or could result in coalescence with another settlement(s); - the density would not make efficient use of land.	--
SA8	Be unlikely to cause or suffer from widespread light, noise, odour or visual pollution?	The proposal is distant from major sources of pollution and not of a scale likely to cause substantial pollution	+
		For residential proposals, the site is located near to the strategic transport network or near to a major employment site.	-
		For non-residential proposals, the site is close to major sources of pollution and/or is of a scale likely to cause substantial pollution	-
		The proposal could undermine the Dark Sky Discovery Sites designated at the Great Fen	--
SA9	Contribute to meeting a wide range of the types, sizes and tenures of housing needed across the district?	The site is likely to support over 100 new homes which could include a wide range of types, sizes and tenures, or	++

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
	Meet the needs of specific housing groups such as gypsies and travellers or older people?	The site is suitable to meet specialist needs of identified groups, or	
	Contribute to diversification of the housing supply by being no more than 1 ha in size?	The site is 1 ha or less and contributes to the government's aspiration to promote sites suitable for SME builders	
		The site will contribute to meeting the housing needs of the district	+
		The site is for non-residential uses	N
SA10	Minimise the distance people need to travel to access town centres and local convenience shops?	The site is within 5 kms of a town centre	++
		The site is within 800 m of a local convenience shop or 2.5 kms of a freestanding supermarket	+
		The site is proposed solely for biodiversity net gain or renewable energy opportunities	N
		The site is more than 800 m from a local convenience shop or 2.5 kms from a freestanding supermarket	-
	Minimise the distance people need to travel to education facilities?	The site meets at least 1 of the following: - is within 800 m of a town based primary school - is within 800 m of a village primary school - the site has capacity for at least 1,000 dwellings and will include a primary school	++
		The site does not meet the criteria above but is either within 1.5 kms of a town based primary school or is in a village containing a primary school	+
		The site is either for non-residential use or for residential accommodation specifically targeted at older people.	N
		The site is beyond 1.5 kms of a town based primary school; or Is in a village which does not have a primary school and is of insufficient capacity to provide a school on site.	--
	Minimise the distance people need to travel to leisure and cultural facilities?	The site meets at least 5 of the following, is within 800 m of:	++

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
		• public hall/ meeting place • pub • place of worship • museum • library • cinema • sports centre • playing fields • the site has capacity for at least 1,000 dwellings and will include new leisure and/ or cultural facilities The proposal provides additional leisure and /or cultural facilities.	
		The site meets at least 3 of the following, is within 800 m of: • public hall/ meeting place • pub • place of worship • museum • library • cinema • sports centre • playing fields	+
		The site meets at least 1 of the following, is within 800 m of: • public hall/ meeting place • pub • place of worship • museum • library • cinema	N

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
		- sports centre - playing fields Or The site is proposed solely for biodiversity net gain or renewable energy opportunities	
		The site is beyond 800 m of all the following: - public hall/ meeting place - pub - place of worship - museum - library - cinema - sports centre - playing fields	-
SA11	Facilitate access to a range of employment opportunities?	The site is within 1.5 kms of multiple concentrations of employment (eg town centre, industrial estate, secondary school) or the site itself will provide over 5 ha of employment land.	++
		The site meets at least 1 of the following: - is within 5 kms of multiple concentrations of employment - is within 1.5 kms of a range of employment sources Will provide over 2 ha of employment	+
		The site is proposed solely for renewable energy opportunities, biodiversity net gain or open space uses	N
		The site meets at least 2 of the following: - is more than 5 kms from multiple concentrations of employment - is more than 1.5 kms from a range of employment sources	-

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
		Will not provide at least 2 ha of employment	
		The site meets all of the following: - is more than 5 kms from multiple concentrations of employment - is more than 1.5 kms from a range of employment sources Will not provide at least 2 ha of employment	--
	Be in a location with high quality digital infrastructure?	Ultrafast broadband is available in the vicinity	++
		Superfast broadband is available in the vicinity	+
		The site is proposed solely for biodiversity net gain opportunities	N
		Standard or no broadband is available in the vicinity	-
SA12	Benefit from access to public transport infrastructure?	The site is within 5 kms of a railway station and 800 m of a bus service rated B- or higher on the Place Based Carbon Calculator (approximately every 20 minutes Mon-Sat)	++
		The site is within 800 m of a bus service rated D+ or higher on the Place Based Carbon Calculator (approximately hourly Mon-Sat)	+
		The site is within 800 m of a bus service rated F+ or higher on the Place Based Carbon Calculator (approximately 3 per day Mon-Fri)	-
		The site is within 800 m of a bus service rated F or lower on the Place Based Carbon Calculator (approximately 1 per day Mon-Fri) or is beyond 800 m of any bus service	--
	Benefit from access to active travel infrastructure for practical and social activities?	A pavement adjoins the site frontage or is immediately across the road from the site; or A footpath along the site frontage will need to be created to join the site with a nearby footpath; or There is a public right of way/ segregated cycleway within the site.	++

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
		The site is within 500 m of a public right of way and/ or segregated cycleway	+
		The site is within 1 km of a public right of way and/ or segregated cycleway	-
		The site is more than 1 km of a public right of way and/ or segregated cycleway	--
SA13	Provide opportunities for the creation of new businesses beyond supporting people working from home? Facilitate retention or expansion of existing businesses? Support provision of tourism facilities or services appropriate to the sustainability of its location?	The proposal includes high job density employment use(s) such as offices, or Facilitate the expansion of an existing business(es)	++
		The proposal would support new low job density employment use(s) such as logistics or industrial uses, or Facilitate the retention of an existing business(es), or Supports the retention of existing tourism facilities or services appropriate to the location	+
		The proposal does not include employment, commercial or tourism uses	N
		The proposal would result in the loss of employment, commercial or tourism facilities and services	-
SA14	Reinforce the role of town, local and village centres in serving their communities?	The proposal supports provision of additional retail or social facilities within an existing town, local or village centre	++
		The proposal is for the retention, modernisation or expansion of an existing retail or social facility	+
		The proposal does not include retail or social uses so does not apply.	N
		The proposal would result in the loss of retail or social facilities within an existing town, local or village centre	-
SA15	Provide high quality development sensitive to the character of the local environment? Promote sustainable design solutions?	The proposal includes the redevelopment of a site that is previously developed and derelict, or Where there is a known issue, the proposal offers opportunities to address crime and /or anti-social behaviour issues.	++

Appendix 2 - Scoring Matrix and Site SA Criteria

SA Objective	Site appraisal decision aiding question	Assessment indicators	Scoring matrix
	Will allocation of the site:		
	Provide opportunities to incorporate crime reduction measures?	The site is located such that it can be effectively masterplanned to become part of the existing place and community.	-
		The site is located such that it could not be effectively integrated with the existing community.	-
SA16	Impact on any heritage assets or their settings?	There are no designated heritage assets within the site or in the immediate vicinity of the site	++
		The proposal could enhance a heritage asset where there is currently a negative impact	+
		There are designated heritage assets that could be adversely impacted by the development	-

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

9.1 To appraise the sustainability merits of each growth strategy option in detail, a separate SA has been undertaken for each and are set out in the following tables.

Strategy 1 - Strong focus on towns and cities

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA1	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with, or exceeding, nationally or locally set targets?	++	Strategic expansions to existing towns would focus development towards the more sustainable settlements in the district. This scale of development will also support new services and facilities to meet the needs of development. This option therefore provides greater opportunities to reduce the need to travel to meet day to day needs and enhance the opportunities for active travel by reducing journey lengths reducing emissions outputs. These locations are also more likely to have established sustainable travel options such as good bus routes and potentially railway provision. Focusing development towards these areas could incentivise use of public transport and support their continuation and potential expansion aiding a wider modal shift in travel behaviours which would reduce emissions outputs. This strategy can support enhancements to green infrastructure in and around the towns which can help to increase absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants but will have limited impact on the remaining parts of the district.
	Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants?	+	
SA2	Concentrate new development in locations that maximise opportunities to adapt and be more resilient to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency?	-	Focusing development towards the towns and larger urban areas may not focus development in locations most resilient to the impacts of climate change in particular due to enhanced flood risk depending on the nature of the specific locations selected.
	Support habitats in adjusting to the impacts of the climate emergency?		

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			This option could support habitats within and around towns, three of which are closely related to the Ouse Valley green infrastructure corridor, however, it would not necessarily support adjustments of habitats more widely across the district and may give rise to increased development pressure on sensitive sites.
SA3	Maintain and where possible improve the quality and availability of water resources?		The cumulative impact of development and particularly of strategic expansions on water infrastructure will be greater in the towns and towards the north of the district near Peterborough and as such require upgrades to ensure sufficient capacity. This could be particularly acute in the early stages of development as infrastructure is delivered. All of our towns experience some issues with flooding so focusing development towards these areas may make them less resilient to flooding overall depending on the specific locations chosen for development.
	Minimise the risk of flooding from all sources?	-	
SA4	Enable the use of land that has previously been developed in preference to greenfield land?	+	This strategy may result in some opportunities for previously developed land regeneration within towns and may also reduce the need for greenfield land especially as it could facilitate more dense development. Denser development may also minimise the use of higher grade agricultural land. It is recognised that there are limited major development opportunities within our towns so it is likely that large amounts of greenfield land around them will face development pressure to deliver strategic urban extensions.
	Promote development in locations that are grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land) in preference to higher grades?	+	
SA5	Focus development in areas which are either well served by publicly accessible open and natural green space or have the capacity to provide additional such space?	+	This strategy is more likely to see development located in good proximity to accessible open and natural greenspace or be of a scale to provide new accessible open and natural greenspace to spread the cumulative impact of increased recreational pressure and use. This option can support and enhance connectivity to existing green infrastructure areas located within or nearby to towns but may not support those in other parts of the district.
	Ensure current strategic blue and green infrastructure networks are not compromised and future extensions or improvements are not prejudiced?		

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA6	Protect sites of designated biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	-	Focusing development to the towns may give rise to more concentrated adverse impact on sites such as Portholme Meadow, Hinchingsbrooke Park and in neighbouring authority areas such as Orton Pits but through development could also enhance them and connectivity between them. Largescale strategic extensions to towns may be of a scale that could provide mitigation and opportunities for enhancements to habitat connectivity and provide greater biodiversity benefits.
	Promote opportunities for the recovery and enhanced connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	+	
SA7	Promote opportunities to protect and enhance valued landscape and townscape characteristics?	-	This strategy could have a cumulative adverse impact on the character of our towns. Directing growth towards these areas is likely to adversely impact their character and landscape setting as development may likely be in the form of peripheral edge of settlement development, the historic centres of these towns are likely to be largely unchanged through. Additionally, the strategy could direct new settlement proposals towards the north of the district resulting in substantial change in landscape within the Northern Wolds, Fen Margin and Nene Valley Landscape Character Areas. Some landscape impacts could be mitigated as the scale of such proposals can provide strategic scale green infrastructure.
	Reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place?		
SA8	Promote actions to reduce contributions to air pollution?	-	Focusing development within and around our existing towns could have a cumulative impact on raising pollution levels or be impacted by pollution if in close proximity to the strategic road network. The scale of potential development could however provide mitigation.
	Facilitate the minimisation of light, noise and odour pollution, in particular on the rural environment		
SA9	Facilitate the delivery of the district's housing needs in sustainable locations that meet the community's needs?	++	This strategy would focus most housing growth around the district's main towns which provide sustainable locations. However, there is the risk that strategic scale expansion locations would be peripherally located and so will be at a significant distance from central facilities although due to their scale some facilities would be expected to be provided within the sites. New settlement proposals can provide services within the site so that they are largely self sustaining and provide additional provision on areas where existing provision is limited.
SA10	Support and enhance the more deprived areas of the district?	N	This strategy would support growth in the towns where most of the more deprived urban areas are located but offers limited support for growth in areas of rural deprivation.

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
	Maximise opportunities for access to existing or proposed social and community facilities and services?	++	This strategy would focus most housing growth around the district's main towns which currently provide the best offer for social and community facilities and services. Additional services and facilities could be included within the strategic expansion locations and new settlements reducing potential social exclusion and inaccessibility to key services and facilities.
SA11	Contribute to regeneration activities?	-	This strategy could contribute towards regeneration activities in our towns and larger villages where they exist. However, recognising that growth will likely be on the edge of existing towns and potentially new settlement proposals, the strategy is unlikely to support regeneration activities as this would primarily involve greenfield sites. This strategy allows for both large scale growth which could support enhanced and diversified economic opportunities with the benefit of proximity to concentrated labour forces and supply chain businesses. Also, focusing most growth primarily in and around the main towns and nearby other urban areas like Peterborough would provide continuity for investors and support enhancement of existing economic opportunities; scope for diversification may be limited by the more consistent nature of the land offer.
	Enhance and diversify economic opportunities with the district?	++	
SA12	Support development in locations with good active travel and public transport links and services or provide opportunities for significant improvements?	++	This strategy allows for maximisation of the usage of existing infrastructure and services supporting their provision and has the potential to support additional provision in locations that could also serve the wider community. New settlements nearby to existing urban areas have greater opportunities to deliver extensions to existing sustainable and active travel routes and be of a scale to sustain these. However, these could take some time to deliver.
SA13	Attract new investment and provide opportunities to improve the resilience of the local economy?	+	Strategic expansions could support large scale investment opportunities through a greater diversity of sites being available around existing towns, this could also support smaller units for small and growing businesses to start up. This could improve the resilience of the local economy and promote growth opportunities for local companies without the need for significant
	Contribute to a balanced portfolio of employment land in sustainable locations throughout the district?		

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
	- Support retention and growth of indigenous companies? - Encourage sustainable tourism?		relocation. This strategy may not best support the rural economy and established employment areas located outside of the towns. It could support sustainable tourism where this is located within or around the towns.
SA14	Facilitate modernisation of existing town centres to meet current and anticipated needs?	+	Focusing most growth around the towns would provide enhanced local spending power and expanded catchment populations to support town centre uses enhancing their attractiveness for investment. Although largescale strategic extensions would be expected to provide some main town centre uses to meet the day to day needs of residents, the application of the sequential test may be required to minimise potential impact on the town centre.
SA15	- Strengthen a local sense of place? - Retain the character of existing settlements?	+	This strategy could have a cumulative adverse impact on the character of our towns particularly strategic expansions which are likely to be peripheral edge of settlement proposals. These proposals will likely have their own distinct identity which may alter the overall character of the settlement and are unlikely to significantly impact the historic centre of towns. New settlement proposals can be designed with placemaking being a fundamental factor so that its identity and sense of place is established early on in development and evolves as places become more established.
SA16	Conserve and where possible enhance sites, features and area of archaeological value throughout the district?	N	This strategy provides opportunities for identification of additional assets of archaeological value depending on the location of sites brought forward for development.

Summary of SA

Overall strategy 1 has some clear sustainability benefits, it performs very positively against SA objectives 1, 9, 10, 11 and 12 and positively against SA objectives 4, 5, 13, 14 and 15. It performs negatively against SA objectives 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8 with a particularly negative score against SA3 regarding the availability of water resources. These are by virtue of focusing development towards areas where there is existing infrastructure which could give rise to cumulative pressure, but also supports opportunities for strategic scale growth such as new settlements nearby to urban areas but distinct from them. The strategy focuses development towards sustainable locations can support a range of settlements and while the strategy does not preclude development within smaller villages, this is not its emphasis so there may be limitations towards supporting development and services rural areas.

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

Strategy 2 - Sustainable locations served by public transport employment and infrastructure

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA1	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with, or exceeding, nationally or locally set targets?	++	Focusing development towards sustainable locations such as market towns and service centres due to their more comprehensive range of services and facilities and access to public and sustainable travel modes which helps to reduce carbon emissions. These areas are also more likely to have established public transport options such as bus routes and railways. Focusing growth along public transport corridors could incentivise take up of public transport and support their continuation and potential expansion aiding a wider modal shift in travel behaviours which would reduce emissions outputs. This strategy can support enhancements to green infrastructure in and around the towns and larger villages which can help to increase absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants but will have limited impact on the remaining parts of the district.
	Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants?	+	
SA2	Concentrate new development in locations that maximise opportunities to adapt and be more resilient to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency?	+	Focusing development towards sustainable locations well served by public transport may not focus development in locations most resilient to the impacts of climate change in particular due to enhanced flood risk depending on the nature of the specific locations selected. This strategy could support habitats within and around our towns three of which include the Ouse Valley green infrastructure corridor, however, it would not necessarily support adjustments of habitats more widely across the district. There may be opportunities to support sites that are located within or adjacent to public transport corridors such as along the A1, A141 and A428/A421, equally this development could give rise to adverse impact on these sites.
	Support habitats in adjusting to the impacts of the climate emergency?		
SA3	Maintain and where possible improve the quality and availability of water resources?	-	The cumulative impact of development on water infrastructure may be greater in certain locations and as such require upgrades to ensure sufficient capacity. Locating development along public transport corridors may help to minimise this pressure.
	Minimise the risk of flooding from all sources?	-	

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			All of our towns experience some issues with flooding so focusing development towards these areas may make them less resilient to flooding overall depending on the specific locations chosen for development. Locating development along public transport corridors may help to minimise this pressure.
SA4	Enable the use of land that has previously been developed in preference to greenfield land?	+	This strategy may result in some opportunities for previously developed land regeneration within towns and some larger villages where there are opportunities. These may reduce the need for greenfield land especially as it could facilitate more dense development. This strategy may be able to facilitate more dense development, especially in and around towns and larger villages, which could minimise the use of higher grade agricultural land.
	Promote development in locations that are grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land) in preference to higher grades?	+	
SA5	Focus development in areas which are either well served by publicly accessible open and natural green space or have the capacity to provide additional such space?	+	This strategy is more likely to see development located in good proximity to accessible open and natural greenspace or be of a scale to provide new accessible open and natural greenspace. This strategy can support and enhance connectivity to existing green infrastructure areas located within or nearby to towns and larger villages but may not support those in other parts of the district.
	Ensure current strategic blue and green infrastructure networks are not compromised and future extensions or improvements are not prejudiced?		
SA6	Protect sites of designated biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	-	Focusing development to the towns may give rise to more concentrated adverse impact on sites such as Portholme Meadow, Hinchbrook Park, Paxton Pits and other protected sites. Development along public transport corridors could help to minimise this pressure but may still give rise to impact on protected sites or valuable habitat along these routes but could also provide opportunities for enhancements to habitat connectivity. Large scale development could provide mitigation and enhancements.
	Promote opportunities for the recovery and enhanced connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	+	

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA7	Promote opportunities to protect and enhance valued landscape and townscape characteristics?	-	Development along the public transport corridors could have an adverse impact on the landscape and townscape setting and character of the existing settlements along these routes without appropriate masterplanning. There could be particular cumulative pressure as development may likely be on the peripheral edge of settlements but wider landscape impact across the district is minimised. The impact will depend on the concentration and location of specific sites.
	Reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place?		
SA8	Promote actions to reduce contributions to air pollution?	-	Development could be adversely impacted by pollution arising from its proximity to the road network including the A1, A141 and A428/A421 and equally focusing development along these corridors may raise pollution levels.
	Facilitate the minimisation of light, noise and odour pollution, in particular on the rural environment		
SA9	Facilitate the delivery of the district's housing needs in sustainable locations that meet the community's needs?	++	This strategy would focus most housing growth around the more sustainable settlements of the district. However, there is the risk that strategic scale expansion locations would be peripherally located and so will be at a significant distance from central facilities although due to their scale some facilities would be expected to be provided within the sites.
SA10	Support and enhance the more deprived areas of the district?	+	This strategy would support growth in the towns and larger villages which could help to support deprived urban areas within these settlements, growth along public transport corridors have opportunities to support a wider range of settlements. This strategy would offer limited support for growth in areas of rural deprivation.
	Maximise opportunities for access to existing or proposed social and community facilities and services?	++	
			Focusing growth towards sustainable locations would focus most housing growth around the district's main towns and larger villages which currently provide the best offer for social and community facilities and services. Additional services and facilities could be included within the strategic expansion locations. This strategy provides greater opportunities to provide additional provision in settlements located along public transport routes and could maximise emerging enhancements and route improvements, for example along the A141 and East West Rail.

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA11	Contribute to regeneration activities?	+	Focusing growth on the outskirts of our towns could support regeneration activities as but most growth is likely to primarily involve greenfield sites on the edge of settlements. Sites along the public transport corridors may have a lesser impact on town centres but could provide additional travel to these areas which could bring greater scope for investment. Access to public transport corridors could help to enhance and diversify economic opportunities by providing a wider range of employment options to people in various settlements. This strategy allows for growth which could support enhanced and diversified economic opportunities with the benefit of proximity to concentrated labour forces and supply chain businesses providing continuity for investors and support enhancement of existing economic opportunities.
	Enhance and diversify economic opportunities with the district?	++	
SA12	Support development in locations with good active travel and public transport links and services or provide opportunities for significant improvements?	++	This strategy strongly aligns with delivery of this objective and would both support existing provision and support additional services and infrastructure. Growth along these corridors may enhance the viability of these routes supporting expansion and greater frequency of services. This is beneficial for schemes within the A141 and East West corridor who could also help to deliver strategic transport improvements.
SA13	Attract new investment and provide opportunities to improve the resilience of the local economy?	+	Access to public transport corridors could help to enhance and diversify investment opportunities and provide longer term resilience for the local economy and indigenous companies through proximity of sustainable means of travel to work for employees. It could improve the resilience of economic areas in larger villages and promote growth opportunities for local companies without the need for significant relocation. It may have limited impact on sustainable tourism in rural areas but could support tourism within the towns and larger villages.
	Contribute to a balanced portfolio of employment land in sustainable locations throughout the district?		
	Support retention and growth of indigenous companies?		
	Encourage sustainable tourism?		
SA14	Facilitate modernisation of existing town centres to meet current and anticipated needs?	++	Public transport corridors typically connect between larger centres and enhanced growth along them could expand the accessible catchment population. Growth along these corridors may enhance the viability of these

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			routes supporting expansion and greater frequency of services. This can provide greater investment and attraction to town centres as connectivity will be enhanced.
SA15	Strengthen a local sense of place?	+	Development along the public transport corridors could have an adverse impact on existing settlements but could also be of a scale that can be successfully integrated. The impact will depend on the concentration and location of specific sites. There could be a risk of cumulative pressure of development along these routes and being concentrated around certain sustainable settlements such as the market towns.
	Retain the character of existing settlements?		
SA16	Conserve and where possible enhance sites, features and area of archaeological value throughout the district?	N	This strategy provides opportunities for identification of additional assets of archaeological value depending on the location of sites brought forward for development.

Summary of SA

Overall strategy 2 has some clear sustainability benefits, it performs very positively against SA objectives 1, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 and positively against SA objectives 2, 4, 5, 13 and 15. It performs negatively against SA objectives 3, 6, 7 and 8 with no very negative scores. The benefits arise by virtue of focusing development development towards areas where there is existing infrastructure such as public transport. The appraisal notes that this could give rise to cumulative pressure on sustainable areas, it recognises that growth can facilitate further infrastructure and transport enhancements particularly along the the A141 corridor and East West rail. The strategy focuses development towards sustainable locations can support a range of settlements and while the strategy does not preclude development within smaller villages, this is not its emphasis so there may be limitations towards supporting development and services rural areas.

Strategy 3 - Dispersed growth to support existing settlements

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA1	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with, or exceeding, nationally or locally set targets?	-	This option would spread development across the district including potentially to places that are not currently well served by sustainable modes of transport. This could incentivise car usage and make carbon reduction targets more challenging to achieve.

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
	Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants?	+	Distributed growth is unlikely to compromise existing green infrastructure but is unlikely to make strategic enhancements. Development likely to be of a scale where localised connections and/or enhancements could be made alongside development to increase the rates of absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants locally.
SA2	Concentrate new development in locations that maximise opportunities to adapt and be more resilient to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency?	++	Dispersed growth provides opportunities to spread development across the district to areas that may be more resilient to the impacts of climate change in particular those at lowest risk of flooding and be of a scale that would have less of increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere. This option could support habitats at a localised scale.
	Support habitats in adjusting to the impacts of the climate emergency?		
SA3	Maintain and where possible improve the quality and availability of water resources?	+	Dispersed growth is more likely to provide development of a proportionate scale across the district putting less cumulative pressure on infrastructure.
	Minimise the risk of flooding from all sources?	++	Dispersed growth provides opportunities to spread development across the district and in areas that may be less at risk from flooding.
SA4	Enable the use of land that has previously been developed in preference to greenfield land?	-	Dispersed growth could utilise previously developed land across the district but this is likely to be minimal in more rural areas. Also densities in these areas are likely to be much lower which could increase the use of greenfield land. There is increased potential for agricultural land of higher quality being used for development.
	Promote development in locations that are grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land) in preference to higher grades?	--	
SA5	Focus development in areas which are either well served by publicly accessible open and natural green space or have the capacity to provide additional such space?	-	Distributed growth may result in some developments in locations that have limited existing provision of accessible open and natural greenspace and also of a scale where such space is not provided alongside the development.
	Ensure current strategic blue and green infrastructure networks are not compromised and future extensions or improvements are not prejudiced?		

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			Distributed growth is unlikely to compromise existing green infrastructure but is also of a scale where connections or enhancements are made to them alongside the development but this will be dependent on the location of proposals.
SA6	Protect sites of designated biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	+	Distributed growth is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on such sites but this would be dependent on specific site proposals.
	Promote opportunities for the recovery and enhanced connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	N	Distributed growth is unlikely to result in significant opportunities to enhance connectivity beyond at a localised scale but this would be dependent on specific site proposals.
SA7	Promote opportunities to protect and enhance valued landscape and townscape characteristics?	+	This option has the opportunity to spread development of a proportionate scale across the district supporting the vitality of settlements. There is some risk to local character if developments are of a scale or type that does not harmonise with their context.
	Reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place?		
SA8	Promote actions to reduce contributions to air pollution?	+	A dispersed approach is unlikely to increase pollution levels substantially but this is dependent on location, scale and use of proposals.
	Facilitate the minimisation of light, noise and odour pollution, in particular on the rural environment		
SA9	Facilitate the delivery of the district's housing needs in sustainable locations that meet the community's needs?	+	This option may support growth in some sustainable settlements with local service provision to meet needs with the growth potentially helping to support and maintain service levels. However, dispersal to small villages without any local services would not support sustainable development as travel would be required to meet many needs.
SA10	Support and enhance the more deprived areas of the district?	+	This option could support growth across more deprived areas in rural areas and to a lesser extent within towns depending on specific development sites brought forward.
	Maximise opportunities for access to existing or proposed social and community facilities and services?	N	

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			A high proportion of our villages have some form of social and community facilities and services but these are limited in most smaller villages reducing the overall range of services and facilities that could be accessed.
SA11	Contribute to regeneration activities?	-	Although dispersed sites in villages could include some previously developed land this option is unlikely to significantly contribute towards regeneration activities but this would be dependent on specific proposals. There may be greater opportunities within market towns or larger villages. Dispersed growth may diversify economic opportunities but the scale may be limited within village environments. It could also support the retention of existing established employment areas within the countryside or within villages.
	Enhance and diversify economic opportunities with the district?	+	
SA12	Support development in locations with good active travel and public transport links and services or provide opportunities for significant improvements?	-	The potential locations for dispersed growth would have a variety of active travel and public transport services with some having none. Sufficient growth would need to be concentrated in particular locations to support additional provision.
SA13	Attract new investment and provide opportunities to improve the resilience of the local economy?	+	Dispersed growth may diversify economic opportunities but the scale and economic attractiveness of less sustainably located village sites may fail to attract much new investment, however they provide opportunities for local and small businesses to start up or expand. This option could benefit retention and growth of indigenous companies by facilitating growth in or near their current sites and support opportunities for sustainable tourism.
	Contribute to a balanced portfolio of employment land in sustainable locations throughout the district?		
	Support retention and growth of indigenous companies?		
	Encourage sustainable tourism?		
SA14	Facilitate modernisation of existing town centres to meet current and anticipated needs?	-	This option would contribute little to achieving this objective although there would be some enhanced local spending power and expanded catchment populations around all our towns they may not be sufficiently concentrated to facilitate significant modernisation.

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA15	Strengthen a local sense of place?	++	This option has the opportunity to spread development of a proportionate scale across the district supporting the vitality of settlements.
	Retain the character of existing settlements?		
SA16	Conserve and where possible enhance sites, features and area of archaeological value throughout the district?	N	This option provides opportunities for identification of additional assets of archaeological value depending on the location of sites brought forward for development. Dispersed growth within or on the edge of existing settlements may have an impact on heritage assets but this would be dependent on the location and scale of development proposals.

Summary of SA

Overall strategy 3 has some clear sustainability benefits, it performs very positively against SA objectives 2, 3 and 15 and positively against SA objectives 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13. It performs negatively against SA objectives 12 and 14 with a particularly negative score against SA 4 regarding the potential for greater amounts of greenfield land that is potentially of higher agricultural value to be used within this strategy. It has a mixed outcome against SA objectives 1 and 6. The strategy has a somewhat positive outcome by virtue of dispersing growth across the district to a wide range of settlements, the benefits of this can be in supporting growth that is proportionate, can utilise existing infrastructure capacity and sustain local services. The challenges is that these may not be of a scale to bring substantial enhancements, for example to public transport provision and reinforce private car usage.

Strategy 4 - Freestanding strategic developments and limited dispersed growth

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA1	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with, or exceeding, nationally or locally set targets?	+	Comprehensive masterplanning of new communities would enable public transport and active travel infrastructure to be designed from an early stage. This can provide development at a scale to sustain public transport routes. They can also be comprehensively designed to internalise traffic whereby less trips need to be made outside of the settlement because services and facilities are available within it. These serve to reduce both the need to travel and enhance low carbon transport options. Dispersed growth may result in some development in locations that would rely primarily on private car usage but a lower level of need for dispersed growth would facilitate selection of more sustainable locations.
	Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants?	+	

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			New communities are developed at a scale where new green infrastructure can be provided at scale within the development and as such increase the absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants. Dispersed growth would have more limited opportunities to achieve this.
SA2	Concentrate new development in locations that maximise opportunities to adapt and be more resilient to the unavoidable impacts of the climate emergency?	++	It will depend on which new community(ies) is pursued but in principle sites of this scale are more capable of providing infrastructure and mitigation to build in resilience against the impacts of climate change. Dispersed growth can also compliment this and spread smaller scale developments across the district in resilient areas. This could support habitats at a strategic level through establishment of new habitats within new communities and their linkages to existing habitat networks along with supporting habitats at a localised level associated with dispersed growth.
	Support habitats in adjusting to the impacts of the climate emergency?		
SA3	Maintain and where possible improve the quality and availability of water resources?		A new community will likely require substantial upgrades and/or new infrastructure to meet water demands of the development. Dispersed growth is more likely to utilise existing capacity. It will depend on which new community(ies) is pursued but in principle sites of this scale are more capable of providing flood mitigation if there are elements of the site at risk. Dispersed growth can complement this and spread smaller scale developments across the district in at low flood risk areas.
	Minimise the risk of flooding from all sources?	++	
SA4	Enable the use of land that has previously been developed in preference to greenfield land?	-	A new community(ies) will require a large amount of land, much is likely to be greenfield land. Various densities can be achieved in these sites which would reduce the pressure on using greenfield and in other locations less. Dispersed growth could utilise previously developed land across the district but this is likely to be minimal in more rural areas.
	Promote development in locations that are grade 3 agricultural land or lower (including urban and non-agricultural land) in preference to higher grades?	+	

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			Depending on the location of the new community(ies) a mixture of previously developed and agricultural land may be available (for example former airfields) with the opportunity to select sites in areas of grade 3. A range of densities could be incorporated to reduce the overall land take.
SA5	Focus development in areas which are either well served by publicly accessible open and natural green space or have the capacity to provide additional such space?	+	New communities can be masterplanned to include accessible and natural greenspace within them. Dispersed growth may be located in settlements with access to such areas but there may be some where it is not readily accessible.
	Ensure current strategic blue and green infrastructure networks are not compromised and future extensions or improvements are not prejudiced?		New communities can be masterplanned to include new green infrastructure and also be of a scale to link to existing strategic priority areas. This is dependent on the location of the new community and what opportunities exist for enhancements and connections. Dispersed growth is unlikely to significantly impact on strategic green infrastructure.
SA6	Protect sites of designated biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	+	New community proposals could have a greater impact on nature sites if they are in close proximity to them, they are also of a scale that could provide greater mitigation. Their location in proximity to other settlements is also a factor when considering the cumulative impact on protected sites. Distributed growth is unlikely to result in significant opportunities to enhance connectivity beyond at a localised scale. New community proposals could provide new nature sites within them which could connect to designated sites or habitats of value such as ancient woodland. Distributed growth is unlikely to result in significant opportunities to enhance connectivity beyond at a localised scale.
	Promote opportunities for the recovery and enhanced connectivity of sites of biodiversity or geodiversity significance?	+	
SA7	Promote opportunities to protect and enhance valued landscape and townscape characteristics?	+	New communities can be masterplanned and designed such that a distinct identity and sense of place can be formed and shaped, this could utilise local landscape characteristics, historic features of the site or nearby settlements as inspiration. This can take many years to develop and requires a mix of
	Reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place?		

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			uses providing employment, retail, open space and community uses as well. Dispersed growth can also be of a scale proportionate to settlements that can harmonise with their context.
SA8	Promote actions to reduce contributions to air pollution?	+	A new community is of a scale that could result in increased levels of pollutants but is also of a scale that can mitigate any sources of pollution. Dispersed growth is unlikely to be of a scale to substantial increase levels of pollution but this is dependent on location, scale and use of proposals.
	Facilitate the minimisation of light, noise and odour pollution, in particular on the rural environment		
SA9	Facilitate the delivery of the district's housing needs in sustainable locations that meet the community's needs?	++	This option offers the opportunity to provide new communities with integral services and facilities to meet the needs of residents alongside some housing growth in more sustainably located villages which can benefit from and support existing services. New communities will provide a wide range of housing types, sizes and tenures.
SA10	Support and enhance the more deprived areas of the district?	+	New communities are unlikely to support or enhance more deprived areas although they could contribute to assisting in reducing rural deprivation as could the dispersed growth element. New communities would be expected to provide social and community facilities and services within them but the range of provision is likely to be limited compared to long established larger villages and towns. Provision for the dispersed element of growth would depend on specific settlements where growth was focused.
	Maximise opportunities for access to existing or proposed social and community facilities and services?	+	
SA11	Contribute to regeneration activities?	N	The impact of this option will depend on the nature of the new community sites selected and whether they comprise previously developed land in need of regeneration. New communities would be designed to include substantial areas for economic development to provide balanced communities and reduce the need to travel to work. Such locations would enhance and diversify economic opportunities. Combined with some dispersed growth this option would
	Enhance and diversify economic opportunities with the district?	++	

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
			provide a wide choice of economic development site types. Dispersed economic growth can help to support economic opportunities in more rural areas and also support existing established employment areas.
SA12	Support development in locations with good active travel and public transport links and services or provide opportunities for significant improvements?	+	New communities would be expected to fully integrate active travel and public transport infrastructure within their designs. However, public transport services would need sufficient connectivity to major centres to be viable in the long term. Dispersed growth elements would be able to make a variable contribution to this objective and sites are unlikely on their own to substantially enhance active and public travel options.
SA13	Attract new investment and provide opportunities to improve the resilience of the local economy?	++	New communities would be designed to include substantial areas for economic development which would provide substantial opportunities for new investment and contribute to the portfolio of available sites. Strategic scale freestanding new commercial sites could provide opportunities to meet different economic demands for example in logistics and distribution centres or enable new strategic business clusters supporting regional and national sectoral needs and provide skilled jobs in high knowledge sectors. The contribution of the dispersed element of the option could partially assist with supporting the retention and growth of indigenous companies and support sustainable tourism opportunities.
	Contribute to a balanced portfolio of employment land in sustainable locations throughout the district?		
	Support retention and growth of indigenous companies?		
	Encourage sustainable tourism?		
SA14	Facilitate modernisation of existing town centres to meet current and anticipated needs?	-	New communities would be expected to include sufficient town centre uses to meet the day to day needs of residents to promote sustainable forms of development which would reduce their impact on providing support for modernisation of town centres as would the dispersal of other growth. The location of growth would impact on whether potential residents were more likely to be attracted to our existing towns or to centres in the surrounding area.

Appendix 3- SA performance of strategy options

SA Objective	Decision aiding questions: Will approach/ option help to....	Score	Commentary
SA15	Strengthen a local sense of place?	+	New communities can be masterplanned and designed such that a distinct identity and sense of place can be formed and shaped, however this can take many years to fully develop. Dispersed growth can also be of a scale proportionate to settlements that can harmonise with their context.
	Retain the character of existing settlements?		
SA16	Conserve and where possible enhance sites, features and area of archaeological value throughout the district?	N	This option provides opportunities for identification of additional assets of archaeological value depending on the location of sites brought forward for development. Dispersed growth within or on the edge of existing settlements may have an impact on heritage assets but this would be dependent on the location and scale of development proposals.

Summary of SA

Overall strategy 4 has some clear sustainability benefits, it performs very positively against SA objectives 2, 9, 10, 11 and 13 and positively against SA objectives 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 15. It performs negatively against SA objectives 14 with a mixed score against SA 4 regarding the potential for greater amounts of greenfield land that is potentially of higher agricultural value to be used within this strategy and SA objective 3 regarding pressure on water resources and need for new infrastructure arising from new settlement proposals. The strategy focuses development towards new settlements, these have the potential in time to deliver new infrastructure and largely be self sustaining communities reducing the need to travel and be of a scale that could facilitate connection to public transport. The strategy also supports some dispersed growth the benefits of this can be in supporting growth that is proportionate, can utilise existing infrastructure capacity and sustain local services.

Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites

Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites

10.1 The Local Plan's Growth Strategy includes the allocation of some strategic scale sites. Strategic sites were classified as those capable of providing 2,500 homes and/or over 120,000 sqm of commercial floorspace or more. Due to their nature they are not comparable to smaller scale sites. As such, these were assessed using the strategy SA decision aiding questions.

10.2 16 sites were identified as strategic scale sites and were assessed through the council's Land Availability Assessments and Sustainability Appraisals.

10.3 Not all of these strategic sites can be considered as reasonable alternatives. To be considered a reasonable alternative, a site needed to demonstrate a realistic prospect of meeting development requirements, of being delivered within the plan period and not have significant constraints to overcome or objections from statutory consultees.

10.4 The following tables identifies which sites were not considered to reasonable alternatives and a summary of the reasons why.

Table 13 Strategic Sites that are not reasonable alternatives

Call for Site Ref	LAA reference	Site Name	Use	Area (ha)	Council's Assessment
CfS: 227	Southoe and Midloe 2	Southoe Garden Village, Southoe	Mixed Use	300	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal indicate that the site is inappropriate for development due to its likely significant impacts on the character of the landscape and on Southoe as well as designated nature conservation sites. The achievability of the development is unclear because of significant infrastructure requirements including new access(s) onto the A1, the presence of pipelines and overhead powerlines.
CfS: 363	Buckden 6	Land West of A1 from Buckden to Brampton	Mixed Use	527	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal indicate that the site is inappropriate for development as the combination of outcomes of the LAA and SA indicate that the site is inappropriate for development due to the very significant landscape impact of the development and the scale of development fundamentally impacting the character of the landscape and setting of various settlements. Access and a new junction onto the A1(M) will require considerable engagement with Cambridgeshire County Council.
CfS: 376	Godmanchester 6	Land to the South of Godmanchester including land at Corpus Christi Farm and Lower Debden Farm, Godmanchester	Mixed Use	406	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal indicate that the site is inappropriate for development due to its likely significant impacts on the character of the landscape and on Godmanchester and challenges in terms of integration as well as the impact of traffic particularly those heading east.

Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites

Call for Site Ref	LAA reference	Site Name	Use	Area (ha)	Council's Assessment
CfS: 348	Sibson-cum-Stibbington 1	Sibson Garden Community	Mixed Use	263	As part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated. The Highways Agency also raised significant concerns saying that the site is likely to require significant highways improvements due to scale and that Elton Road is not suitable for connection or intensification without significant improvement. They noted that it is unclear whether suitable improvement could be achieved along its entire length within existing highway or land in the applicant's control. They continued that, this road also joins with the A1 at its northern extent; the existing junction is again unlikely to be suitable without significant improvement and would need to be discussed with National Highway. As there are limited sustainable connections to Peterborough, given the remote location of this site and existing infrastructure crossing the A1, it is unclear how this would be achieved. The Whole Plan Viability Assessment also demonstrates the site to be the most unviable of all sites put forward.
CfS: 43	Alconbury Weston 6	Safefield Farm, North West of Alconbury Airfield	Mixed Use	267	Significant objections were raised by Natural England who state that they " object to any allocation of this land due to unacceptable risks to Monks Wood SSSI/NNR and the serious impact on internationally important long-term research carried out by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH), which would jeopardise their future plans and activities." National highways raised issues noting that "Development requires realignment of the A1 between Wansford Station overbridge and Elton Road (Water Newton)." which has the potential to impact viability and achievability. The site is therefore now considered inappropriate for development.
CfS: 126	Yaxley 2	Land South West of Yaxley and East of A1(M) near Norman Cross	131.18		This site was considered inappropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which noted that the site is not considered to be appropriate for development due to the likely significant adverse impacts on the fenland landscape and the setting of the Great Fen. It will also fundamentally and detrimentally impact the character and setting of Yaxley. While the site promoter submitted additional evidence at various stages of Local Plan consultations, the very significant concerns regarding landscape, ecology and settlement character remain.

Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites

Call for Site Ref	LAA reference	Site Name	Use	Area (ha)	Council's Assessment
CfS: 209	Chesterton 1	Land West of A1 (North of Peterborough Motorway Services) - Option A, (larger site) Haddon	Commercial	90	As Part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated. The Highways Authority raised significant concerns saying that the site is likely to require significant highways improvements due to scale and that it is unclear how sustainable travel links can be achieved on the A605 across the A1 to link to Peterborough. National Highways also raised significant concerns noting that J17 A1(M) is a potential crash cluster, therefore safety improvements may be required.
CfS: 44 and CfS: 140	Brampton 16	Land at Low Harthay and Woodhatch Farms	Commercial	Between 61 and 71	This site was considered inappropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which noted that it is detached from a settlement and located within the countryside and the impact on the landscape could be most significant to the south and west. The commercial uses could impact nature conservation designations as the site is approximately 300m from Brampton Wood SSSI and is nearby to the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area. A critical factor is to determine through engagement with Cambridgeshire County Council whether developing the site could adversely impact the existing water recycling centre and if commercial uses can be successfully integrated with it. There are two options, one to develop the site leaving the water recycling centre where it is or relocate the water recycling centre to elsewhere in the site. The probability and possibility of these options have not been addressed by the site promoter.

10.5 The remaining strategic sites that could be considered as reasonable alternatives are set out below. Those highlighted in green were draft allocations in the Preferred Options Plan.

10.6 A sequential approach based on flood risk was taken to identify which of these remaining sites could be progressed in the Preferred Options Local Plan Growth Strategy. Those that were progressed into the Regulation 18 Plan are highlighted. A more detailed breakdown of the sites and flood risk can be found in Appendix C of the Level 1 SFRA or through the relative site-specific Level 2 SFRAs where applicable.

Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites

Table 14 Strategic Sites that are reasonable alternatives

Call for Site Ref	LAA reference	Site Name	Use	Area (ha)	Strategic Recommendation from SFRA
CfS: 221	The Stukeleys 5	Land North of A141, between Huntingdon Racecourse and A1307	Commercial	105	Development granted under 25/01922/OUT Local Plan Reference in Pre Submission Local Plan is North Huntingdon 2
CfS: 247	Hemingford Abbots 3	The Lattenburys (land to the South of the A1307 and North of A14, and West of A1198)	Mixed Use	243	These are the most sequentially preferable sites and so were selected as residential-led strategic mixed-use allocations. Local Plan Reference in Pre Submission Local Plan is Hemingford Abbots 1 and North Huntingdon 3
CfS: 256	Wyton on the Hill 3	Lodge Farm, North of A141, Huntingdon (Wyton on the Hill)	Mixed Use	331	
CfS: 95	Wyton on the Hill 1	Wyton Airfield	Mixed Use	260	Of these remaining sites, CfS:95 Wyton Airfield was selected as an allocation. The justification for this is two-fold. Wyton Airfield is the largest brownfield site that was submitted to the Council for consideration. The allocation of this site is supported in national policy. Wyton Airfield also supports the ambitions of the Council to create a defence and innovation cluster by providing additional employment and homes to facilitate sustainable economic growth, thus aligning with corporate priorities and the development of Project Fairfax . This is also supported by the Ministry of Defence through a ' Statement of Intent '. 1% of Wyton Airfield is within flood zone 3b and surface water risk to the site is predominantly very low. Approximately 4% of the site is at high surface water risk. A further 2% is at medium risk and a further 5% is at low surface water risk. The entirety of the site is classified as no risk of groundwater emergence. Infiltration SuDS should be suitable at this site based on groundwater.
CfS: 197	Abbots Ripton 6	Sapley Park Garden Village	Mixed Use	580	
CfS: 232	Alconbury 8	Land at Weybridge Farm (Brampton Cross)	Commercial	395	
CfS: 36	The Stukeleys 2	Nook Farm, Little Stukeley	Mixed Use	376	
CfS: 47	Wyton on the Hill 2	Hungary Hall, West of A141, Wyton-on-the Hill	Mixed Use	384	

Appendix 4 - Assessment of Strategic Sites

Call for Site Ref	LAA reference	Site Name	Use	Area (ha)	Strategic Recommendation from SFRA
					Wyton Airfield can provide development of a proportionate scale that could be integrated with the existing Wyton on the Hill which has limited services and facilities. The site will provide multiple on-site services, facilities and infrastructure, including employment, green infrastructure, a local centre, education and community and sports facilities to support existing nearby communities (Wyton on the Hill) and future residents of the site.

10.7 The strategic sites in the Pre-Submission Plan are unchanged and therefore retains the spatial strategy established at Regulation 18.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:242	Land off Huntingdon Road, Brampton	5.97	Brampton 12	Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA. This site has been put forward for mixed use development comprising open space and car parking facilities for Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Although the site is at high risk of flooding open space is considered water compatible development. Car parking is considered a less vulnerable use compatible with flood zones 2 and 3a. There are no other sequentially preferable sites put forward for open space and car parking in association with the Country Park to enhance the recreational offer to the wider area. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Brampton 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 25 % within flood zone one with predominately very low surface water risk. The SFRA recommends that the risk area should be converted to open greenspace for the country park and that the car park should be sited in Flood Zone 1 next to the access road with appropriate drainage. The site allocation includes criteria requiring the location of the car park in flood zone 1 and appropriate drainage and assessment of groundwater.
CfS:44	Land at Low Harthay and Woodhatch Farms, Brampton	71.06	Brampton 16	Central Huntingdonshire	It was considered inappropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which noted that it is detached from a settlement and located within the countryside and the impact on the landscape could be most significant to the south and west. The commercial uses could impact nature conservation designations as the site is approximately 300m from Brampton Wood SSSI and is nearby to the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area. A critical factor is to determine through engagement with Cambridgeshire County Council whether developing	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					the site could adversely impact the existing water recycling centre and if commercial uses can be successfully integrated with it. There are two options, one to develop the site leaving the water recycling centre where it is or relocate the water recycling centre to elsewhere in the site. The probability and possibility of these options have not been addressed by the site promoter. Therefore the site will not progress to Level 2 SFRA as achievability is uncertain.	
CfS:140	Land at Low Harthay and Woodhatch Farms, Brampton	61.51	Brampton 16	Central Huntingdonshire	It was considered inappropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which noted that it is detached from a settlement and located within the countryside and the impact on the landscape could be most significant to the south and west. The commercial uses could impact nature conservation designations as the site is approximately 300m from Brampton Wood SSSI and is nearby to the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area. A critical factor is to determine through engagement with Cambridgeshire County Council whether developing the site could adversely impact the existing water recycling centre and if commercial uses can be successfully integrated with it. There are two options, one to develop the site leaving the water recycling centre where it is or relocate the water recycling centre to elsewhere in the site. The probability and possibility of these options have not been addressed by the site promoter. Therefore the site will not progress to Level 2 SFRA as achievability is uncertain.	Not allocated
CfS:320	Land to the North of Thrapston Road (opposite The Hurdles), Brampton	5.7	Brampton 3	Central Huntingdonshire	Over a third of the site is at risk of fluvial flood risk (zones 2, 3a and 3b), surface water and groundwater emergence. More sequentially preferable sites are available. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:341	Wallis Land, Thrapston Road, Brampton	0.7	Brampton 4	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Brampton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low/low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater and residual flood risk.
CfS:275	Former RGE Engineering Site and HDC Car Park, The Avenue, Godmanchester	2.46	Godmanchester 1	Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1 and 2, it is previously developed land. The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. It presents the opportunity to redevelop previously developed land and contribute towards the Government's need to make use of previously-developed or brownfield land whilst decreasing flood risk through redevelopment. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Godmanchester 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 65% flood zone one. It noted that the area of functional floodplain should not be developed and should remain as open greenspace that is allowed to flood and that the area of flood zone 1 could be developed as surface water risk is nominal and safe access and escape routes appear achievable at times of flood. It presents the opportunity to redevelop previously developed land and contribute towards the Government's need to make use of previously-developed or brownfield land whilst decreasing flood risk through redevelopment. As the site is at high risk of flooding criteria has been included to provide flood risk betterment to the site and surrounding area and the need for the sequential location of development within the site and demonstration of safe access and escape routes, provision of a flood risk assessment, detailed drainage strategy and natural flood management.
CfS:372	Land East of Silver Street, Godmanchester	5.12	Godmanchester 10	Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1, 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure	Allocated - Godmanchester 2. The allocation includes at least 5.1 ha of land for biodiversity net gain in the north eastern part of the site around Stoneyhill Brook (this site) and bordering Silver Street (areas at flood risk) to

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities and in proximity to a Market Town (Huntingdon) with enhanced services and facilities. The site in isolation had previously been discounted as the combination of outcomes of the LAA and SA indicated that the site is inappropriate for development on its own as the necessary intervening land to integrate the site into Godmanchester was not in the site promoter's control and has integration challenges of its own. This site has been combined with CfS 139,371,285 and 87 to promote a comprehensive scheme to maximise its ability to integrate into the existing town and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to provision of a new junction with the A1198. This also allows for a strategic response to mitigating the flood risk arising from Stoneyhill Brook and provide betterment. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore progress to Level 2 SFRA for further assessment.	sequentially located built development in flood zone 1 and green infrastructure to include a mixture of strategic green space, amenity open space, play space, accessible natural green space and flood mitigation. This will provide a strategic approach to flood risk in association with Stoneyhill Brook and provide flood risk betterment to the wider area.
CfS23-24180	Land off Bluegate, Godmanchester	3.33	Godmanchester 13	Central Huntingdonshire	The site is 100% Flood Zone one and therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1,2 and 3. The site was not put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan due to high and/or medium risk from surface water sources. The site has very limited access which would require demolition of one of the homes to the side of the route to achieve sufficient width for a safe	Allocated - Godmanchester 2. The allocation includes at least 5.1 ha of land for biodiversity net gain in the north eastern part of the site around Stoneyhill Brook and bordering Silver Street (areas at flood risk) to sequentially located built development in flood zone 1 and green infrastructure to include a mixture of strategic green space, amenity open space, play space, accessible natural green space and flood mitigation. This will provide a strategic

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					access.. This site has been combined with Cfs 139,371,285 and 372 to promote a comprehensive scheme to maximise its ability to integrate into the existing town and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to provision of a new junction with the A1198. This also allows for a strategic response to mitigating the flood risk arising from Stoneyhill Brook and provide betterment. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	approach to flood risk in association with Stoneyhill Brook and provide flood risk betterment to the wider area.
CfS:87	Dexters Farm, Godmanchester	10.18	Godmanchester 3	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1,2 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities and in proximity to a Market Town (Huntingdon) with enhanced services and facilities. The site in isolation had previously been discounted as the combination of outcomes of the LAA and SA indicated that the site is inappropriate for development on its own as the necessary intervening land to integrate the site into Godmanchester was not in the site promoter's control and has integration challenges of its own. This site has been combined with Cfs 87, 139, 285, 371, 372, 23-24180 to promote a comprehensive scheme to maximise its ability to integrate into the existing town and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to provision of a new junction with the A1198. This also allows for a strategic response to mitigating the flood risk arising from Stoneyhill Brook and provide betterment. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Godmanchester 2. The allocation includes at least 5.1 ha of land for biodiversity net gain in the north eastern part of the site around Stoneyhill Brook and bordering Silver Street (areas at flood risk) to sequentially located built development in flood zone 1 and green infrastructure to include a mixture of strategic green space, amenity open space, play space, accessible natural green space and flood mitigation. This will provide a strategic approach to flood risk in association with Stoneyhill Brook and provide flood risk betterment to the wider area.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:207	Emmanuel Knoll Village, Godmanchester	106	Godmanchester 4	Central Huntingdonshire	Site was progressed to level 2 SFRA as mapping indicated the site was 100% flood zone 1 with low surface water flood risk. This site was tested through growth strategies 1, 2 and 3. This site would provide a very substantial extension to Godmanchester but the scheme proposed would not make efficient use of land. The site was not selected for allocation as part of the Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan due to the significant hazard presented by a gas pipeline and its easement strip crossing the north eastern part of the site and impacting on deliverability of the potential junction to the A1307. The provision of an outer link road and roundabout onto the A1307 is further hampered by proximity to existing junctions on the road meaning significant highways infrastructure to facilitate safe access and exit from the site is required which has the potential to significantly impact the viability of the site given the number of homes that are proposed to be delivered. Although flood risk is fairly low the proposed allocation South of Godmanchester off the A1198 provides a more concentrated development with better opportunity to facilitate connectivity into Godmanchester and requires substantially less transport infrastructure provision. It will also provide substantial flood betterment to a long existing problem in relation to Stoneyhill Brook by allocating land for flood mitigation. This will not only benefit the development, but also the wider community of Godmanchester. Significant concerns have been raised by the Highways authority who note that delivery of the access/es will be subject to the proximity of accesses provided to adjacent sites, which may limit the ability to deliver an access for this site. The applicant should look to liaise with adjacent parcel holders to deliver a co-joined site utilising joint frontage. They cite that the site is not sustainable as a stand-alone parcel given a lack of public transport links or high quality walking, cycling, and wheeling access from local centres of population.	Not allocated
CfS:139	Land West of London Road	12.3	Godmanchester 5	Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1,2 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of	Allocated - Godmanchester 2. The allocation includes at least 5.1 ha of land for biodiversity net gain in the north

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
	and South of Stokes Drive, Godmanchester				the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities and in proximity to a Market Town (Huntingdon) with enhanced services and facilities. The site in isolation had previously been discounted as the combination of outcomes of the LAA and SA indicated that the site is inappropriate for development on its own as the necessary intervening land to integrate the site into Godmanchester was not in the site promoter's control and has integration challenges of its own. This site has been combined with Cfs 87, 139, 285, 371, 372, 23-24180 to promote a comprehensive scheme to maximise its ability to integrate into the existing town and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to provision of a new junction with the A1198. This also allows for a strategic response to mitigating the flood risk arising from Stoneyhill Brook and provide betterment. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore progress to Level 2 SFRA for further assessment.	eastern part of the site around Stoneyhill Brook and bordering Silver Street (areas at flood risk) to sequentially located built development in flood zone 1 and green infrastructure to include a mixture of strategic green space, amenity open space, play space, accessible natural green space and flood mitigation. This will provide a strategic approach to flood risk in association with Stoneyhill Brook and provide flood risk betterment to the wider area.
CfS:247	The Lattenburys (land to the South of the A1307 and North of A14,	243	Hemingford Abbots 3	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested in Growth Strategy Option 4. However, this site offers the opportunity for creation of a substantial new community, where the developers' aspiration is to create two linked villages situated	Allocated - Hemingford Abbots 1. The site was assessed as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
	and West of A1198)				within the lower elements of the landform designed to generate a village-style living experience while in a wholly new community. This would contribute towards the rural nature of the surrounding area. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:347	Amber Centre, 36 Mayfield Road, Huntingdon	0.35	Huntingdon 1	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2, 3 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and has the opportunity to redevelop previously developed land and contributing towards the Government's need to make use of previously-developed or brownfield land. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Huntingdon 2 - The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1,2,3 and 4.
CfS:236	Land South of Ermine Street (adjoining Huntingdon)	50.21	Huntingdon 3	Central Huntingdonshire	Site has outline permission (18/01918/OUT) and Reserved Matters are pending consideration therefore the site has not been taken forward as development is approved. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA as it has planning permission	The site is included within the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan within the chapter 'North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zones' as an existing commitment. This site was allocated in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 as the south western part of HU1: Ermine Street Huntingdon. It gained outline planning permission (reference 18/01918/OUT) on 20th September 2024. A series of detailed Reserved Matters have been submitted since then and conditions discharged to allow development to commence.
CfS23-24288	Hinchingbrooke Hospital site, Hinchingbrooke Park Road, Huntingdon	16.2	Huntingdon 4	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2, 3 and 4. The findings from the	Allocated - Huntingdon 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low/ low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and has the opportunity to provide enhanced health facilities and local employment and training opportunities in a highly sustainable location. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-24316	Land at the former WATA Site, Hartford	1.97	Huntingdon 5	Central Huntingdonshire	Medium flood risk present on the majority of the site proposed for a 'more vulnerable' use, alternative sequentially preferable sites are available. Built development is unlikely to be able to avoid medium risk flood areas. In response to the consultation on additional sites, the site promoter submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (May 2025) in support of their proposals. It states that a full Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy including the full technical detail that would be assessed by the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority will accompany any subsequent planning application. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA, as more sequentially preferable sites are available to avoid locating 'more vulnerable' development in medium risk areas.	Not allocated
CfS:74	Land South of New Road, Offord Cluny	2.94	Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy 1	Central Huntingdonshire	In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter stated the site is wholly within flood zone 1. The EA flood maps show that this is the case but there is surface water flood risk. However two more locationally preferable sites were chosen in 'the Offords' CfS: 156 & 174 with have better connections to the main thoroughfare.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:174	Land to the West of Graveley Road, Offord D'Arcy	4.05	Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy 2	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). However, the site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. It is also in proximity to Godmanchester and Huntingdon where wider services can be accessed. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated Offord D'Arcy 1. The site was tested as part of the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.
CfS:156	Land West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close (smaller site), Offord Cluny	2.8	Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy 7	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). However, the site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. It is also in proximity to Godmanchester and Huntingdon where wider services can be accessed. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Offord Cluny 1. The site was tested as part of the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:167	Land to the South of Rectory Road, Bluntisham	1.53	Bluntisham 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site was allocated in the Preferred Options Local Plan as Bluntisham 1. Following a review of comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cite concern regarding heritage and impact on the Grade II* Bluntisham House as well as potential impact to ridge and furrow land, alongside concerns about the cumulative impact of development on services and infrastructure within Bluntisham, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.
CfS:248	Land West of Colne Road, Bluntisham	7.78	Bluntisham 2	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Bluntisham 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS23-24128	Land off 18 Holliday's Road, Bluntisham	2	Bluntisham 6	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Bluntisham 1. The site is 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.
CfS:75	Land at Ramadie, Earith Road, Colne	0.85	Colne 2	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site meets this criteria. Level 2 SFRA not required. Second most sequentially preferable site category (Strategic Recommendation B). Site progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Colne 1. The site is 100% Flood Zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, but is greater than 1 ha and therefore falls within the second most sequentially preferable site category. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1,2 and 3.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:215	Land to the North West of Holme Fen Drove, Colne	0.37	Colne 3	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Colne were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk-based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with low risk of surface water flood risk meaning it could meet the criteria for consideration. However, site 'CfS 75 ' also met this criteria. 'CfS 75 ' was selected as a draft residential allocation as it had no flood risk as opposed to this site (CfS215) which has very low surface water flood risk. Site not progressed to level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:316	Land West of the B1050, Earith Road, Colne	4.75	Colne 6	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Colne were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and	Not allocated. This site was assessed as being at high to medium flood risk and groundwater flood risk meaning that it did not meet the criteria. 'CfS 75 ' was selected as a draft residential allocation as it had no flood risk as opposed to this site (CfS316).

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being at high to medium flood risk and groundwater flood risk meaning that it did not meet the criteria. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:22	Colne Fen Farm and Fishery, South of Chatteris Road, Somersham (Colne)	165	Colne 7	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Colne were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). More sequentially preferable sites were available in Colne. 'CfS 75 ' was selected as a draft residential allocation as it	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					had no flood risk as opposed to this site (CfS22). Site not Progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-24149	Pound Ground, Colne High Street, Somersham Road, Colne	0.82	Colne 8	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Colne were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being at high and medium surface water flood risk and therefore did not meet the criteria.	Not allocated. This site was assessed as being at high and medium surface water flood risk and therefore did not meet the criteria. 'CfS 75 ' was selected as a draft residential allocation as it had no flood risk as opposed to this site (CfS23-24149).
CfS:345	New Farm, Meadow Lane, Earith	1.16	Earith 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site was assessed as being at risk high and medium surface water and groundwater risk. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). Therefore this site has not been taken forward as a preferred site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:46	Galley Hill, Fenstanton	61	Fenstanton 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 3 and 4. However, the site has the opportunity to provide local business and employment opportunities long the Strategic Road Network (A14). Flood risk is high, however the site has the opportunity to provide flood mitigation and flood risk betterment to the wider area of Fenstanton. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Fenstanton 1. Built development is to be located on land within flood zone 1 (25ha of the site) leaving the remaining 36ha for open space to safeguard against flooding. The site is for a less vulnerable use.
CfS:216	Hemingford Grey Lake, South of Marsh Lane, Hemingford Grey	29.6	Hemingford Grey 11	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal, but noted that net developable area will need to be determined in collaboration with the relevant water management bodies to reflect the capacity of the water bodies to transport boats and the physical layout of any moorings, including any potential navigation issues. No responses were received to confirm the compatibility and suitability of the site so the site did not progress to assessment within the growth strategy options. It is noted that the site promoters submitted a Vision document which shows space for 50 moorings. The site is at high flood risk (86% in flood zone 3b), raising concerns about safe access and escape in times of flood. Site did not progress to level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:29	Mill Lane Field, Hemingford Grey	5.45	Hemingford Grey 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	It was considered inappropriate for built development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which noted that it is significantly constrained by fluvial flooding with 89% of the site within flood zone 3a. The site was also put forward by a third party for proposed open space uses which the Council considered would be appropriate, however as this use was not put forward by the landowner, this proposed use is considered unachievable. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:170	Land East of Daintree Way, Hemingford Grey	5.8	Hemingford Grey 6	Eastern Huntingdonshire	High and medium flood risk present on the majority of the site proposed for a 'water compatible', 'less vulnerable' and cemetery. These proposed uses were not put forward by the landowner but a third party, therefore the site is not considered available for these uses and therefore will not progress to a level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:42	Land West of Potton Road, Hilton	9.24	Hilton 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	A number of sites in Hilton were tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3 to provide an indication of suitability in relation to the growth strategy on a locational basis. During the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted additional documents and plans in support of their proposal, the site promoter proposes a different capacity to this assessment, they consider 51 dwellings can be delivered with a net developable area of 36%. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). This site was assessed as being at medium fluvial flood risk. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. This site was assessed as being at medium fluvial flood risk. It therefore did not meet the criteria.	Not allocated
CfS:41	Land East of The Paddocks, Hilton	5.29	Hilton 2	Eastern Huntingdonshire	A number of sites in Hilton were tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3 to provide an indication of suitability in relation to the growth strategy on a locational basis. During the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted additional documents and plans in support of their proposal, the site promoter proposes a different capacity to this assessment, they consider 51 dwellings can be delivered with a net developable area of 36%. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). This site was assessed as being at medium fluvial flood risk. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA	
CfS:235	Land North of High Street, Hilton	2.1	Hilton 4	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is therefore not considered locationally suitable for development. This site was assessed as being at medium fluvial and groundwater flood risk. It therefore did not meet the criteria. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:185	Land North of Bluntisham Road, Needingworth	10.6	Hilton 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. It is also in proximity to St Ives and Huntingdon where wider services can be accessed. The site could be combined with CfS 23-24309 to provide a more comprehensive development with multiple access points. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Needingworth 2. The Level 2 SFRA assessed the site as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a it is a sequentially preferable site.
CfS23-24307	Land at Conger Lane, Holywell	1	Hilton 10	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal originally found that the site may be appropriate for development, on further assessment there are significant concerns regarding point of access and narrowness of the road restricting access. Therefore the site is now considered	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					inappropriate in the LAA. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-24309	Land North West of Needingworth, South of Station Road	24.4	Huntingdonshire 11	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. It is also in proximity to St Ives and Huntingdon where wider services can be accessed. The site could be combined with Cfs 185 to provide a more comprehensive development with multiple access points. The site is at some risk of medium to high flood risk. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to see if development can be sequentially located.	Not allocated. The site was allocated in the Preferred Options Local Plan as Needingworth 2. As a result of the Preferred Options consultation responses, especially in relation to traffic impacts, flood risk, coalescence with neighbouring settlements, landscape concerns and the size of the site the Council have concluded to remove this parcel of land from the wider allocation.
CfS:240	Giffords Park, East of B1040, St Ives, (Needingworth)	122	Huntingdonshire 7	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Needingworth 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 86.3 % within flood zone one with predominately very low surface water risk. A small percentage of the site is located within flood zones 2 and 3. The site is in a Market Town the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to extensive services and facilities. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. The site was put forward as proposed

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
						allocation Needingworth 1 with about 65.5 ha of green infrastructure, sustainable drainage and flood mitigation uses meaning that more vulnerable uses are located outside areas of flood risk.
CfS23-2486	Orchard Paddock, West of Mill Way, Needingworth	2.006	Houghton and Needingworth 8	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The Growth Strategy allows for limited development in Local Services Villages Sites. The site was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal, however it is located to the south of Needingworth on the western side of Mill Way which is typically less developed with the potential to create isolated development in the countryside. The site chosen (CfS 185) provides better opportunity to integrate with the existing settlement, with active routes to St Ives employment areas and accessible transport links providing connections to market towns and enhanced services and facilities. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24306	Five Acres Farm, South of Needingworth Road	5.71	Houghton and Needingworth 9	Eastern Huntingdonshire	Medium flood risk present on the majority of the site proposed for a 'less vulnerable' use, alternative sequentially preferable sites are available. Built development is unlikely to be able to avoid medium risk flood areas. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA, 72% of site in flood zone 2, more sequentially preferable sites are available to avoid locating 'less vulnerable' development in medium risk areas.	Not allocated
CfS:90	Tir na Nog, Sawtry Way, Houghton	0.92	Houghton and Wyton 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:196	Land at New Manor Farm, Houghton and Wyton	3.3	Houghton and Wyton 2	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:183	Land off Old Houghton Road, Houghton and Wyton	3	Houghton and Wyton 4	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal, but noted that net developable area will need to be determined in collaboration with the relevant water management bodies to reflect the capacity of the river and the physical layout of any moorings, including any potential navigation issues. No responses were received to confirm the compatibility and suitability of the site so the site did not progress to assessment with the growth strategy options. The site is at high flood risk (flood zone 3b) and distance from the river to the nearest footpath is over 100m minimum, raising concerns about safe access and escape in times of flood. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:315	Land North of 6 Old Houghton Road, Hartford, Huntingdon (Houghton and Wyton)	3.2	Houghton and Wyton 5	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The council's Land Availability Assessment has been updated to correct the assessment which originally identified moorings on site. The site has been reassessed and is considered inappropriate for built development due to the significant flood risk, but could be suitable for flood mitigation and open space. Planning application 22/01460/OUT for 25 dwellings has, however been approved on the northern parcel of the site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA as it has planning permission.	Not allocated
CfS23-24291	Ruddles Lane, Wyton	28.03	Houghton and Wyton 6	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 3. However the site presents opportunities for renewable	Allocated - Houghton and Wyton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 76.3 % within flood zone one with

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					energy generation which can assist in contributing towards net zero. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to establish if development can be sequentially located outside areas at risk of flooding.	predominately low surface water risk. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 3. The site will require the sequential location of development within the site and provision of emergency plans and safe access and escape routes for the lifetime of development.
CfS:109	Land South of Meadow Lane St Ives	0.65	St Ives 3	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. However, it was also noted that integration of the site is more challenging by virtue of its edge of town location and that appropriate noise mitigation will be required to mitigate the impact of the A1123 and nearby employment uses. In addition, the site promoter states that a key constraint to development is to work with the existing tenants to find alternative locations for their businesses. No update has been provided as to when the site will become available and therefore the site did not move forward to assessment as part of the growth strategy options testing. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:95	Wyton Airfield	253.89	Wyton on the Hill 1	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 2,3 and 4. The site is previously developed land and contributes towards the Governments need to make use of previously-developed or brownfield land and the Combined Authorities ambitions in the Local Growth Plan for a North Huntingdon Growth Corridor. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development	Allocated - North Huntingdon 4. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 99% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water. The site is previously developed land and contributes towards the Governments need to make use of previously-developed or brownfield land and the Combined Authorities ambitions in the Local Growth Plan for a North Huntingdon Growth Corridor. There is nominal fluvial flood risk where development can be sequentially located away from this. The two Strategic mixed-use residential sites chosen (Wyton Airfield and Lodge Farm) align with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authorities Local Growth Plan, meaning there is more potential with these sites to leverage infrastructure to facilitate delivery of these sites as part of the wider combined authority ambition. Infrastructure Funding priorities are also under

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	development such as the new A141 allowing for greater certainty of infrastructure delivery.
CfS:47	Hungary Hall, West of A141, Wyton-on-the Hill	383.36	Wyton on the Hill 2	Eastern Huntingdonshire	The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site was progressed to level 2 SFRA . The site is at risk of emergence to both surface and subsurface assets and residual risk at this site comes from the potential blockage of several culverts beneath the B1090 road along the southwestern boundary. The site could also give rise to coalescence of proposed development at Lodge Farm which has better accessibility to services and facilities in Huntingdon and to Wyton Airfield which is preferable as being previously developed land. The Highways Agency has raised significant concerns stating development of this scale would not be acceptable without significant improvements to the road and footway/cycleway infrastructure between the site and the adjacent towns of Huntingdon and Stives. The approach road network will need to be assessed in relation to the suitability to cater for increased traffic flows. They go on to note that access via the local roads to the north would not be acceptable for a development of this scale without significant improvements to the road and footway infrastructure, which is unlikely to be achievable through Broughton Village. Local infrastructure improvements including appropriate safe crossing of the A141 /B1090	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					would also be required and it is unclear at this stage whether sufficient verge exists within the public highway to achieve facilities suitable for a development of this scale. It is not supported by the Highway Authority due to the sites unsustainable location. The site is very rural and not possible to walk or cycle to. also capacity issues in the area.	
CfS:256	Lodge Farm, North of A141, Huntingdon (Wyton on the Hill)	317.69	Wyton on the Hill 3	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site aligns with Combined Authorities ambitions in the Local Growth Plan for a North Huntingdon Growth Corridor and therefore should progress to a Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - North Huntingdon 3. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. . The site aligns with Combined Authorities ambitions in the Local Growth Plan for a North Huntingdon Growth Corridor. There is nominal fluvial flood risk and development can be sequentially located away from this. The two Strategic mixed-use residential sites chosen (Wyton Airfield and Lodge Farm) align with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authorities Local Growth Plan, meaning there is more potential with these sites to leverage infrastructure to facilitate delivery of these sites as part of the wider combined authority ambition. Infrastructure Funding priorities are also under development such as the new A141 allowing for greater certainty of infrastructure delivery.
CfS:263	Land North of Houghton Road (southern portion), St Ives (Wyton on the Hill)	14.47	Wyton on the Hill 4	Eastern Huntingdonshire	Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. This site is part of CfS: 198, which was taken forward as a draft allocation in the Preferred Options draft Local Plan as draft mixed use allocation St Ives 1.	Not allocated
CfS:198	Land to the North of Houghton Road (larger site), St Ives	23.91	Wyton on the Hill 5	Eastern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk	Allocated - St Ives 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and surface water risk is predominantly very low/low, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:153	Land off Causeway Road, Broughton	0.75	Broughton 1	North East Huntingdonshire	Site not within preferred growth option. Site not taken forward as an allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:141	Bury Industrial Estate, Old Station Road, Bury	0.96	Bury 1	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy making it one of the most preferable locations for residential development. Only four sites in Bury and Ramsey were considered appropriate for residential development within the LAA and the SA. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Bury 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and is at very low risk of flooding from surface water, therefore sequentially a preferable site.
CfS:188	Land off Cheveril Lane, Bury	6.42	Bury 2	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1 & 2. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site was put forward for open space and is therefore water compatible development. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Bury 2. The Level 2 SFRA assessed the site as 25.3 % flood zone one with predominately very low surface water risk. The site was allocated for open space and land to safeguard against flooding as allocation Bury 2.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:84	RAF Upwood - Phase 3, Bury	17.69	Bury 7	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy making it one of the most preferable locations for residential development. Only four sites in Bury and Ramsey were considered appropriate for residential development within the LAA and the SA. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Bury 3. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.
CfS:189	Land End Farm, Pidley	1.01	Pidley-cum-Fenton 2	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:190	Old Football Field, Warboys Road, Pidley	1.2	Pidley-cum-Fenton 3	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:217	Bittens Field, North of Warboys Road, Pidely	1.2	Pidley-cum-Fenton 4	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:214	Land North of Oldhurst Road, Pidley	1.62	Pidley-cum-Fenton 5	North East Huntingdonshire	The in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal originally found that the site may be appropriate for development. Comments from Cambridgeshire Highways flagged that the site appears to have insufficient frontage to the public highway to achieve an access for anything other than a single dwelling. Therefore the site was not taken forward as part of the growth strategy options testing, alternative sites Pidley 2, 3 and 4 were. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:53	Ramsey Forty Foot Village rural mooring, Ramsey Forty Foot	1.4	Ramsey 14	North East Huntingdonshire	The site is put forward for open space and moorings. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Ramsey Forty Foot 1. The Level 2 SFRA assessed the site as 31 % flood zone one with predominantly very low surface water risk . It is allocated for is allocated for leisure moorings, open space and land to safeguard against flooding which are water compatible development. Provision of safe and suitable access and escape to and from moorings and demonstration that the site can be safe for the lifetime of the development will be required.
CfS:272	Land at Bridge Farm, Ramsey Forty Foot	1.17	Ramsey 15	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2 and 3. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:271	Woodlane Farm, West of Ramsey Road, Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey	1.34	Ramsey 17	North East Huntingdonshire	Some sites were tested in Ramsey Forty Foot by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2 and 3 to identify suitability. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk and groundwater flood risk should be investigated meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Ramsey Forty Foot 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. T
CfS23-24252	Two Acre Stables, Middle Drove, Ramsey Heights	0.32	Ramsey 19	North East Huntingdonshire	High flood risk present on all of the site proposed for a 'more vulnerable' use. Built development is unlikely to be able to avoid high risk flood areas and unlikely to achieve safe access and escape routes. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:268	Land North of Hollow Lane, Ramsey	1.7	Ramsey 3	North East Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Ramsey 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.
CfS:262	Land East of Wood Lane, Ramsey	8.3	Ramsey 4	North East Huntingdonshire	The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy making it one of the most preferable locations for residential development. Only four sites in Bury and Ramsey were considered appropriate for residential development within the LAA and the SA. Surface water and ground water risk is present, however the site is 100% within flood zone 1. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated - Site was allocated in the Preferred Options Local Plan as Ramsey 3. Upon review of the concerns and objections raised to the loss of community land at Ramsey 3, the site has been removed as a draft allocation despite the rationale for allocating it being to secure the long term use of the wider site for community open space uses.
CfS:92	Land at Newtown Road, Ramsey	0.3	Ramsey 5	North East Huntingdonshire	High flood risk present on the majority of the site (flood zone 3a) proposed for a 'more vulnerable' use, alternative sequentially preferable sites are available. Built development is unlikely to be able to avoid high or medium risk flood areas. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:163	Dews Bus and Coach Depot, Chatteris Road, Somersham	2.15	Somersham 1	North East Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. A small portion of the site is identified as being at fluvial flood risk with climate change. However, the development could be sequentially located outside areas of risk. The site is also part previously developed land which the allocation of which could contribute towards the Governments requirement to make	Allocated - Somersham 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The New National Model shows the site to be at risk in the future due to climate change. In the absence of detailed modelling, the risk area should be left free of development. As the site is part previously developed land the site was put forward for allocation to satisfy the Governments requirement to make

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					use of previously-developed or brownfield land. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	use of previously-developed or brownfield land as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan as Somersham 1 and includes criteria on how to address groundwater and climate change.
CfS:184	Land South of 35 Church Street (larger site), Somersham	1.65	Somersham 10	North East Huntingdonshire	During the Autumn 2024 consultation on sites, comments were received from the Parish Council and Historic England expressing concern regarding impact on heritage assets. Following this, the site is no longer viewed as being potentially suitable for development due to impacts on heritage including the designated scheduled monument. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:339	Land to the west of Parkhall Road, College Farm, Somersham	6.33	Somersham 11	North East Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Somersham 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 2,3 and 4. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.
CfS23-24248	Pitches 5 - 8 Land of	0.4	Somersham 18	North East Huntingdonshire	High flood risk present on all of the site proposed for a 'more vulnerable' use. Built development is unlikely to be able to	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
	Chatteris Road Somersham (Legacy Park)				avoid high risk flood areas and unlikely to achieve safe access and escape routes. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-24246	Pitches 9 - 15 Land of Chatteris Road Somersham (Legacy Park)	0.25	Somersham 19	North East Huntingdonshire	High flood risk present on all of the site proposed for a 'more vulnerable' use. Built development is unlikely to be able to avoid high risk flood areas and unlikely to achieve safe access and escape routes. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:55	Somersham Town Football Club and land to the south of the Football Club, Somersham	4.4	Somersham 2	North East Huntingdonshire	In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (November 2024) and Flood Risk Assessment (November 2024) in support of their proposal. The SFRA mapping update has shown the site is now 82% in Flood Zone 3a it is therefore no longer considered appropriate for residential development in the LAA. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:107	Land North of The Pasture and South of Rectory Lane, Somersham	0.95	Somersham 3	North East Huntingdonshire	Site discounted as it has been confirmed that the site has secured planning permission planning permission on the western parcel of the site (21/02111/OUT) for 11 dwellings and associated works (all matters reserved), approved in December 2022. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:233	Land to South of College Farm, Somersham (smaller site)	1.7	Somersham 6	North East Huntingdonshire	The Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal indicate that the site is appropriate for development, this site was combined with CfS 57 to form a larger site for assessment - CfS 213 Land to the West of College Farm (larger site), Somersham. The site is assessed under CfS 213.	Not allocated
CfS:213	Land to South of College Farm (larger site), Somersham	5.62	Somersham 7	North East Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site is formed by combination of CfS 233 and CfS 57. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability	Not allocated. The site was put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan as Somersham 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. Following a review of

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cite concern regarding infrastructure capacity, cumulative impact of all draft allocations on the village, transport impacts, landscape harm and scale of the proposal, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.
CfS:270	College Farm, West of Newlands Industrial Estate, Somersham	1.8	Somersham 8	North East Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. This site is a current allocation (SM1) in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Carry forward allocation and progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Somersham 3. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.
CfS:173	Land South of 35 Church Street (smaller site), Somersham	0.44	Somersham 9	North East Huntingdonshire	Site was considered potentially appropriate for development through the LAA and SA. During the Autumn 2024 consultation on sites, comments were received from the Parish Council and Historic England expressing concern regarding impact on heritage assets. Following this, the site is no longer viewed as being potentially suitable for development due to impacts on heritage including the designated scheduled monument.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:82	RAF Upwood - Phase 4, Upwood	14	Upwood and The Raveleys 1	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2, 3 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy making it one of the most preferable locations for development. The recommendations from the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment included for consideration for employment related development to provide opportunities for expansion of established employment areas. This site is adjacent to and capable of being integrated with Established Employment Area Upwood Air Park. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Ramsey 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes about 9.2 ha of land for green infrastructure to include a mixture of strategic green space, accessible natural green space and flood mitigation.
CfS:287	Village Field, Raveley Road, Great Raveley	0.99	Upwood and The Raveleys 2	North East Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:314	Manor Farm Buildings, Church Road, Warboys	0.68	Warboys 10	North East Huntingdonshire	The Highways Authority states the site appears to have insufficient frontage to the public highway to achieve an access in accordance with DMRB/MfS requirements respecting local junction spacing and access is of insufficient width to accommodate a development of this scale without improvements which may not be achievable within the existing highway. Therefore the site is currently considered unachievable. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:85	Land off Fenton Road, Warboys	10.57	Warboys 12	North East Huntingdonshire	Site discounted. The Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal assessed the site in isolation concluding that the site may be potentially suitable. When looking at the wider context that the site sits within, it is considered that the site is detached from the main built area of Warboys which would pose challenges for safe pedestrian access across the A141 to local services and facilities for development of this scale. It is therefore not suitable for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:172	Land East of Church Road, Warboys	4.8	Warboys 4	North East Huntingdonshire	From an individual site perspective the site was considered that it may be appropriate for development however, in the context of the whole settlement it was not considered appropriate to consider as an allocation as the site is not well connected to Warboys and there are concerns regarding safe access and exit to the site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:148	Land North of Humberdale Way, Warboys	12.3	Warboys 6	North East Huntingdonshire	Although sites 'CfS104' and 'CfS148' have now been proposed as a single site, the deliverability of this site is dependent on providing appropriate access and connection to the public highways as stated by the Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority. Therefore the site is currently considered unachievable. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. A	Not allocated
CfS:152	Land West of Harris Lane, Wistow	1	Wistow 1	North East Huntingdonshire	This site has not been selected as a draft allocation. The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:106	West of Wennington Road Wennington, Abbots Ripton	1.22	Abbots Ripton 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Site discounted because it is located within an hamlet and therefore it was not tested in any of the Council's Growth Strategies due to the hamlets inherent lack of sustainability. The District's hamlets are classified together with the countryside, the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 allows for only limited and specific opportunities where development in these locations would be acceptable. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:259	Home Farm South, Abbots Ripton	2.83	Abbots Ripton 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site is at flood risk, but presents the opportunity for small scale residential and business/employment opportunities with a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. This site was the only site considered appropriate for assessment in Abbots Ripton through the LAA and the SA. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	Allocated - Abbots Ripton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 96.2 % within flood zone one with predominately very low surface water risk. It concluded that it should be appropriate to develop the majority of this site for more vulnerable purposes given a large proportion of the site is within Flood Zone 1 and that risk area should be left free of development and remain as greenspace that is allowed to flood. The site allocation requires that development is sequentially located within flood zone 1.
CfS:197	Sapley Park Garden Village	579.66	Abbots Ripton 6	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The site was considered to be less viable than other sites submitted. It has highly variable accessibility to services and facilities with the southern part being good whilst the northern parts of the site have poor accessibility and significant challenges in terms of active travel and public transport at present. Until there is greater certainty over the rerouting of the A141 (which will potentially run through the site impeding access) the ease and safety of potential connections to Huntingdon are challenging. The previous Local Plan Inspector expressed significant concern over the market absorption challenges. This site is very close to the existing strategic location of Alconbury Weald and likely to compete directly in the market. The site's proximity to Alconbury Weald also raised concern over delivery of the site which may be impacted by market absorption due to its proximity to an ongoing strategic housing scheme with the potential to slow housing delivery in the district and thus not contributing effectively to the Governments housing delivery targets. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:164	Land South of Great North Road, Alconbury	1.4	Alconbury 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where	Site allocated - Alconbury 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one with the majority of the site at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:359	Land to the East of Globe Lane (smaller site), Alconbury	3.5	Alconbury 2	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Alconbury 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the Council as part of Growth Strategies 2,3 and 4.
CfS:329	Brooklands Farm, land to the East of A1 junction 13, Alconbury	5.68	Alconbury 4	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). The site is not sustainably located close to local services and facilities or other employment uses, there are other available small scale employment sites that can meet this criteria. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:321	Land North of B1043 and East of Alconbury, Alconbury	20	Alconbury 6	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was not considered appropriate by the Highways Authority and was considered unacceptable as it does not accommodate walking or cycling. They also note that it will cause junction capacity pressures on the nearby roundabouts and junctions and that it is not clear if the north western half of the site will be connected to the south eastern half via the tree belt. If not, on the basis of the boundary line there is inadequate connection to the public highway. Therefore the site was not taken forward as a site within the growth strategy options due to these issues and is now considered inappropriate for development in the LAA. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:367	Fifty Acres, Land adjacent to Ermine Street and A1304, Alconbury	20	Alconbury 7	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site is located in proximity to Alconbury Weald. This site is very close to the existing strategic location of Alconbury Weald and likely to compete directly in the market. The site's proximity to Alconbury Weald also raised concern over delivery of the site which may be impacted by market absorption due to its proximity to an ongoing strategic housing scheme with the potential to slow housing delivery in the district and thus not contributing effectively to the Governments housing delivery targets. It was considered that development at Alconbury Weald would need to be completed before the commencement of any nearby residential allocation, therefore the site was not taken forward as a site within the growth strategy options. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:232	Land at Weybridge Farm (Brampton Cross)	378.76	Alconbury 8	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 1 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The Preferred Options draft Local Plan to 2046 focuses employment growth and opportunities around 2 strategic sites, alongside opportunities for expansion of established employment areas and sustainable locations such as market towns and service centres. This site is located away from such locations. More sequentially preferable sites have been selected for strategic employment with regards to flood risk, these are North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307 (immediately north of Huntingdon) and West of the A1 and South of Peterborough Motorway Services. These sites have also been chosen due to their locational distribution, ensuring that logistics and distribution uses spread the transport impact. In addition, the floorspace proposed for Brampton Cross would concentrate Huntingdonshire's employment need all in one location creates less opportunity for employment across the district. This is not to say that this site may not be deliverable in the future as part of the Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan. The site was not put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan due to substantial accessibility challenges both by non-car modes of travel and through the capacity of the highway network to accommodate the volume and nature of vehicles expected to be generated by the proposed scheme. Significant concerns have also been raised by the Highways Agency with the need for significant highway improvements in relation to the scale of development proposed. No access should be permitted via the A14 east bound, Woolley Hill and Woolley Road as the route is not suitable to cater for high volumes of traffic and HCVs. There are also concerns regarding sustainable travel connections to wider centres of population and the site would not be acceptable for a development of this scale without significant improvements. Natural England also raise concerns citing the need careful	

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					consideration and likely requirement for additional assessments including as downstream impacts on internationally designated sites. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:13	Land North West of Buckworth Road, Alconbury Weston	3.66	Alconbury Weston 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Alconbury Weston were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Alconbury Weston were not considered appropriate for allocation. This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk and groundwater emergence risk at significant rates meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:298	Land East of High Gables, Buckworth Road, Alconbury Weston	2.65	Alconbury Weston 2	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site was tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 3 to test an overall approach to development in Alconbury Weston. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Alconbury Weston were not considered appropriate for allocation. This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:137	48 Old Great North Road, Alconbury Weston	1	Alconbury Weston 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Alconbury Weston were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Alconbury Weston were not considered appropriate for allocation. This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk and groundwater emergence risk at significant rates meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:178	48 Old Great North Road, Alconbury Weston	1	Alconbury Weston 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Alconbury Weston were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Alconbury Weston were not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:195	Land East of Vinegar Hill, Alconbury Weston	1.6	Alconbury Weston 5	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site was tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 3 to test an overall approach to development in Alconbury Weston. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Alconbury Weston were not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:327	Land to the North of the Crossways Distribution Centre, Alconbury Hill	52.88	Alconbury Weston 6	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Site discounted. This site was originally considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. However significant objections have been raised by Natural England who state that they "object to any allocation of this land due to unacceptable risks to Monks Wood SSSI/NNR and the serious impact on internationally important long-term research carried out by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH), which would jeopardise their future plans and activities." The site is now considered inappropriate for development in the LAA. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:43	Safefield Farm, North West of Alconbury Airfield	267.55	Alconbury Weston 8	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site has not been selected as a draft allocation. It was originally considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. However significant objections have been raised by Natural England who state that they " object to any allocation of this land due to unacceptable risks to Monks Wood SSSI/NNR and the serious impact on internationally important long-term research carried out by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH), which would jeopardise their future plans and activities." National highways raised issues noting that "Development requires realignment of the A1 between Wansford Station overbridge and Elton Road (Water Newton)." which has the potential to impact viability and achievability. The site is therefore now considered inappropriate for development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS23-249	Land Northwest of Chequers Close, Alconbury Weston	0.99635	Alconbury Weston 9	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site was tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 3 to test an overall approach to development in Alconbury Weston. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Alconbury Weston were not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24310	Land at Manor Farm, Kings Ripton	0.53	Kings Ripton 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	A selection of sites were tested by the Council as part of growth strategy option 3 to provide an indication of suitability in relation to the growth strategy on a locational basis. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:11	Green End Field, Sawtry	0.62	Sawtry 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Site was progressed to level 2 SFRA as mapping indicated the site was 100% flood zone 1 with surface water flood risk. Site progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated - Updated level 1 SFRA mapping and site specific level 2 SFRA indicate site is no longer suitable for development, the site is now only 31% within flood zone 1 it is unclear how development can be located in areas at lower risk. More sequentially preferable sites are available to avoid locating 'more vulnerable' development in high and medium risk areas.
CfS:161	Land to the East of St Judith's Lane and west of Toll Bar Way and Green End	34.67	Sawtry 10	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The smaller site (CfS 155) was selected to provide an element of separation from, and to address the impact on, Judith's Lane and potential impact on Aversley Wood SSSI. Site progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated - Site discounted as the smaller site (CfS 155) was selected to provide an element of separation from, and to address the impact on, Judith's Lane and potential impact on Aversley Wood SSSI.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
	Road (larger site), Sawtry					
CfS:155	Land to the West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road (smaller site), Sawtry	18.83	Sawtry 11	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The larger version of this site (CfS 161) was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	Allocated - Sawtry 3. The larger site (CfS 161) was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 91.3% within flood zone one with low surface water risk. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. The site allocation requires built development to be located within flood zone 1 and the site area reduced. The site has the opportunity to provide betterment to flood risk through the allocation of about 3ha of open space to safeguard against flooding and to be used as a blue green corridor which can provide multiple benefits alongside flood risk, including ecological, social and amenity benefits. The final site area should be determined through a flood risk assessment taking into account all sources of flood risk now and in the future, with 3ha safeguarded land considered the minimum requirement.
CfS:338	Land to the West of Toll Bar Way and North of Whitehall Farm, Sawtry	9.04	Sawtry 12	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. This site is located on the western side of the A1(M) meaning that it is not locationally preferable and could	Not allocated - Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					contribute towards increased transport impact from commercial vehicles. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:15	Land South of Old Great North Road Industrial Estate (larger site), Sawtry	12.31	Sawtry 13	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. Of those sites that were assessed for potential allocation, this site was at a higher risk of flooding with 25% of the site being within flood zone 3b. In comparison those sites that were proposed for draft allocations were either wholly within flood zone 1 or a nominal percentage below, which would allow for the sequential location of development away from areas at flood risk. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted an Odour Report (August 2022) in support of their site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated. Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. Of those sites that were assessed for potential allocation, this site was at a higher risk of flooding with 25% of the site being within flood zone 3b. In comparison those sites that were proposed for draft allocations were either wholly within flood zone 1 or a nominal percentage below, which would allow for the sequential location of development away from areas at flood risk. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted an Odour Report (August 2022) in support of their site.
CfS:384	Land South of Old Great North Road Industrial Estate (smaller site), Sawtry	1.26	Sawtry 14	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. This site was considered more removed and isolated locationally with the chosen draft employment allocations providing a more concentrated clustering of sites. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated. Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. This site was considered more removed and isolated locationally with the chosen draft employment allocations providing a more concentrated clustering of sites.
CfS:335	Land East of B1043 and East of Keeper's Cottage, Sawtry	25.64	Sawtry 15	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. Of those sites that were assessed for potential	Not allocated. Employment development near to Sawtry was focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. The location of

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					allocation, this site was at a higher risk of flooding with only 76% of site being within flood zone 1 and the remainder in flood zones 2, 3a and 3b. The location of fluvial flood risk is such that the southern extent is severely restricted and the northern half of the site is divided by flood zone 3b raising questions as to whether a comprehensive development could be achieved. In comparison those sites that were proposed for draft allocations were either wholly within flood zone 1 or a nominal percentage below, which would allow for the sequential location of development away from areas at flood risk. This site was also considered more removed and isolated locationally with the chosen draft employment allocations providing a more concentrated clustering of sites. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	fluvial flood risk is such that the southern extent is severely restricted and the northern half of the site is divided by flood zone 3b raising questions as to whether a comprehensive development could be achieved. In comparison those sites that were proposed for draft allocations were either wholly within flood zone 1 or a nominal percentage below, which would allow for the sequential location of development away from areas at flood risk. This site was also considered more removed and isolated locationally with the chosen draft employment allocations providing a more concentrated clustering of sites.
CfS23-24188	Land off Old North Road, Sawtry	4	Sawtry 17	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 2. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The site has the opportunity to focus employment development and opportunities near to Sawtry but focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Sawtry 4 - The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% flood zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore sequentially preferable site. The site has the opportunity to focus employment development and opportunities near to Sawtry but focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses.
CfS:88	Land to the West of Glatton Road, Sawtry	12.48	Sawtry 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence	Allocated - Sawtry 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA assessment as 99.4 % within flood zone one with predominately low surface water risk. The Environment

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. The Level 2 SFRA confirms that it should be appropriate to develop the site for more vulnerable purposes should the risk areas be left as open greenspace and allowed to flood whilst accounting for climate change. The site allocation requires built development to be located within flood zone 1. The site has the opportunity to provide betterment to flood risk through the allocation of about 2ha of open space to safeguard against flooding and to be used as a blue green corridor which can provide multiple benefits alongside flood risk, including ecological, social and amenity benefits, the final site area should be determined through a flood risk assessment taking into account all sources of flood risk now and in the future, with 2ha safeguarded land considered the minimum requirement.
CfS:52	Land East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate, Sawtry	6.5	Sawtry 4	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22	Allocated - Sawtry 2. The site is 82.4 % flood zone one with a low to medium risk of surface water risk. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					October 2025) states that “you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding.” The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. The Level 2 SFRA confirms that it should be appropriate to develop the site for more vulnerable purposes should the risk areas be left as open greenspace and allowed to flood whilst accounting for climate change. The site has the opportunity to provide betterment to flood risk through the allocation of about 1ha of open space to safeguard against flooding and to be used as a blue green corridor which can provide multiple benefits alongside flood risk, including ecological, social and amenity benefits, this should be determined through a flood risk assessment taking into account all sources of flood risk now and in the future, with 1ha safeguarded land considered the minimum requirement.
CfS:330	Glebe Farm, Sawtry	48.87	Sawtry 6	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site now has a conservation covenant on it which means biodiversity net gain credits can be purchased from the site as off-site credits for development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:380	Land at Little Common Farm, Sawtry	14.56	Sawtry 7	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The site has the opportunity to focus employment development and opportunities near to Sawtry but focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. The	Allocated - Sawtry 5. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 98.6 % within flood zone one with predominately low surface water risk. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that “you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding.” The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. The Level 2 SFRA notes that this site is not required to pass part b) of the exception test as the development proposed is less vulnerable. It must still be proven that the development can be safe for its lifetime, which is 75 years for non-residential development.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	It must also be made clear that this site cannot be developed until the required information from the Middle Level Catchwater Drain and Black Horse Drain are fully ascertained. The site allocation will require built development to be located within flood zone 1. The site has the opportunity to provide betterment to flood risk through the allocation of about 2.5ha of open space to safeguard against flooding and to be used as a blue green corridor which can provide multiple benefits alongside flood risk, including ecological, social and amenity benefits, the final site area should be determined through a flood risk assessment taking into account all sources of flood risk now and in the future, with 2ha safeguarded land considered the minimum requirement. The site will require modelling of Middle Level Catchwater Drain and allow for maintenance and mitigation and development must not commence until this is resolved.
CfS:385	Land North of Black Horse Industrial Estate (smaller site), Sawtry	1.35	Sawtry 9	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. The site has the opportunity to focus employment development and opportunities near to Sawtry but focussed on the eastern side of the A1(M) to avoid adverse impact on additional traffic as a result of commercial operations on the village of Sawtry and to encourage comprehensive development and expansion of established employment areas and to maximise the benefits of the clustering of businesses. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a	Allocated - Sawtry 6. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 96.6 % within flood zone one with predominantly low surface water risk and therefore falls within the second most sequentially preferable site category. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 2,3 and 4. The site was put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. The Level 2 SFRA notes that this site is not required to pass part b) of the exception test

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Therefore, in cases where the proportion of the site at flood risk is small, a sequential approach at the site level would be appropriate and enable development to be located in areas of low risk of flooding. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine if development can be sequentially located outside of areas at flood risk.	as the development proposed is less vulnerable. It must still be proven that the development can be safe for its lifetime, which is 75 years for non-residential development. It must also be made clear that this site cannot be developed until the required information from the Middle Level Catchwater Drain and Black Horse Drain are fully ascertained. The allocation requires built development to be located outside areas of flood risk and that development cannot be commenced until modelling Middle Level Catchwater Drain and Black Horse Drain to evaluate current and future fluvial and surface water flood risk is completed and mitigated. The site will require about 0.3ha open space to safeguard against flood risk along Middle Level Catchwater Drain and allow for maintenance.
CfS:86	Land at Thrapston Road, Spaldwick	2.83	Spaldwick 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Over half the site is at fluvial flood risk, more sequentially preferable site are available. In the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoters commented wishing to clarify the proposed site area for development. They confirm it should be 2.04ha rather than 2.83ha and the capacity calculations should be adjusted as a result. This has resulted in a slight reduction in the commercial floorspace that could be delivered on site as set out above (down to 4,284sqm from 5,943sqm). Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:351	Rear of Manor Farmyard, Spaldwick	1.5	Spaldwick 2	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Over three quarters of the site is at risk of fluvial flood risk, more sequentially preferable sites are available. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:353	Church Field, Spaldwick	3.4	Spaldwick 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Concern over the impact on the character of the area (including views to the church) which would not be the case with the CfS 305. The Growth Strategy allows for limited development in Local Services Villages, therefore CfS 305 is a more preferable development within Spaldwick, being located next to a primary school and near to services and facilities. Site not Progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:305	Land to East of Stow Road, Spaldwick	6.1	Spaldwick 4	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Spaldwick 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% flood zone one, with surface water flood risk to the site predominantly very low.
CfS23-24285	Land South of the A14, Spaldwick (modest employment)	1.67	Spaldwick 5	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Updates to SFRA mapping demonstrate that the risk of flooding has increased since the initial assessment. More than 99% of the site is now at risk of fluvial flooding, and the majority of the site is also at high risk from surface water flooding. More sequentially preferable sites are available. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24284	Land South of the A14, Spaldwick (modest residential)	0.98	Spaldwick 6	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Updates to SFRA mapping demonstrate that the risk of flooding has increased since the initial assessment. More than 99% of the site is now at risk of fluvial flooding, and the majority of the site is also at high risk from surface water flooding. More sequentially preferable sites are available. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24286	Land South of the A14, Spaldwick (larger scale residential)	7.75	Spaldwick 7	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Updates to SFRA mapping demonstrate that the risk of flooding has increased since the initial assessment. More than half of the site is now at risk of fluvial flooding concentrated in the northern half with the potential to make safe access and escape problematic. More sequentially preferable sites are available. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24322	Land to the South of High Street, Spaldwick	0.83	Spaldwick 8	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Updated level 1 SFRA mapping and site specific level 2 SFRA indicate that site is no longer suitable for development. More sequentially preferable sites are available to avoid locating 'more vulnerable' development in high and medium risk areas. This site is 19% Flood Zone one with the remaining site within flood zones 2 and 3a and surface water risk predominantly high. The site was not put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan due to significant flood risk. Site progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:77	Land North East of Ermine Street (adjoining Huntingdon)	33.96	The Stukeleys 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site is included within the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan within the chapter 'North Huntingdon Growth Cluster Opportunity Zones' as an existing commitment. An outline planning application (reference 20/00847/OUT) was submitted on 6th May 2020 which is awaiting a decision as of September 2025 once issues with Anglian Water are resolved. The site retains the principle of the site being appropriate for development in case works have not started before this Local Plan is adopted.	Site is allocated in the currently local plan to 2036 and has been included in the Local Plan to 2046 to outline its existing commitment and is identified as North Huntingdon Existing 2: Ermine Street
CfS:36	Nook Farm, Little Stukeley	375.77	The Stukeleys 2	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	Site discounted. The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 1. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The site is the least sequentially preferable strategic site when considering flood risk and the Huntingdonshire Transport Strategy ranks the site as one of the least accessible. The site's proximity to Alconbury Weald also raised concern over delivery of the site which may be impacted by market absorption due to its proximity to an ongoing strategic housing scheme with the potential to slow housing delivery in the district and thus not contributing effectively to the Governments housing delivery targets. Site did not progress to level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:28	Land between 76 and 86 Owl End, Great Stukeley	0.3	The Stukeleys 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1, 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source and preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site meets this criteria. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - The Stukeleys 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as a site at nominal risk. The site is 100% Flood Zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on surface water.
CfS:221	Land North of A141, between Huntingdon Racecourse and A1307	103.58	The Stukeleys 5	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2, 3 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and has the opportunity to provide sustainably located employment opportunities in close proximity to employment and residential areas. The site is 94.5% within flood zone 1. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can	Allocated - North Huntingdon 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 93 % within flood zone one with predominately very low surface water risk. The site is for less vulnerable use. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. The Level 2 SFRA notes that it should be appropriate to develop this site for more vulnerable purposes given its location within Flood Zone 1 and nominal surface water flood risk. The site was allocation includes criteria on the

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Progress to Level 2 SFRA. to assess if development can be sequentially located outside areas of flood risk.	sequential location of development within flood zone 1 and provision of a flood risk assessment and detailed drainage strategy. The site has outline planning permission - 25/01922/OUT .
CfS:276	Huntingdon Racecourse	69	The Stukeleys 6	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1 and 2, it is previously developed land. The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. It presents the opportunity redevelop previously developed land and contribute towards the Governments need to make use of previously-developed or brownfield land whilst decreasing flood risk through redevelopment. The site has the opportunity to enhance facilities, employment and job opportunities at Huntingdon Racecourse an increase the viability and vitality of an important economic and tourism location within the District. It will support the continued use of the site for the racecourse, equine support facilities and Huntingdon and District Rugby Football Club. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - North Huntingdon 1. The site is 80 % in flood zone 3b with predominately low surface water risk. The site includes criteria for a development strategy that seeks to sequentially locate development and relocate existing uses to lower flood risk parts of the site wherever possible in order to reduce overall exposure to flood risk.
CfS:34	Land to South West of South Farm, Upton	0.39	Upton and Coppingford 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1, 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source and	Allocated - Upton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on flood risk.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site meets this criteria. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-2420	Land at Christ's College Farm, Upton	0.41	Upton and Coppingford 3	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). A more sequentially preferable site has been chosen in Upton 'CfS34' which has less flood risk.	Not allocated
CfS:299	Land adjacent Winwick Village Hall, Thurning Road, Winwick	0.6	Winwick 1	Northern Central Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not Progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24298	Land North Of 23 To 33 Oundle Road, Alwalton (larger site)	12.9	Alwalton 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site has the benefit of being an extension to Peterborough providing access to substantial services and facilities. Built development on this site has the potential to be located within areas not at flood risk, with the extended	Site was allocated in the Preferred Options Local Plan as Alwalton 1. Following a review of comments received from residents, stakeholders and neighbouring authorities, who cite concern regarding heritage, transport impacts and

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					site providing additional opportunities for flood mitigation associated with the River Nene and flood betterment. It is recommended that this site progresses to a Level 2 SFRA.	scale of the proposal, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.
CfS:209	Land West of A1 (North of Peterborough Motorway Services) - Option A, (larger site) Haddon	89.05	Chesterton 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The site was promoted variously for employment and for residential led development and tested for residential through the Strategic Transport Study. This identified that the site has poor accessibility for pedestrians in particular. As Part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated.. The Highways Authority raised significant concerns saying that the site is likely to require significant highways improvements due to scale and that it is unclear how sustainable travel links can be achieved on the A605 across the A1 to link to Peterborough. National Highways also raised significant concerns noting that J17 A1(M) is a potential crash cluster, therefore safety improvements may be required. The site was not put forward for allocation as part of Huntingdonshire's Preferred Options Local Plan due to high and/or medium risk from surface water sources and groundwater flood risk, particularly emergence to subsurface assets. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS23-2414	Chesterton Garden Village	128.132	Chesterton 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 1 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The site is at risk of groundwater emergence to both surface and subsurface assets and has limited accessibility by active travel. Site was progressed to level 2 SFRA. As part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated. Other concerns from statutory consultees are from the Highways Authority who note that significant highway improvements are required, due to scale and that it is unclear if a corridor linking the site to Oundle Road can be achieved across the A1 to link the development with Peterborough. As the site is on the wrong side of the A1 it would be very reliant on vehicles and there are existing issues with bridge over A1. Historic England raised concerns about the nearby (metres away) grade I listed church. There are potential adverse impact on the extensive scheduled monument of the Roman Town of Durobrivae located just 80 metres to the north of the site boundary. They also have considerable concerns about this site as a potential site allocation. A detailed heritage impact assessment would be needed to assess this and determine whether the site is suitable and if it is to make clear recommendations for protection, enhancement	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					of the heritage assets and appropriate mitigation for any impacts. Highways England note that the junction is a potential crash cluster area therefore might need to consider safety improvement.	
CfS23-24296	Bottom Lodge Farm / Land at A1 West (North)	115	Chesterton 3	Northern Huntingdonshire	Site discounted. The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 1 and 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. As part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated. Site did not progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:382	Land West of Conington Airfield	9.63	Conington 3	Northern Huntingdonshire	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal indicate that the site is inappropriate for development as it would not support sustainable place-making. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation the site promoter confirmed that it is intended this site will offset any development coming forward on their other proposed development sites. However, due to the nature of the site 'Priority Habitat – Deciduous Woodland', biodiversity net gain enhancements may not be achievable due to the high level of biodiversity already present on site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:58	Land between Middle Street and Highgate Green, Elton	0.5	Elton 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	CfS 58 was proposed for natural green and open space uses. As it is currently a green space it is not considered that allocation is required as its use will be protected through complementary planning policies in the local plan such as "Protecting our open spaces, outdoor sport and recreational facilities"	Not allocated
CfS:59	Land between Duck Street and Wansford Road, Elton	2.78	Elton 5	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:30	Land West of Peterborough Road and North of Grazeley Gardens, Farcet	8.74	Farcet 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 1. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted a Vision document in support of their site setting out proposed layout, uses and mitigations. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:108	Land West of Peterborough Road and South of Grazeley Gardens, Farcet	8.3	Farcet 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal note that it is significantly constrained by fluvial flooding with the majority of the site within flood zone 2 and 3a. The site was also put forward by a third party for proposed open space uses which the Council considered would be appropriate, however as this use was not put	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					forward by the landowner, this proposed use is considered unachievable. The third party also proposed cemetery or parking uses the former of which is incompatible with the level of flood risk on the site and the latter was not put forward by the landowner rendering this proposed use is considered unachievable. The LAA and SA originally found that the site may be appropriate for development, but did raise concerns regarding point of access and road network capacity. Comments from Cambridgeshire Highways flagged the site as inappropriate for development due to no connection to the public highway, Haddon Way. They also noted that Haddon Way is insufficient in width meaning that improvements may not be achievable to facilitate access. They also raised concerns regarding the possibility for junction capacity issues. The site is therefore now considered inappropriate for development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:149	Land East of Peterborough Road, Farcet (cross boundary site with Peterborough City Council)	47.84	Farcet 3	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategies 1 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted a revised planning statement which set out a reduced proposal of up to 200 dwellings, a local centre and access from Peterborough Road. They state the site will also solely be within Huntingdonshire District Council's authority area but no amended location plan was received. The statement also included pre-application advice that has been sought from the Local Authority, LLFA and County Highways. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. The	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:177	Former PH Plant Hire and 9 Cross Street, Farcet	0.63	Farcet 4	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site has not been selected as a draft allocation as planning permission (23/02383/FUL) has been secured for the demolition of existing commercial buildings and erection of 17 dwellings including public open space, approved in May 2024. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:132	Land off Hawthorn Road, Folksworth (smaller site)	1.87	Folksworth and Washingley 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:130	Land adjacent A1 at Norman Cross, Folksworth	11.47	Folksworth and Washingley 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	Site discounted. The Preferred Options draft Local Plan to 2046 focuses employment growth and opportunities around 2 strategic sites, alongside opportunities for expansion of established employment areas and sustainable locations such as market towns and service centres. This site is located away from such locations with the nearest settlement - Stilton' classified as a Local services Village. Site did not progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-245	Hawthorn/Manor Road, Folksworth (larger site)	3.15659	Folksworth and Washingley 4	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site has not been selected as a draft allocation. The smaller site (Folksworth and Washingley 1: Land off Hawthorn Road, Folksworth -smaller site) was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3 which includes land within this site and therefore provides an indication of suitability in relation to the growth strategy on a locational and capacity basis. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:193	Land south of Great Gidding Village Hall, Great Gidding	0.667	Great Gidding 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA, or tested through the Councils Growth Strategy Option as the site located away from main built area of Great Gidding and therefore not considered as sustainably located as other village sites put forward.	Not allocated
CfS:307	Orchard Field Allotment, Haddon Road, Haddon	0.32	Haddon 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site has not been selected as a draft allocation because it is located within an hamlet and therefore it was not tested in any of the Council's Growth Strategies due to the hamlets inherent lack of sustainability. The District's hamlets are classified together with the countryside, the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 allows for only limited and specific opportunities where development in these locations would be acceptable. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:206	Land West of A1 (North of Peterborough Motorway Services) - Option B (smaller site), Haddon	45.97	Haddon 4	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site is 100% Flood Zone one and therefore a sequentially preferable site. The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The site was promoted variously for employment and for residential led development and tested for residential through the Strategic Transport Study. This identified that the site has poor accessibility for pedestrians in particular. As part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated. The Highways Authority Raised significant concerns noting that the site is likely to require significant highways improvements due to scale, and that it is unclear how sustainable travel links can be achieved on the A605 across the A1 to link to Peterborough. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:212	Land at A1 West (South) - South of Peterborough Motorway Services, Haddon	48.24	Haddon 5	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested in Growth Strategy Option 1. The Economic and Employment Needs Assessment recommends the allocation of at least 1 strategic employment site for strategic scale logistics in a few optimal nodes. This site is appropriately located on the A1(M) providing quick access to the Strategic Road Network. Progress to Level 2 SFRA	Allocated - Peterborough Services 1. The Level 2 SFRA assessed the site as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.
CfS:157	Land at Church Street/Short Drove, Holme	1.1	Holme 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	A number of sites in Holme were tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 1,2 & 3 to assess suitability. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with low risk of surface water flood risk meaning it could meet the criteria for consideration. However, site 'CfS 23-243 ' also met this criteria and was sequentially more preferable.	
CfS23-243	Land to North of Station Road, Holme	2.90073	Holme 5	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 1,2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was at the lowest flood risk of all sites in Holme that could potentially meet this criteria for consideration and therefore it is recommended that this site progresses to a Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Holme 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on flood risk.
CfS:348	Sibson Garden Community	260.9	Sibson Stington 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	The Council received a number of strategic sites that were submitted for consideration as for allocation in the Local Plan. These sites were tested as part of 4 strategic growth options. This site was tested through strategic Growth Option 1 and progressed to level 2 SFRA The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study,	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. There is a significant hazard posed by the ordinary watercourses culverted underneath the A1. The site was also scrutinised through the Strategic Transport Study and Viability Assessments which identified that it has poor accessibility and that the mitigation required to the A1 to provide access would not be viable for the proposed development. As part of Duty to Cooperate meetings Peterborough City Council raised significant concerns relating to this site and the impact on the transport network and Oundle Road specifically and the inability of the road network into Peterborough to accommodate the extra traffic likely to be generated. . The Highways Agency also raised significant concerns saying that the site is likely to require significant highways improvements due to scale and that Elton Road is not suitable for connection or intensification without significant improvement. They noted that it is unclear whether suitable improvement could be achieved along its entire length within existing highway or land in the applicant's control. They continued that, this road also joins with the A1 at its northern extent; the existing junction is again unlikely to be suitable without significant improvement and would need to be discussed with National Highway. As there are limited sustainable connections to Peterborough, given the remote location of this site and existing infrastructure crossing the A1, it is unclear how this would be achieved. The Whole Plan Viability Assessment also demonstrates the site to be the most unviable of all sites put forward.	
CfS:51	Goldthorns, Stilton	0.48	Stilton 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategies 2 and 3. Sites 'Stilton 2: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese, Inn, Stilton' and 'Stilton 5: Land rear of 16 to 58 North Street, Stilton' were selected as draft allocations for the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 as they	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					were considered to be locationally preferable due to being infill development within the built area of Stilton and in proximity to local services and facilities whilst this site is located within open countryside. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:165	Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese Inn	0.44	Stilton 2	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. This site is one of two sites in Stilton which are located within the built area with immediate access to services and facilities. Other sites put forward within Stilton were on the edge of the settlement with lesser accessibility to services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA	Allocated - Stilton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.
CfS:131	Land off High Street, Stilton	2.6	Stilton 3	Northern Huntingdonshire	The Growth Strategy allows for limited development in Local Services Villages Sites 'CfS 165: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese, Inn, Stilton' and 'CfS 186: Land rear of 16 to 58 North Street, Stilton' were selected as draft allocations for the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 as they were considered to be locationally preferable due to being infill development within the built area of Stilton and in proximity to local services and facilities whilst this site is located within open countryside. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:142	Land off Caldecote Road, Stilton	7.8	Stilton 4	Northern Huntingdonshire	Sites 'Stilton 2: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese, Inn, Stilton' and 'Stilton 5: Land rear of 16 to 58 North Street, Stilton' were selected as draft allocations for the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 as they were considered to be locationally preferable due to being infill development within the built area of Stilton and in proximity to local services and facilities whilst this site is located within open countryside. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:186	Land rear of 16 to 58 North Street, Stilton	2.98	Stilton 5	Northern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. This site is one of two sites in Stilton which are located within the built area with immediate access to services and facilities. They are contiguous sites. This site in particular is also a continuation of a recently built scheme with access already in place. Other sites put forward within Stilton were on the edge of the settlement with lesser accessibility to services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA	Allocated - Stilton 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within Flood Zone one and therefore a sequentially preferable site. Surface water risk is very low/low on 50% of the site. The site allocation will provide surface water mitigation.
CfS23-2412	Land to the South and West of 61 Church Street, Stilton	2.43078	Stilton 6	Northern Huntingdonshire	The Growth Strategy allows for limited development in Local Services Villages Sites 'CfS 165: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese, Inn, Stilton' and 'CfS 186: Land rear of 16 to 58 North Street, Stilton' were selected as draft allocations for the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 as they were considered to be locationally preferable due to being infill development within the built area of Stilton and in proximity to local services and facilities whilst this site is located within open countryside. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:18	Eagle Business Park, Phase 3, Yaxley	16	Yaxley 1	Northern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1,2 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site was put forward for a less vulnerable use with no reasonably alternative sites available for the local employment in a sustainable location close to existing residential development in Yaxley. The site presents an opportunity for expansion of an established employment area. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Yaxley 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 88 % within flood zone one with 3% flood zone 2, 5% flood zone 3a and 1 % 3b running along the eastern boundary with predominately low surface water risk. Flood risk from the site is predominantly from tidal sources. The site was put forward for a less vulnerable use with no reasonably alternative sites available for local employment in a sustainable location close to existing residential development in Yaxley. The site presents an opportunity for expansion of an established employment area. Less vulnerable uses are compatible with flood zones 2 and 3a. The findings of the SFRA level 2 note that the nominal area of functional floodplain onsite should not trigger the exception test nor negate any development plans. Development will be required be located away from the eastern edge of the site.
CfS:273	Land South of Main Street, Yaxley	3.52	Yaxley 3	Northern Huntingdonshire	Significant concerns were raised at local exhibitions and in response to the consultation regarding significant flooding and drainage issues being experienced across Yaxley. It was therefore deemed inappropriate to carry forward any residential led allocations at this time. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:228	Folly Farm, London Road, Yaxley	4.6	Yaxley 4	Northern Huntingdonshire	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the LAA and SFRA indicate that the site is inappropriate for development of housing through the Council's Land Availability Assessment as it was considered important to support the proposed neighbouring land uses and to reduce coalescence between Yaxley and Great Haddon. The site progressed to sustainability appraisal on the basis of assessment as open space and biodiversity net gain opportunities, where it was considered suitable. However, the land was not put forward for this use and therefore development as open space was not considered achievable. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter commented that if residential development does not occur, the equestrian use is likely to continue. They also	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					state the site does not contain any agricultural structures and is entirely previously developed land. All relevant planning application documents, including a letter addressing perceived coalescence, have been submitted. The planning application on site was refused but is now awaiting the outcome of a Public Inquiry. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-241	Land South of 25 West End, Yaxley	5.99507	Yaxley 7	Northern Huntingdonshire	Significant concerns were raised at local exhibitions and in response to the consultation regarding significant flooding and drainage issues being experienced across Yaxley. It was therefore deemed inappropriate to carry forward any residential led allocations at this time. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:21	Land at Potton Road (Rectory Farm), Eynesbury Hardwick, St Neots	53	Abbotsley 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted additional documents and plans in support of their proposal. As identified in the capacity calculation for the site, the capacity is indicative and subject to review based on further information on potential routes for East West Rail. Since the Council's Land Availability Assessment was undertaken, the site is now not considered suitable for development in the short to medium term as the East West Rail safeguarded route runs through the site currently limiting development. Availability of land for development is therefore unknown. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:208	Land East of Wintringham Park, St Neots	54.47	Abbotsley 2	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Since the Land Availability Assessment was undertaken, the site is now not considered suitable for development in the short to medium term as the East West Rail safeguarded route runs through the site currently limiting development.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Availability of land for development is therefore unknown. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:253	Land East of St Neots	31	Abbotsley 3	Southern Huntingdonshire	It was potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Since the LAA was undertaken, the site is now not considered suitable for development in the short to medium term as the East West Rail safeguarded route runs through the site currently limiting development. Availability of land for development is therefore unknown. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:103	Pear Tree Solar Farm, Abbotsley	72	Abbotsley 4	Southern Huntingdonshire	Site discounted as it has been confirmed that the site has secured planning permission for the Erection of a Solar Photovoltaic Farm through application 23/01507/FUL which was approved on 31 January 2025 and therefore does not require allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:278	North of Wintringham Hall, Cambridge Road, St Neots	19	Abbotsley 5	Southern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). However, the site is in close proximity to a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy and has the opportunity to provide local employment opportunities in a highly sustainable location. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Site allocated - Abbotsley 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site.
CfS:143	Cell Energy, Vicarage Lane, Diddington	47.17	Diddington 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	It was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					However, this site has a planning application 23/00258/FUL for the installation of solar photovoltaic park which is currently pending consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:257	Land West of West Street, Great Gransden	4.4	Great Gransden 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	It was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. However the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan has identified the site as part of the Gransden Brook Corridor. Policy G6 of the neighbourhood plan identifies this area as an opportunity to restore or enhance existing ecological network access. It is therefore now considered inappropriate for development due to potential ecological impact. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:249	Land West of Eltisley Road, Great Gransden	0.7	Great Gransden 2	Southern Huntingdonshire	The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. The site is removed from the main built up area of Great Gransden, other village sites chosen are more sustainably located.	Not allocated
CfS:202	Land South of Caxton Road, Great Gransden	1.8	Great Gransden 3	Southern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). However,	Allocated - Great Gransden 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The allocation includes criteria to address flood risk.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					this site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. This site presents the opportunity for the expansion for an established employment area 'Sand Road Industrial Estate' which will facilitate increased employment opportunities within a Local Services Village. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-24234	Land adjacent to Meadow Road and Hall Farm Road, Great Gransden	1.93	Great Gransden 6	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy option 1, 2, 3 and 4. It was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. However, during the consultation on additional sites in the Spring of 2025, additional evidence was provided that demonstrated the site is subject to a restrictive covenant which limits the site to agricultural use up to 2047. The site is therefore not immediately available for development without amending this covenant. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA	Not allocated
CfS:14	West of High Street, Great Paxton	0.5	Great Paxton 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain	Allocated - Great Paxton 1. The site is 100% Flood Zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1,2 and 3.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site meets this criteria Level 2 SFRA not required. Most sequentially preferable site (Strategic Recommendation A).	
CfS:309	Land to the West of High Street, Great Paxton	1.12	Great Paxton 2	Southern Huntingdonshire	The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). More sequentially preferable site in Great Paxton Allocated (CfS14) which has very low flood risk now and in the future. This site has medium fluvial risk and groundwater and reservoir risk making it less sequentially preferable. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:368	Land East of Dovecote Lane, Great Paxton	0.47	Great Paxton 3	Southern Huntingdonshire	It was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Comments from the Highways Authority note that the site does not appear to have sufficient frontage to the public highway to achieve an access in accordance with DMRB/MfS requirements meaning achievability of the site may be compromised. It was therefore not taken forward for testing as part of the growth strategy options. In addition the site was assessed as having high fluvial flood risk. More sequentially preferable sites were available in Great Paxton. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:302	Land North of Harley Industrial Park, Paxton	3.6	Great Paxton 4	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 3 and 4, but has been included for consideration for employment related development to provide opportunities for expansion of established employment areas as per the	Allocated - Great Paxton 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site will to

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
	Hill, Great Paxton				recommendations of the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	provide opportunities for local employment expansion and job opportunities in an established employment location.
CfS:78	Land North of St James Road, Little Paxton	1.3	Little Paxton 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Little Paxton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as a site at nominal risk. The site is 100% flood zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.
CfS:203	Land West of Little Paxton	20.36	Little Paxton 2	Southern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Little Paxton 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. The site allocation includes criteria on how to address groundwater.
CfS:331	Midloe Grange Farm, Midloe	20.26	Southoe and Midloe 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site now has a conservation covenant on it which means biodiversity net gain credits can be purchased from the site	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					as off-site credits for development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-24237	Land North of Rectory Lane, Southoe	0.38	Southoe and Midloe 4	Southern Huntingdonshire	It was considered potentially appropriate for development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. Comments from the Highways Authority note that the site does not appear to have sufficient frontage to the public highway to achieve an access in accordance with DMRB/MfS requirements meaning achievability of the site may be compromised. It was therefore not taken forward for testing as part of the growth strategy options. In addition the site was assessed as having high fluvial flood risk. More sequentially preferable sites were available in Great Paxton. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:239	Land North of Priory Park, St Neots	89	St Neots 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	It was considered inappropriate for built development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal as it would not support sustainable place-making. High/medium fluvial flood risk is present on the site. In addition, the achievability of the development is unclear because of the presence of overhead powerlines, odour and flood mitigation, noise and vibrational mitigation resultant from proximity to the railway line. It was however considered that it may be appropriate for green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and potential extension to Priory Park subject to provision of safe crossing(s). In response to the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter submitted several documents in support of their site. While these technical documents provide some further information and clarification on some of the issues identified in bringing forward this site including those related to flooding, connectivity, odour, landscape and utilities, the fundamental issues and constraints that impact the site have not been overcome. Therefore, the site is still considered to be inappropriate for built development but green infrastructure and biodiversity	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					uses are still supported. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:317	Land South West of Potton Road, Eynesbury, St Neots	3.87	St Neots 6	Southern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,& 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - St Neots 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore a sequentially preferable site. T
CfS:362	Land North East of Wintringham, St Neots	0.3	St Neots 7	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was put forward for multiple uses. It was considered inappropriate for built development through the in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal as amenity levels would be inadequate. During the Autumn 2024 consultation, the site promoter commented stating that St Neots 7 is now in the same ownership as St Neots 8 (Urban and Civic) so can be considered together and which can allow for improved access options. Access to the site by vehicle in a safe manner was also considered a barrier to the safety of road users and pedestrians if residential or commercial options were chosen due to proximity to the roundabout. Commercial uses were considered potentially appropriate however access remains an issue and therefore the site was not taken forward for testing as part of the growth strategy options. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:16	Land East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm Extension), St Neots	99.55	St Neots 8	Southern Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2,3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Market Town, the most sustainable of settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - St Neots 1. The site was assessed in the level 2 SFRA as within 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is considered a sequentially preferable site.
CfS23-24239	Land between the West Lodge and Home Farm, Waresley	1.6	Waresley Town 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 1,2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This could potentially meet this criteria for consideration and therefore it is recommended that this site progresses to a Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Waresley 1. The site was tested in the Level 2 SFRA as a nominal risk site. The assessment concluded that the site is 100% within flood zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. .

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:269	Land West of Manor Farm, Yelling	1.09	Yelling 1	Southern Huntingdonshire	Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation	Not allocated
CfS:310	Land North and East of Hill Place, Brington	0.98	Brington and Molesworth 3	Western Huntingdonshire	This site has not been selected as a draft allocation. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-24304	Land at High Street, Brington	1.76	Brington and Molesworth 4	Western Huntingdonshire	During the consultation on additional sites in the Spring of 2025, the site promoter withdrew the site. It therefore will not be considered further.	Not allocated
CfS:98	Land West of Warren Lane, Bythorn	0.5	Bythorn and Keyston 1	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 1,2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered appropriate for allocation.	Site was allocated in the Preferred Options Local Plan as Bythorn 1. The Parish council stated preference for an alternative allocation at Home Farm because it has an existing access, is more centrally located in the village and could offer a high quality heritage lead redevelopment of the site. The site has been removed as a draft allocation.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was at the lowest flood risk of all sites in Bythorn that could potentially meet this criteria for consideration and therefore it is recommended that this site progresses to a Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:158	Land South West Of Old Toll Bar House Toll Bar Lane, Keyston	3	Bythorn and Keyston 2	Western Huntingdonshire	The Highways Agency noted that Toll Bar Lane appears to be around 130m in length, between the A14 and the bend. There is a road safety risk heading north with the potential for overtaking slow moving vehicles risking head on collisions or rear end shunts as commercial vehicles turn into the site. Due to these serious concerns the site was therefore considered inappropriate for development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:111	Home Farm, Bythorn	0.98	Bythorn and Keyston 3	Western Huntingdonshire	The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Bythorn 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone 1, surface water risk to the site is predominantly very low. It is currently built development with the opportunity for residential conversion and residential development.
CfS:113	Land East of Clack Lane, Bythorn	0.33	Bythorn and Keyston 5	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options, however a handful of sites within Bythorn were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option	Not allocated - This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk and groundwater risk meaning it did not meet the criteria

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with high to medium risk of surface water flood risk and groundwater risk meaning it did not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	for consideration. More locationally sequentially preferable site selected – CfS 111.
CfS:12	Fruit Field opposite Victory Playing Field, Catworth	2.12	Catworth 1	Western Huntingdonshire	Preferred draft allocations within villages will only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). Site progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Catworth 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% within flood zone 1, surface water risk to the site is predominantly very low.
CfS:64	Land West of Catworth	0.83	Catworth 2	Western Huntingdonshire	The Highways Authority raised significant concerns in relation to the narrow road and the feasibility of providing carriageway widening to accommodate two way traffic and suitable access. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:63	Land South of A14, Catworth	6.73	Catworth 3	Western Huntingdonshire	The Highways Agency noted that the suitability of the approach road network will need to be assessed in relation to the suitability to cater specifically for HCVs, as no further information was submitted the site was not progressed. The Preferred Options draft Local Plan to 2046 focuses employment growth and opportunities around 2 strategic sites, alongside opportunities for expansion of established employment areas and sustainable locations such as market towns and service centres. This site is located away from such locations. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:17	Land East of Fox Road, Catworth	8.2	Catworth 4	Western Huntingdonshire	The in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal noted that the site is inappropriate for built development as it would not support sustainable place-making and has limited potential for open space uses such as biodiversity net gain in the south eastern and northern portions of the site in conjunction with existing areas of trees at The Grange and Little Wood. The site was put forward for multiple uses and therefore the final intention for the site is currently unknown and thus achievability of providing open space and biodiversity net gain. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. The in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal noted that the site is inappropriate for built development as it would not support sustainable place-making and has limited potential for open space uses such as biodiversity net gain in the south eastern and northern portions of the site in conjunction with existing areas of trees at The Grange and Little Wood. The site was put forward for multiple uses and therefore the final intention for the site is currently unknown and thus achievability of providing open space and biodiversity net gain.
CfS:356	Land West of Fox Road, Catworth	5.8	Catworth 5	Western Huntingdonshire	The in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal noted that the site is inappropriate for built development but has potential to accommodate a variety of open space uses and biodiversity net gain which should be restricted to the southern portion of the site which could be laid out to relate to the physical form of the existing village. The site was put forward for multiple uses and therefore the final intention for the site is currently unknown and thus achievability of providing open space and biodiversity net gain. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:358	Triangular land South of Church End, Catworth	2.9	Catworth 6	Western Huntingdonshire	The in-combination outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal noted that the site is inappropriate for built development, but has the potential as a biodiversity net gain site. The site has the potential to come forward outside the Local Plan process for open space/or biodiversity net gain. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:35	Land west of Grafham Road Ellington	1.87	Ellington 3	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3, however a handful of sites within Ellington were also tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with low risk of surface water flood risk meaning it could meet the criteria for consideration. Progress to Level 2 SFRA	Site allocated - Ellington 2. The Level 2 SFRA found the site to be 100% within flood zone one with surface water flood risk predominantly very low.
CfS23-2421	Old Sheds at Manor Farm	2	Ellington 4	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options , however a handful of sites within Ellington were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies,	Allocated - Ellington 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as a site at nominal risk. The assessment concluded that the site is 100% within flood one one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). More sequentially preferable sites were available in Ellington. CfS23-2421 and CfS:35	
CfS23-2422	Land between Thrapston Road East of Ellington and A14	1.2	Ellington 5	Western Huntingdonshire	The Highways Authority states the site is likely to require significant highway improvements in relation to the scale of development proposed and will require further technical work and engagement with National Highways. No further information has been received to ascertain whether highways improvements would be achievable and therefore the site was not taken forward for further testing through the growth strategy options. Fluvial flood zones, 2, 3a and 3b are present on the site along the site frontage which may also impede access and escape to and from the site. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS23-2424	Land South East of Ellington	3.2	Ellington 6	Western Huntingdonshire	The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). More sequentially preferable sites were available in Ellington. CfS23-2421 and CfS:35	
CfS:303	Land adjacent to 24 Cedar Close, Grafham	1.14	Grafham 2	Western Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1, 2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source and preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site meets this criteria. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Grafham 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore it is a sequentially preferable site. It includes criteria to address flood risk.
CfS23-2481	Field south of Village Farm, Grafham	1.62	Grafham 4	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option , however a some sites within Grafham were tested as part of Growth Strategy Option 1, 2 & 3 to test an overall approach. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred	Allocated - Grafham 2. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with low risk of surface water flooding meaning it could meet the criteria for consideration.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was considered potentially appropriate for allocation. The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages will only be selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with low risk of surface water flooding meaning it could meet the criteria for consideration. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:125	Land East of B661, The Green, Great Staughton	0.9	Great Staughton 1	Western Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). However, the site is in a Local Services Village which has some services and facilities. The NPPF (paragraph 83) encourages the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas, where it will enhance or maintain their vitality especially where this will support local services. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Great Staughton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as within 100% Flood Zone one with surface water risk to the site predominantly very low therefore this is a sequentially a preferable site.
CfS:150	Land South of 29 The Green, Great Staughton	0.71	Great Staughton 2	Western Huntingdonshire	The site is allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan for housing. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated. The site is allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan for housing.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
CfS:373	Brook Farmyard (central site), Great Staughton	0.79	Great Staughton 4	Western Huntingdonshire	The site is allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan for provision of a healthcare facility and enabling housing development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated. The site is allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan for provision of a healthcare facility and enabling housing development.
CfS:375	Brook Farmyard (with western expansion), Great Staughton	0.98	Great Staughton 4	Western Huntingdonshire	The majority of the site is allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan for provision of a healthcare facility and enabling housing development. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated. The majority of the site is allocated in the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan for provision of a healthcare facility and enabling housing development.
CfS:39	Land West of 5 High Street, Hail Weston	0.8	Hail Weston 1	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 1,2 & 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site meets this criteria. Level 2 SFRA not required. Most sequentially preferable site (Strategic Recommendation A).	Allocated - Hail Weston 1. The site is 100% Flood Zone one and not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, therefore a sequentially preferable site. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth Strategies 1,2 and 3.
CfS:187	The Walnuts, 113 High Street, Hail Weston	0.47	Hail Weston 3	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy, but other sites in Hail Weston were tested through growth strategy Options 1,2 & 3 to assess suitability. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). This site was assessed as being 100% flood zone 1 with no flood risk meaning it could meet the criteria for consideration. However, site 'CfS39' also met this criteria by not being at risk of flooding. 'CfS 39' was selected as a draft residential allocation as it is closer to local services and facilities and will not impact the setting of an heritage asset. This site 'CfS 187' is directly over the road from the grade II* listed St Nicholas's Church and any development scheme would need to be sensitive to the setting of this building. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:182	Land South of 143 High Street, Hail Weston	1.52	Hail Weston 4	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy, but other sites in Hail Weston were tested through growth strategy Options 1,2 & 3 to assess suitability. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). The Council has applied a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). A more sequentially preferable site has been chosen in Hail Weston ('CfS39') which has no flood risk. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:296	Land opposite Brook End Farm, 17-19 Ford End, Hail Weston, PE19 5JR	1.68	Hail Weston 6	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy, but other sites in Hail Weston were tested through growth strategy Options 1,2 & 3 to assess suitability. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). Although	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					this site meets this criteria a more preferably sequential site has been chosen in 'CfS 39' which has no flood risk. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS:267	Land South West of Pound Close, Hail Weston	0.71	Hail Weston 7	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was not tested specifically by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy, but other sites in Hail Weston were tested through growth strategy Options 1,2 & 3 to assess suitability. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The Council will apply a sequential risk- based approach to the location of development in villages steering it towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Preferred draft allocations within villages have only been selected where they have either no flood risk or are 100% flood zone 1 with nominal / very low surface water flood risk across the majority of the site. These sites will assist in providing an element of residential development to enhance or maintain the vitality of our villages through proportionate opportunities for growth (NPPF 83). Although this site meets this criteria a more preferably sequential site has been chosen in 'CfS 39' which has no flood risk. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:7	Brittens Farm, Station Road, Kimbolton	1.4	Kimbolton 1	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. No other	Allocated - Kimbolton 1. The site was assessed in the Level 2 SFRA as 84.8 % within flood zone one with predominately low surface water risk with some high risk areas in association with the River Kym to the south. Fluvial flood risk is limited to the south of the site in association with the River Kym. The Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					sequentially preferable sites were available for residential development within Kimbolton. The site has elements of medium and high flood risk in association with the River Kym, however the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Assessment Standing Advice (22 October 2025) states that "you may not need a sequential test if development can be laid out so that only elements such as public open space, biodiversity and amenity areas are located in areas at risk of any source of current or future flooding." The premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. Progress to Level 2 SFRA to determine whether development can be sequentially located outside areas of flood risk.	premise of this was subsequently included within Paragraph 175 of the NPPF which was updated in December 2024. The Level 2 SFRA demonstrates that built development can be located within flood zone one. A third of the site will be reserved specifically for open space to safeguard against flooding and remain as a blue/green corridor offering multifunctional benefits including ecological, social and amenity value to the site.
CfS:365	Land South East of Bicton Industrial Estate Kimbolton	3.48	Kimbolton 10	Western Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Options 2, 3 & 4. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Allocated - Kimbolton 2. The site is 100% Flood Zone one and the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water, therefore sequentially preferable site. T
CfS23-24319	Stonely Grange, South of Easton Road - plot 1	0.2809	Kimbolton 13	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments), therefore	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					the site is considered inappropriate for allocation. This site was assessed as 100% flood zone 1 but with high and medium surface water flood risk and therefore does not meet the criteria for consideration.	
CfS:31	Land East of Stow Road, Kimbolton	17.18	Kimbolton 2	Western Huntingdonshire	25/01543/OUT, outline planning application with all matters reserved except for site access for the erection of up to 190 homes, provision of public open space and landscaping, surface water attenuation and associated infrastructure is currently pending consideration. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated. Site has not been proposed as an allocation. 25/01543/OUT, outline planning application with all matters reserved except for site access for the erection of up to 190 homes, provision of public open space and landscaping, surface water attenuation and associated infrastructure is currently pending consideration.
CfS:364	Land North of Gimbers End, Stonely	0.8	Kimbolton 6	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Stonley were not considered suitable for allocation. This site was assessed as 100% flood zone 1 but with high and medium surface water flood risk and therefore does not meet the criteria for consideration. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:354	Land North of Station Road/Stow Road, Kimbolton	0.43	Kimbolton 8	Western Huntingdonshire	Site discounted as the combination of outcomes of the Council's Land Availability Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal indicate that the site is inappropriate for development until the current allocation is completed due to its isolated location within the open countryside and low potential for integration into the village. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:361	Land North of Easton Road Stonely	0.98	Kimbolton 9	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of the Growth Strategy Option 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment,	Not allocated

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore sites in Stonley were not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA. This site was assessed as 100% flood zone 1 but with high and medium surface water flood risk and therefore does not meet the criteria for consideration.	
CfS:24	Land South of Manor Farm, Old Weston	3.52	Old Weston 1	Western Huntingdonshire	Site not within preferred growth option. Site not taken forward as an allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:319	Land South of Spaldwick Road, Stow Longa	0.48	Stow Longa 2	Western Huntingdonshire	The site was tested by the Council as part of growth strategy 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments) and therefore this site was not considered appropriate for allocation. Site not progressed to Level 2 SFRA.	Not allocated
CfS:371	Land adjacent to London Road (A1198), adjoining Bleakley Farm, Godmanchester	4.91	Godmanchester 9	Central Huntingdonshire	This site falls within Strategic Recommendation C, the third most sequentially preferable category of site where many of the sites submitted fall. The site was tested by the council as part of Growth strategy 1,2 and 3. The findings from the Sustainability Appraisal of the growth strategies, informed by evidence documents such as the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Study, Strategic Transport Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment demonstrated that Growth Strategy 2 was the preferred strategic growth option (with some adjustments). The site is in a Service Centre, the second most sustainable of settlement categories in the Settlement Hierarchy with access to multiple services and facilities and in proximity to	Allocated - Godmanchester 2. The allocation includes at least 5.1 ha of land for biodiversity net gain in the north eastern part of the site around Stoneyhill Brook and bordering Silver Street (areas at flood risk) to sequentially located built development in flood zone 1 and green infrastructure to include a mixture of strategic green space, amenity open space, play space, accessible natural green space and flood mitigation. This will provide a strategic approach to flood risk in association with Stoneyhill Brook and provide flood risk betterment to the wider area.

Appendix 5- Assessment of Reasonable Alternative Sites

CfS Ref	Site Name	Hectares (ha)	LAA Ref	LAA Doc	Council Comments including SA outcomes and technical evidence gathering including SFRA	Council Decision on Site for Local Plan
					a Market Town (Huntingdon) with enhanced services and facilities. The site in isolation had previously been discounted as the combination of outcomes of the LAA and SA indicated that the site is inappropriate for development on its own as the necessary intervening land to integrate the site into Godmanchester was not in the site promoter's control and has integration challenges of its own. This site has been combined with Cfs87, 139, 285, 371, 372, 23-24180 to promote a comprehensive scheme to maximise its ability to integrate into the existing town and reflect the need for a collaborative approach to provision of a new junction with the A1198. This also allows for a strategic response to mitigating the flood risk arising from Stoneyhill Brook and provide betterment. Progress to Level 2 SFRA.	
CfS23-2412	Land to the South and West of 61 Church Street, Stilton	2.43	Stilton 6	Northern Huntingdonshire	The Growth Strategy allows for limited development in Local Services Villages Sites 'CfS 165: Land to the rear of The Stilton Cheese, Inn, Stilton' and 'CfS 186: Land rear of 16 to 58 North Street, Stilton' were selected as draft allocations for the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 as they were considered to be locationally preferable due to being infill development within the built area of Stilton and in proximity to local services and facilities whilst this site is located within open countryside.	Not allocated

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

12.1 The following table sets out all the proposed policies in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and whether these have progressed into the

Regulation 19 Local Plan. It identifies where policies have been removed and the new policies that have been added. A brief reason for the exclusion and inclusion of policies is also given in the table below. The table also identifies where policy references have been updated for ease of comparing policies between versions of the Local Plan

Table 15

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 1 - How much development do we expect?	Retained	LP 1 - How much development do we expect?	No	N/A	No changes made
LP 2 - Our Strategy for Change	Retained	LP 2 - Our Strategy for Change	Yes	No	Minor wording updates. Inclusion of grade 1 agricultural land and more emphasis on defence sector made to policy.
	ADDITION - split out from a former policy	LP 3 – Distribution of Growth	Yes	No	The policy text had formerly been in LP2 but has been moved into its own policy for clarity.
	ADDITION - split out from a former policy	LP 4 - Green and Blue Infrastructure Priority Areas	Yes	No	The policy text had formerly been within LP12 but has been split into two green and blue infrastructure priorities for clarity. This policy designates areas.
LP 3 - How will infrastructure be provided	Retained – reference updated	LP 12 - How will infrastructure be provided	Yes	No	Minor wording updates.
LP 4 - Securing infrastructure provision	Retained – reference updated	LP 13 - Securing infrastructure provision	Yes	No	Updates to references to appendices. Community facilities including public meeting halls and places of worship added.
	ADDITION	LP 14 – Supporting and enabling strategic infrastructure	Yes	Yes	This is a new strategic policy so is considered to be a significant change.

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 5 - Settlement Hierarchy	Retained	LP 5 - Settlement Hierarchy	Yes	No	Some amendments to order in table and change of categorisation of Great Gransden from Local Service Village to Village.
LP 6 - Market Towns	Retained	LP 6 - Market Towns	Yes	No	Minor wording updates and updates to use classes.
LP 7 - Service Centres	Retained	LP 7 - Service Centres	Yes	No	Minor wording updates and updates to use classes.
LP 8 - Local Services Villages	Retained	LP 8 - Local Services Villages	Yes		Minor wording updates and inclusion of class E and F development.
LP 9 - Villages	Retained	LP 9 - Villages	Yes	No	Minor wording updates. Removal of thresholds relating to rural exceptions housing.
LP 10 - Hamlets and the Countryside	Retained	LP 10 - Hamlets and the Countryside	Yes	No	Minor wording updates.
LP 11 - Health and well-being	Retained – reference updated	LP 17 - Health and well-being	Yes	Yes	Threshold for criteria amended to 50 from 100 homes and includes commercial development. Additional thresholds added for 50-199 homes and for 200 or more homes.
LP 12 - Green and Blue Infrastructure	Retained – reference updated	LP 19 - Green and Blue Infrastructure	Yes	No	Policy shortened to remove element designating priority areas to a separate policy.
LP 13 - Managing Flood Risk	Retained – reference updated	LP 21 - Managing Flood Risk	Yes	No	Policy checked against the NPPF and PPG, minor changes made where applicable. Amendments relating to critical drainage areas, hydraulic modelling, groundwater, water compatible development and land in defended areas
LP 14 - Managing Waste Water	Retained – reference updated	LP 22 - Managing Waste Water	Yes	No	Additional criteria included to address non-mains connection. Wording updates seeking agreement with Anglian Water on waste water capacity.

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 15 - Managing Surface Water	Retained – reference updated	LP 23 - Managing Surface Water	Yes	No	Reference within the policy included to address Critical Drainage Areas. Surface water hierarchy added.
LP 16 - Water Efficiency	Retained – reference updated	LP 24 - Water Efficiency	Yes	No	Minor wording updates and inclusion of support for water efficiency measures in non-household development.
LP 17 - Approach to renewable energy schemes	Retained – reference updated	LP 16 -Approach to renewable energy schemes	Yes	Yes	Policy shortened to provide clarity for ease of implementation and links to supporting evidence documents moved to supporting text. Reference to critical utilities infrastructure added.
LP 18 - Transport, Travel and Connectivity	Retained – reference updated	LP 15 - Facilitating Transport, Travel and Connectivity	Yes	No	Minor wording changes to include inclusive and accessible transport and address cross boundary impacts with neighbouring authorities.
LP 19 - Design context and character	Retained – reference updated	LP 25 - Design context and character	Yes	No	Neighbourhood plan design guides added to policy.
LP 20 - Creating high quality places and spaces	Retained – reference updated	LP 26 - Creating high quality places and spaces	Yes	No	Headings added to the policy for ease of interpretation and criteria reordered.
LP 21 - Placemaking for larger scale developments	Retained – reference updated	LP 11 - Placemaking for larger scale developments	Yes	Yes	Policy moved to the strategy section of the Local Plan. The SA at Regulation 18 had been undertaken using the policies SA questions, it will need to be reappraised using the Strategy SA questions.
LP 22 - Ensuring amenity for new buildings and neighbours	Retained – reference updated	LP 27 - Ensuring amenity for new buildings and neighbours	Yes	No	Vibration added to the list of sources of pollution.

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 23 - Minimising embodied carbon in new buildings	Retained – reference updated	LP 28 - Minimising embodied and operational carbon in new buildings	Yes	Yes	The policy has been merged with the below policy to include operational carbon and requirements amended to align with national standards in a single policy. Updated SA required.
LP 24 - Minimising operational energy consumption in new buildings	DELETED – merged with above policy	N/A	Yes	Yes	See above.
LP 25 - Making existing buildings more energy efficient	Retained – reference updated	LP 29 - Making existing buildings more energy efficient	Yes	No	Principle of policy remains unchanged but text amended to clarify that proposals that involve change of use, conversions or extension to an existing building must demonstrate how they have considered energy efficiency in their proposals.
LP 26 - Supporting carbon capture through nature	Retained – reference updated	LP 20 - Supporting carbon capture through nature	Yes	Yes	Policy moved to the strategy section of the Local Plan. The SA at Regulation 18 had been undertaken using the policies SA questions, it will need to be reappraised using the Strategy SA questions. Policy shortened and amended for clarity.
LP 27 - Supporting active and sustainable travel	Retained – reference updated	LP 30 - Supporting active and sustainable travel	Yes	No	Minor wording changes for clarity. Addition of equestrian users to policy.
LP 28 - Parking and Vehicle Movement	Retained – reference updated	LP 31 - Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement	Yes	No	Criterion added for communal cycle parking.
LP 29 - Electric vehicle charging points	Retained – reference updated	LP 32 – Providing electric vehicle charging points	Yes	No	Minor wording changes for clarity. Addition of heritage criteria.
LP 30 - Preventing and reducing air pollution	Retained – reference updated	LP 33 - Preventing and reducing air pollution	Yes	No	Criteria adding requiring air quality assessment where development will increase traffic on roads within 200m of internationally and nationally protected nature sites.

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 31 - Preventing and reducing ground contamination and groundwater pollution	Retained – reference updated	LP 34 - Preventing and reducing ground contamination and groundwater pollution	No	N/A	No changes made
LP 32 - Protecting and enhancing Established Employment Areas	Retained – reference updated	LP 35 - Protecting and enhancing Established Employment Areas	Yes	No	Amendments to terminology for consistency across the Local Plan. Removal of impact on internationally protected sites as addressed through LP52 (formerly LP49).
LP 33 - Expansion and diversification of rural businesses	Retained – reference updated	LP 36 - Expansion and diversification of rural businesses	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments.
LP 34 - Shaping new businesses in the countryside	Retained – reference updated	LP 37 - Shaping new businesses in the countryside	Yes	No	Minor amendments made to some criteria. Criterion added to avoid irreversible loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.
LP 35 - Enabling key clusters and innovation-led growth	Retained – reference updated	LP 38 - Enabling key clusters and innovation-led growth	Yes	No	Minor amendments made to some criteria. Inclusion of criteria regarding proven need of a strategic business cluster.
LP 36 - Enabling logistics and distribution	Retained – reference updated	LP 39 - Enabling logistics and distribution	Yes	No	Policy amended for clarity with updated site references.
LP 37 - Helping tourism and recreation in the countryside	Retained – reference updated	LP 40 - Helping tourism and recreation in the countryside	Yes	No	Minor typographical amendments made.
LP 38 - Defining our Retail Hierarchy	Retained – reference updated	LP 41 - Defining our Retail Hierarchy	Yes	Yes	Local Service Villages element removed. Criteria regarding floorspace size removed from policy to supporting text. Use classes removed to provide flexibility on appropriate uses.

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 39 - Promoting Town Centre Vitality	Retained – reference updated	LP 42 - Promoting Town Centre Vitality and Viability	Yes	Yes	Inclusion of viability and C1 Hotels to policy. Removal of requirement of hot food takeaways will only be supported within defined Local Centre of a market town.
LP 40 - Supporting Local Services and Facilities	Retained – reference updated	LP 43 - Supporting Local Services	Yes	Yes	The loss of facilities outside designated areas is now addressed as a separate element in the policy to distinguish between the loss of facilities in areas with no defined town or local centre. Hot food takeaway policy expanded to include market towns.
	ADDITION	LP 44 - Services and facilities outside Designated Centres	Yes	Yes	This is a new policy so is considered to be a significant change.
LP 41 - Providing affordable homes	Retained – reference updated	LP 18 - Providing affordable homes	Yes	Yes	Policy moved to the strategy section of the Local Plan. The SA at Regulation 18 had been undertaken using the policies SA questions, it will need to be reappraised using the Strategy SA questions. Requirement for affordable housing within specialist older persons housing schemes removed. Reference to the nationally described space standards and M4(2)/M4(3) standards removed. Additional policy wording on overage clauses, exception for military housing and clustering guidance.
LP 42 - Promoting a mix of housing	Retained – reference updated	LP 45 - Promoting a mix of housing	Yes	No	Wording added to policy to clarify that some of the documents listed in the policy may only apply based on the location of a development site and any local assessment of housing need demand within a relevant town or parish council to the proposed scheme.
LP 43 - Ensuring accessible and adaptable homes	Retained – reference updated	LP 46 - Ensuring accessible and adaptable homes	Yes	Yes	The policy simplified and amended to set out requirements for scales of development: 50 or more homes, 20-49 homes and less than 20 homes to reflect what may be more viable at these scales of development. The revised policy clearly sets out

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
					requirements for M4(3)(a) and M43(2)(b) for market and affordable homes with remaining homes being built to M4(2).
LP 44 - Facilitating self and custom build homes	Retained – reference updated	LP 47 - Facilitating self and custom build homes	Yes	Yes	Removal of requirement of 5% of homes on sites of 100 or more homes to provide self and custom build homes. Inclusion of criteria for respecting local character and reference to neighbourhood plans. Marketing criteria simplified. Plot passports added to policy.
LP 45 - Supporting specialist housing	Retained – reference updated	LP 48 - Supporting specialist housing	Yes	Yes	Threshold for provision of affordable housing on specialist housing increased from 10 homes to 50 homes.
LP 46 - Supporting houses in multiple occupation	Retained – reference updated	LP 49 - Supporting houses in multiple occupation	No	N/A	No changes made
LP 47 - Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing	Retained – reference updated	LP 50 - Promoting Rural Exceptions Housing	Yes	Yes	Policy criteria amended to apply to sites on land well related to an existing settlement, rather than within. Criterion added to require sensitive development to surrounding landscape and townscape. Text added regarding gypsy and traveller provision on rural exceptions sites
LP 48 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Retained – reference updated	LP 51 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Yes	No	Amendments to terminology for consistency across the Local Plan. Additional criteria regarding not adversely impacting existing infrastructure.
LP 49 - Protecting our nature conservation sites	Retained – reference updated	LP 52 - Protecting our nature conservation sites	Yes	No	Policy reworded to align with legislation on internationally protected sites. Inclusion of Local Nature Reserves to policy and reference to Local Nature Recovery Network.

Appendix 6 - Table of policy changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
LP 50 - Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Retained – reference updated	LP 53 - Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Yes	Yes	The policy no longer encourages a minimum of 20% BNG but now aligns with national policy and legislation on BNG and encourages in excess of 10% where possible.
LP 51 - Protecting our trees, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows	Retained – reference updated	LP 54 - Protecting our trees, orchards, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows	Yes	Yes	Inclusion of orchards to the policy. Value defined to include arboricultural, ecological or landscape value.
LP 52 - Protecting our Open Spaces	Retained – reference updated	LP 55 - Protecting our open spaces, outdoor sport and recreational facilities	Yes	Yes	Inclusion of outdoor sport and recreational facilities to the policy. Policy simplified regarding loss of such facilities and compensatory measures.
LP 53 - Heritage Assets and their Settings	Retained – reference updated	LP 56 - Heritage Assets and their Settings	Yes	No	Archaeology element amended to align more closely with national requirements.
LP 54 - Water related Development	Retained – reference updated	LP 57 - Water related Development	Yes	No	Amendments to terminology for consistency across the Local Plan. Criterion added regarding berths outside of a built-up area must be in a sustainable location. Minor amendment to Grafham Water element of the policy to include a resilience to water supply to support growth.

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

13.1 The following table sets out all the proposed allocation sites in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and whether these have

progressed into the Regulation 19 Local Plan. It identifies where sites have been removed and the new sites that have been added. A brief reason for the exclusion and inclusion of sites is also given in the table below. The table also identifies where policy references have been updated for ease of comparing sites between versions of the Local Plan.

Table 16

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse	Retained	North Huntingdon 1: Huntingdon Racecourse	Yes	No	Archaeology criterion added
North Huntingdon 2: Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307	Retained	North Huntingdon 2: Land North of A141 between the Racecourse and A1307	Yes	Yes	Rewording of proposed uses for clarity and inclusion of 1,000 sqm of sui generis floorspace for a bus depot. Wording amendments referencing Great Ouse Valley and requirement for assessment of impact on SSSIs and early engagement with Anglian Water and Environment Agency on waste water
North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm, North of A141	Retained	North Huntingdon 3: Lodge Farm, North of A141	Yes	Yes	The site boundary has been amended to omit land around Lodge Farm and the parcel on the eastern side of the A141, capacity of 4,900 homes retained. Archaeology criterion and employment and skills plan requirement added. Education provision made more flexible. Inclusion of a mobility hub and an innovation quarter. Further criteria on A141 including land for active travel Proposed care home criteria amended requiring an up to date assessment to inform the quantity of care beds to be provided.
North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield	Retained	North Huntingdon 4: Wyton Airfield	Yes	Yes	4,000 home capacity retained; allows ancillary/"last mile" B8; integrated water

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
					strategy strengthened to include natural flood management; stronger settlement separation wording between the site and Houghton and Wyton. Archaeology criterion added. Proposed care home criteria amended requiring an up to date assessment to inform the quantity of care beds to be provided.
Huntingdon 1: Hinchingsbrooke Hospital	Retained	Huntingdon 1: Hinchingsbrooke Hospital	Yes	Yes	Expanded policy requirements including affordable key worker housing, health-related R&D space, day nursery, public worship space, open space provision to mitigate recreational impacts on nearby nature sites and biodiversity mitigation. Archaeology criterion and integration of existing Anglian Water infrastructure added
Huntingdon 2: Amber Centre, Mayfield Road	Retained	Huntingdon 2: Amber Centre, Mayfield Road	Yes	No	Integration of existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.
St Neots 1: East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm)	Retained	St Neots 1: East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm)	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments for clarity. Archaeology criterion added. Liaison with East West Rail Co regarding safeguarding land for delivery of East West Rail.
St Neots 2: South West of Potton Road	Retained	St Neots 2: South West of Potton Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments for clarity.
St Ives 1: North of Houghton Road	Retained	St Ives 1: North of Houghton Road	Yes	No	Requirement for a masterplan added and minor wording amendments for clarity Archaeology criterion added. Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
Bury 1: Bury Industrial Estate, Old Station Road	Retained	Bury 1: Bury Industrial Estate, Old Station Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Criterion added requiring 15m to pumping station to allow future maintenance.
Bury 2: Off Cheveril Lane	Retained	Bury 2: Off Cheveril Lane	Yes	No	Removal of open space from uses retaining it solely for biodiversity net gain. Inclusion of heritage criterion identifying sensitivity to Ramsey Conservation Area and wider rural setting to be supported by a heritage assessment.
Bury 3: RAF Upwood - Phase 3, Bury	Retained	Bury 3: RAF Upwood - Phase 3, Bury	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments for clarity.
Ramsey 1: RAF Upwood phase 4	Retained	Ramsey 1: RAF Upwood phase 4	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments for clarity. Safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.
Ramsey 2: North of Hollow Lane	Retained	Ramsey 2: North of Hollow Lane	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments for clarity. Archaeology criterion added and the setting of the Abbey and associated assets added to heritage criterion.
Ramsey 3: East of Wood Lane	DELETED	N/A	Yes	N/A	Upon review of the concerns and objections raised to the loss of community land at Ramsey 3, the site has been removed as a draft allocation despite the rationale for allocating it being to secure the long term use of the wider site for community open space uses.
Brampton 1: Wallis Land, Thrapston Road	Retained	Brampton 1: Wallis Land, Thrapston Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments and reordering of criteria for clarity. Criterion added regarding minerals.
Brampton 2: Land off Huntingdon Road	Retained	Brampton 2: Land off Huntingdon Road	Yes	No	Criterion amended identifying incorporation of public right of way, access from Huntingdon Road. Criterion added requiring heritage assessment. Criterion added regarding waste water flows

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
Fenstanton 1: Galley Hill	Retained	Fenstanton 1: Galley Hill	Yes	No	Archaeology criterion and safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure added. Inclusion of Natural Flood Management to reduce flood risk Wording amendments referencing landscape and visual impact assessment and requirement for assessment of impact on SSSIs.
Godmanchester 1: Former RGE Engineering site and HDC Car Park, The Avenue	Retained	Godmanchester 1: Former RGE Engineering site and HDC Car Park, The Avenue	Yes	No	Safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added. Inclusion of Natural Flood Management to reduce flood risk. New text securing connectivity to footbridge and common land.
Godmanchester 2: South of Godmanchester, off the A1198	Retained	Godmanchester 2: South of Godmanchester, off the A1198	Yes	Yes	The site area has been expanded to include additional land at Bluegate which increases the capacity of the site by 30 homes and also to include land on the southern edge to provide a more comprehensive approach to landscaping and flood mitigation along Stoneyhill Brook. Inclusion of Natural Flood Management to reduce flood risk. Safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion and archaeology criterion added. Minor wording amendments for clarity
Godmanchester 3: Former A14 Compound, North of A1198 Roundabout	Retained	Godmanchester 3: Former A14 Compound, North of A1198 Roundabout	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments. Safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added
Kimbolton 1: Brittens Farm, Station Road	Retained	Kimbolton 1: Brittens Farm, Station Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria and proposed uses for clarity. Archaeology criterion added. Criterion added regarding minerals
Kimbolton 2: South East of Bicton industrial Estate, Stow Road	Retained	Kimbolton 2: South East of Bicton industrial Estate, Stow Road	Yes	No	Minor amendments regarding on site drainage and wastewater solutions.

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
Little Paxton 1: North of St James Road	Retained	Little Paxton 1: North of St James Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments for clarity. Criterion added requiring provision of open space to mitigate recreational impacts on nearby nature sites. Mineral extraction criterion amended to avoid adverse impact in Little Paxton Quarry
Little Paxton 2: West of Great North Road	Retained	Little Paxton 2: West of Great North Road	Yes	Yes	Site capacity has been increased from 220 to 410. The original SA for the site undertaken as part of the in combination LAA and SA assessment was based on 410 homes (as submitted by the site promoter). An update to the SA was recorded at Regulation 18 dropping the capacity to 220 in line with CCC Education comments. Minor wording amendments for clarity. Criterion added requiring provision of open space to mitigate recreational impacts on nearby nature sites. Archaeology criterion and safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added
Sawtry 1: West of Glatton Road	Retained	Sawtry 1: West of Glatton Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion added
Sawtry 2: East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate	Retained	Sawtry 2: East of Glatton Road and North of Brookside Industrial Estate	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion added
Sawtry 3: West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road	Retained	Sawtry 3: West of Toll Bar Way and Green End Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion added
Sawtry 4: Off Old North Road	Retained	Sawtry 4: Off Old North Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity and to proposed uses to provide some additional flexibility for site developer. Archaeology criterion added

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
Sawtry 5: Little Common Farm	Retained	Sawtry 5: Little Common Farm	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion and safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.
Sawtry 6: North of Black Horse Industrial Estate	Retained	Sawtry 6: North of Black Horse Industrial Estate	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity and to proposed uses to provide some additional flexibility for site developer. Archaeology criterion and safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.
Somersham 1: College Farm, West of Parkhall Road	Retained	Somersham 1: College Farm, West of Parkhall Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion and safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.
Somersham 2: South of College Farm	DELETED	N/A	Yes	N/A	Following a review of comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cite concern regarding infrastructure capacity, cumulative impact of all draft allocations on the village, transport impacts, landscape harm and scale of the proposal, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.
Somersham 3: Dews Bus and Coach Depot, Chatteris Road	Retained – reference updated	Somersham 2: Dews Bus and Coach Depot, Chatteris Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion and added. Criterion added requiring provision of open space to mitigate recreational impacts on nearby nature sites.
Somersham 4: College Farm, West of Newlands Industrial Estate	Retained – reference updated	Somersham 3: College Farm, West of Newlands Industrial Estate	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity.
Yaxley 1: Eagle Business Park, phase 3, Broadway	Retained	Yaxley 1: Eagle Business Park, phase 3, Broadway	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity. Safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
Abbots Ripton 1: Home Farm South	Retained	Abbots Ripton 1: Home Farm South	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion added. Criterion added requiring 15m to pumping station to allow future maintenance.
Alconbury 1: South of Great North Road	Retained	Alconbury 1: South of Great North Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Safeguarding access to existing Anglian Water infrastructure criterion added.
Alconbury 2: East of Globe Lane	Retained	Alconbury 2: East of Globe Lane	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity.
Bluntisham 1: South of Rectory Road	DELETED	N/A	Yes	N/A	Following a review of comments received from residents and stakeholders, who cite concern regarding heritage and impact on the Grade II* Bluntisham House as well as potential impact to ridge and furrow land, alongside concerns about the cumulative impact of development on services and infrastructure within Bluntisham, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.
Bluntisham 2: Land off 18 Holliday's Road	Retained – reference updated	Bluntisham 1: Land off 18 Holliday's Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity. Archaeology criterion added.
Bluntisham 3: West of Colne Road	Retained – reference updated	Bluntisham 2: West of Colne Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures.
Great Staughton 1: East of B661, The Green	Retained	Great Staughton 1: East of B661, The Green	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added.
Hemingford Abbots 1: The Lattenburys	Retained	Hemingford Abbots 1: The Lattenburys	Yes	Yes	The site boundary has been amended to include an land on the western edge to align with field boundaries and provide a more comprehensive landscaped edge on this side. Capacity of 3,800 retained. Archaeology

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
					criterion and exploration of underground waste collection system added. Minor wording amendments to criteria and proposed uses for clarity supporting a sustainable mix of appropriate uses and sustainable transport options. Proposed care home criteria amended requiring an up to date assessment to inform the quantity of care beds to be provided.
Houghton and Wyton 1: Ruddles Lane	Retained	Houghton and Wyton 1: Ruddles Lane	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures.
Needingworth 1: Giffords Park, East of B1040	Retained	Needingworth 1: Giffords Park, East of B1040	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Proposed care home criteria amended requiring an up to date assessment to inform the quantity of care beds to be provided.
Needingworth 2: North of Bluntisham Road	Retained	Needingworth 2: North of Bluntisham Road	Yes	Yes	Western parcel removed due to consultation responses, especially in relation to traffic impacts, flood risk, coalescence with neighbouring settlements, landscape concerns and the size of the site. This reduces the capacity from 290 homes to 100. The site had originally been submitted as two sites and assessed separately through the in combination LAA and SA assessment, the SA for just the eastern parcel will be brought forward into this document to show an updated position. Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity. Archaeology criterion and added
Offord D'Arcy 1: West of Graveley Road	Retained	Offord D'Arcy 1: West of Graveley Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity. Capacity reduced to 70 homes.
Offord Cluny 1: West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close	Retained	Offord Cluny 1: West of High Street and North of Dunstall Close	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity.

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
	ADDITION	Spaldwick 1: Land east of Stow Road, Spaldwick	Yes	Yes	The site has been added as a pre-submission allocation which is considered to be a significant change. The site has undergone an SA through the in combination LAA and SA assessment. The SA will be brought forward into this document to show a comprehensive picture.
Stilton 1: Rear of the Stilton Cheese Inn, North Street	Retained	Stilton 1: Rear of the Stilton Cheese Inn, North Street	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added. Capacity amended to align with planning permission.
Stilton 2: Rear of 16 to 58 North Street	Retained	Stilton 2: Rear of 16 to 58 North Street	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added
Abbotsley 1: North of Wintringham Hall, Cambridge Road	Retained	Abbotsley 1: North of Wintringham Hall, Cambridge Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity. Archaeology criterion and added.
Alwalton 1: North of 23-33 Oundle Road	DELETED	N/A	Yes	N/A	Following a review of comments received from residents, stakeholders and neighbouring authorities, who cite concern regarding heritage, transport impacts and scale of the proposal, the site has been removed as a draft allocation.
Bythorn 1: West of Warren Lane	DELETED	N/A	Yes	N/A	The Parish council stated preference for an alternative allocation at Home Farm because it has an existing access, is more centrally located in the village and could offer a high quality heritage lead redevelopment of the site.
	ADDITION	Bythorn 1: Home Farm, Bythorn	Yes	Yes	The site has been added as a pre-submission allocation which is considered to be a significant change. The site has undergone an SA through the in combination

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
					LAA and SA assessment. The SA will be brought forward into this document to show a comprehensive picture.
	ADDITION	Catworth 1: Fruit Field, Catworth	Yes	Yes	The site has been added as a pre-submission allocation which is considered to be a significant change. The site has undergone an SA through the in combination LAA and SA assessment. The SA will be brought forward into this document to show a comprehensive picture.
Colne 1: Ramadie, Earith Road	Retained	Colne 1: Ramadie, Earith Road	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity.
Ellington 1: Old Sheds at Manor Farm, High Street	Retained	Ellington 1: Old Sheds at Manor Farm, High Street	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Archaeology criterion and added. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added.
	ADDITION	Ellington 2: Land west of Grafham Road, Ellington	Yes	Yes	The site has been added as a pre-submission allocation which is considered to be a significant change. The site has undergone an SA through the in combination LAA and SA assessment. The SA will be brought forward into this document to show a comprehensive picture.
Grafham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close	Retained	Grafham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Removal of rights of way criterion as connectivity to wider network not possible. Archaeology criterion and requirement for heritage assessment added
	ADDITION	Grafham 2: South of Village Farm, Grafham	Yes	Yes	The site has been added as a pre-submission allocation which is considered to be a significant change. The site has undergone an SA through the in combination LAA and SA assessment. The SA will be brought forward into this document to show a comprehensive picture.

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
Great Gransden 1: South of Caxton Road	Retained	Great Gransden 1: South of Caxton Road	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added. Requirement for ecological assessment and mitigation due to potential impact on Barbastelle Bats.
Great Paxton 1: West of High Street	Retained	Great Paxton 1: West of High Street	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Criterion added to address transport impact. Site boundary amended to remove land associated with parking for the football club. Capacity reduced to 9 homes with six to be for self and custom build housing.
Great Paxton 2: North of Harley Industrial Park, Paxton Hill	Retained	Great Paxton 2: North of Harley Industrial Park, Paxton Hill	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added.
Hail Weston 1: West of 5 High Street	Retained	Hail Weston 1: West of 5 High Street	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity and reduction of capacity to 6 homes. Safeguarding access to existing waste water infrastructure criterion added and also engagement with Anglian Water regarding waste water connection added.
Holme 1: North of Station Road	Retained	Holme 1: North of Station Road	Yes	Yes	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity. Capacity amended to 40 homes and existing homes on site removed from site boundary.
Peterborough Services 1: West of the A1 and South of Peterborough Motorway Services	Retained	Peterborough Services 1: West of the A1 and South of Peterborough Motorway Services	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Criterion added requiring a heritage assessment.
Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Rural Mooring	Retained	Ramsey Forty Foot 1: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Rural Mooring	No	N/A	No changes made.
	ADDITION	Ramsey Forty Foot 2: Woodlane Farm, Ramsey Forty Foot	Yes	Yes	The site has been added as a pre-submission allocation which is considered to be a significant change. The site has undergone an SA through the in combination

Appendix 7 - Table of site changes between Preferred Options and Pre-Submission

Preferred Options Site Policy Reference	Retained/ deleted	Submission Local Plan Site Policy Reference	Changed?	Significant?	Commentary of key changes
					LAA and SA assessment. The SA will be brought forward into this document to show a comprehensive picture.
The Stukeleys 1: Between 76-86 Owl End	Retained	The Stukeleys 1: Between 76-86 Owl End	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity.
Upton 1: Land South West of South Farm	Retained	Upton 1: Land South West of South Farm	Yes	No	Minor wording amendments to criteria for clarity.
Waresley 1: Land between West Lodge and Home Farm	Retained	Waresley 1: Land between West Lodge and Home Farm	Yes	No	Refines, clarifies and strengthens mitigation measures. Capacity reduced to 6 to reflect concerns arising from consultation Criterion added requiring retention of 0.66ha of woodland within the site which was already stated in the supporting text.