

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

CORE STRATEGY & RURAL ISSUES PLAN

| APRIL 2008 |

BEDFORD
DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK

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DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

CORE STRATEGY & RURAL ISSUES PLAN

ADOPTED 16TH APRIL 2008

A summary of the Core Strategy & Rural Issues Plan will be made available in large copy print, audio cassette, Braille or languages other than English on request. If you require the document in one of these formats please contact the Policy Section by calling (01234) 221732, sending an email to bdf@bedford.gov.uk or writing to Planning Services, Town Hall, St Paul's Square, Bedford MK40 1SJ.

The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan can be purchased from the Town Hall, price £5.00 or through the post by sending a cheque for £5.50 payable to 'Bedford Borough Council' to the address below. The Plan is also available to view on the Council's website (www.bedford.gov.uk/planning) and at local libraries.

BEDFORD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Planning and Housing Services
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CONTENTS

FOREWORD 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

1. INTRODUCTION 5
- Bedford Development Framework 5
- What the Core Strategy & Rural Issues Plan is about 5

2. SPATIAL PORTRAIT 8
- Where we are now 8

3. SPATIAL VISION 12
- Where we want to be 12
- Borough Wide Spatial Vision 13
- Plan Objectives 14

4. SPATIAL STRATEGY 15
- How We Get There 15
- The Growth Area 19
  - Location of development 19
  - Sequential approach to allocation of land 21
  - Housing 23
  - Employment 26
- Sustainable Rural Communities 28
  - Settlement Policy Areas 28
  - Location of development 29
  - Scale and Nature of Housing 30
  - Employment development 32
- Town Centre Regeneration and Revitalisation 33
  - Area Action Plan 34
  - Retail Issues 35
- Distinctiveness and Environmental Assets 37
  - Sense of Place 37
  - Designing in Quality 37
  - Green Infrastructure 38
  - Cultural Heritage 39
  - Landscape 40
  - Biodiversity 41
  - Climate Change and Pollution 41
- Delivery and Implementation 43
  - Infrastructure 43
  - Plan, Monitor and Manage 45

APPENDICES 46

Appendix A	Key Diagram	47
Appendix B	Background	48
Appendix C	Table showing relationship between objectives, policies and which saved policies are to be replaced	50
Appendix D	Regional Planning Policy and the Community Plan	51
Appendix E	Glossary	58
Appendix F	Implementation and Monitoring Framework	62

FOREWORD

This is a time of significant change and opportunity for Bedford Borough. Our Growth Area status has placed on us the responsibility to deliver the regeneration of the town centre together with new homes and jobs.

We are officially accredited an 'excellent council', and soon we will be a unitary authority which puts us in a strong position to implement this ambitious programme with the help and support of our partners and the community.

The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is a daunting name but it will play a crucial role in providing the policy framework to deliver sustainable growth up to 2021.

Sustainability means not just providing homes, local job opportunities and a vibrant and successful town centre; it is also vital in fostering viable rural communities and providing green infrastructure.

It is the first of our development plan documents to be adopted and will provide the platform for other policy documents which will become the Bedford Development Framework. As government policy evolves there will be advances, particularly on climate change, and improved community benefits from new developments.

I welcome the plan and take this opportunity to thank those members and officers who have worked to achieve this important milestone in planning the future of the borough and all of its communities.

Frank Branston
MAYOR



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The next 15 years are set to be a time of change for the Borough. By 2021 the urban areas of Bedford and Kempston and the northern Marston Vale should be very different having experienced a major growth in population, housing and jobs.

The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is a key part of the Bedford Development Framework (a set of planning documents which will eventually replace the local plan) as it sets out the vision and the high level planning policies for the borough as a whole. In essence the role of the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is to manage growth positively and to promote the sustainability of the borough. The plan is also part of a suite of strategies including the Council's Community Plan, Corporate Plan and economic development strategy, which all share this common aim.

In summary the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan aims to assess:

- Where are we now?

  What is the Borough like today and what are its key social, physical and economic characteristics? What are the main issues facing the borough?

- Where would we like to be?

  Looking forward to 2021, how do we hope the borough will have changed and developed?

- How do we get there?

  The plan's policies are the means of delivering the vision.

The plan does not include site-specific allocations, for example housing or employment sites. These will be contained within other documents that will in time form part of the Bedford Development Framework.

WHERE WE ARE NOW – THE SPATIAL PORTRAIT

Bedford Borough as it is today has many strengths: its strategic location; its environment, built and natural; its people and diverse communities; and its compact town centre positioned on one of the region's great rivers. However it also has weaknesses which need to be addressed. Relative to the surrounding area, these include a legacy of under investment, a poorly performing local economy, a weak housing market and an infrastructure deficit. Bedford has increasingly been overshadowed by its neighbours with the result that over time its function and role in the region has been eroded.

WHERE WE WANT TO BE – THE VISION

In the coming years, there is a real opportunity to embrace change and to re-establish the borough's position and profile in the region. Our proposed vision for the borough is as follows:-

"Change is embraced. Growth focused on the borough's main urban areas and the Marston Vale has fostered a successful economy and expanding sustainable communities, supported by better social and transport infrastructure. At the same time the town centre has been revitalised, acting as a catalyst for growth and leading to a step change in Bedford's role and place within the region. Rural communities have been sustained through meeting local needs and remain viable. All of this will have been achieved in ways which ensure that the development and use of land promotes quality of life, health and well being for everyone as well as celebrating our distinctiveness and protecting the borough's environmental assets."

HOW WE CAN GET THERE – THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

The draft East of England Plan sets out planning policy for the region and thus the whole of Bedford Borough. A part of the borough has been designated as being within the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Growth Area, established in the government's Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003. The sub-regional strategy for the Growth Area recognises the potential of the Growth Area (Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale) to accommodate a significant volume of development.

Following on from the vision statement and in the context of regional planning policy the plan includes policies which cover five main themes:

- The Growth Area
- Sustainable rural communities
- Town centre regeneration and revitalisation
- Distinctiveness and environmental assets
- Delivery and implementation.

Together the policies seek to ensure that:

- Development takes place in line with regional plans.
- Development follows sustainable principles.
- The areas of Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale (the Growth Area) are the focus for development.
- Wootton, Stewartby and for the future Wixams are identified as Growth Area key service centres.
- 16,270 new homes are built in the Growth Area.
- Affordable housing is provided on sites of 15 dwellings or more or 3 or more dwellings in villages having a population of less than 3,000.
- 16,000 additional jobs are provided giving priority to B1 uses.
- In the Rural Policy Area development is focused on key services centres which are identified as Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford, Harrold, Sharnbrook and Wilstead.
- 1300 new homes are built in the Rural Policy Area and affordable housing is provided to meet the needs of local people. This may include the allocation of sites for 100% affordable housing for local people.
- Bedford town centre is regenerated.
- All new development is of the highest design quality.
- The borough's heritage and its cultural assets and its landscape are protected.
- Existing green infrastructure is protected and support is given to the Bedford Milton Keynes canal.
- Development minimises the impact of climate change.
- Transport infrastructure is provided in accordance with the Local Transport Plan and sustainable transport encouraged.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE BEDFORD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1.1 The next 15 years are set to be a time of change for the borough. By 2021 the urban areas of Bedford and Kempston and the northern Marston Vale should be very different having experienced a major growth in population, housing and jobs.

1.2 The Bedford Development Framework will replace the policies in the adopted Local Plan during the coming few years. This new approach to policy making was introduced in September 2004 in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

1.3 Whilst the Bedford Development Framework is being produced, the adopted Local Plan is 'saved'. As of 27th September 2007, some Local Plan policies ceased to be 'saved'. See Appendix C for details. The remaining 'saved' policies in the Local Plan will not be replaced all at once, as the Bedford Development Framework will be a series of separate documents. Thus, as each document is produced, different Local Plan policies will be replaced. Eventually, all the policies of the Local Plan will be replaced by other Development Plan Documents. Planning decisions will continue to be made in accordance with 'saved' Local Plan policies until such time as they are replaced.

1.4 The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is one of the first documents that will be produced as part of the Bedford Development Framework. Appendix C sets out which policies of the adopted Local Plan the policies in the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan proposes to replace.

WHAT THE CORE STRATEGY AND RURAL ISSUES PLAN IS ABOUT

1.5 The purpose of the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is to set out the long term spatial vision for the borough, spatial objectives and the spatial policies needed to deliver the vision.

1.6 In summary the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan aims to assess:

- Where we are now
- Where we want to be by 2021
- How we can get there.

1.7 The plan does not include site-specific allocations, for example housing or employment sites. These will be contained within other documents that form part of the Bedford Development Framework.

1.8 The other documents in the Bedford Development Framework and their relationship to the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan are listed in the table below.

DOCUMENT IN THE BEDFORD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	RELATIONSHIP TO THE CORE STRATEGY AND RURAL ISSUES PLAN
Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan Development Plan Document	This document will conform with the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan
The Bedfordshire Community Safety Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Adopted 16th Nov 2005	No relationship – this document will conform with saved Policy BE45 of the adopted Local Plan
Shopfronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document Adopted 16th Nov 2005	No relationship – this document will conform with saved Policies TC4 and BE16 of the adopted Local Plan and is consistent with policy TC33 of the emerging Town Centre Area Action Plan
Land north of Bromham Road Biddenham Design Code Supplementary Planning Document Adopted 16th Nov 2005	No relationship – this document will conform with saved policy H8 of the adopted Local Plan
Statement of Community Involvement Adopted 17th May 2006	Future changes are required to be in conformity with the SCI.

1.9 The documents referred to in the table above were included in the Council's first Local Development Scheme. The revised Local Development Scheme (September 2007) includes an Allocations and Designations DPD, to be commenced in 2007. The Allocations and Designations DPD will allocate land required for future development in the Borough up to 2021. It will designate areas where particular controls on development will apply and review the boundary of Settlement Policy Areas and the urban area.



PORTRAIT

PART TWO
THE SPATIAL PORTRAIT

WHERE WE ARE NOW

2.1 Bedford Borough is within the East of England region but also adjacent to the East Midlands and the South East regions. It is included within the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area. The borough has a population of 150,800 (as estimated in 2004) and covers an area of 476 square kilometres. The borough includes the county town of Bedford and also a large rural area. In addition to the town of Bedford and the neighbouring area of Kempston, the borough includes many villages. The largest of the villages is Bromham with a population of almost 5,000 people. Many of the rural parishes of the borough have several small settlements with a combined population of under 500 people. In total, approximately 66% of the population live in the Bedford/Kempston area, yet this accounts for only 8% of the land of the Borough as a whole.

2.2 The population of the borough has grown from 138,000 to almost 151,000 in the period 1996 to 2004. With over 60 different ethnic groups represented in the area, the borough is one of the most cosmopolitan in the country. Black and Asian groups make up over 10% of the local population, rising to 15% in Bedford itself and nearly 40% in Queens Park ward, with main ethnic minority languages spoken being Urdu, Bengali (Sylhet dialect), Hindi, and Punjabi. In addition the borough includes significant Italian, Irish and Polish communities. The population is projected to increase to over 172,000 by 2021. By 2021 the population of over 75s in the borough is expected to have increased from nearly 8% during 2001-2006 to over 14% in 2016-2021.

2.3 The town of Bedford is located to the south of the borough, other neighbouring smaller towns include Sandy and St Neots to the east, Rushden and Wellingborough to the north. The largest neighbouring towns are Milton Keynes to the west, Northampton to the north, Cambridge to the east and Luton to the south. The proximity of Luton airport and London further to the south create pressures and opportunities, and Bedford's position in the middle of the Oxford to Cambridge arc has the potential to stimulate economic growth through knowledge based industry. Bedford town centre has a potential regional role for shopping and employment, despite the continued growth of Milton Keynes and Northampton.



2.4 The borough's traditional **economic base** was centred on engineering and related manufacturing but this has declined in recent years. The top employment industries in the borough are currently education and health, followed by finance and business, wholesale and retail and manufacturing. In 2001, nearly 20% of the residents of the borough worked in education and health. Most employment sites and centres of excellence in the borough are located in or near to Bedford, however there are also important sites at Wyboston, Thurleigh Airfield and Colworth House, Sharnbrook. Potential key future employment sectors are higher-value manufacturing, research and development, computing and related activities, hotel and catering, recreation, cultural, sporting and education. Agriculture has traditionally been important in the economy of the rural parts of the borough.

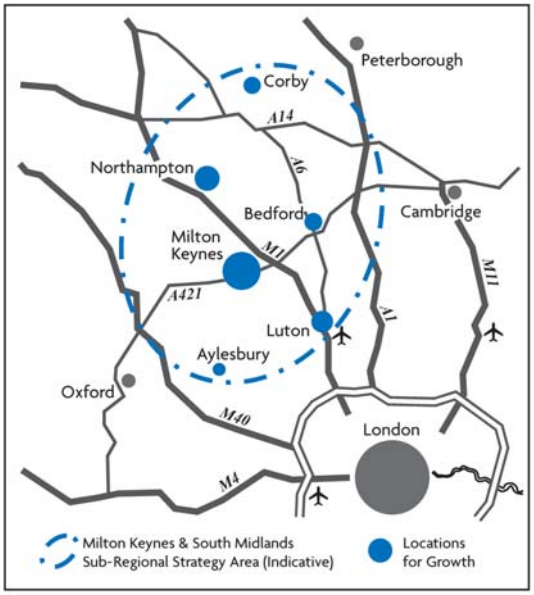


Figure 1 Bedford in the context of Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy



2.5 The distance that residents of the borough travel to work varies considerably. Those living in the rural wards mostly travel between 0 and 20km to work. However, in all urban wards, the clear trend is that the majority of people travel less than 5km to work. This distance accounts for between 50% and 60% of responses in each urban ward. There is a high level of **commuting** both into and out of the borough. Nearly 29% of the working age residents commute out of the borough, though the majority of the borough's residents both live and work in the borough. People who commute into the borough account for 26% of the workers in the borough. Of those people who commute outside of the borough to work, the most popular destinations are Mid Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes and London.

2.6 In terms of **transport accessibility**, the town of Bedford is linked to the north and south by rail. Both the Midland Mainline and First Capital Connect rail services serve Bedford. Trains to Milton Keynes are by Silverlink County Marston Vale services. London St Pancras station is approximately 40 minutes away by train. There are no train services to the east or west of the borough. By road, the A421 is a 'strategic route' from west to east (which runs from the M1 via the south of Bedford to the A1), a portion of which is dual carriageway. Other main roads converge on Bedford from Rushden to the north, Olney and Newport Pagnell to the west, Sandy to the east and Clophill and Shefford to the south. Congestion hotspots in the borough are the A421 swan roundabout (south-west of Bedford) and A421 Great Barford (east of Bedford).



2.7 By far the most popular mode of **travel to work** is the car, accounting for the journeys of between 50% and 77% of people. Fewer people in the urban wards travel to work by car, with more preferring to walk and cycle. This corresponds with the statistics for car ownership. An average of nearly 22% of households in the borough have no access to a car or van. This rises significantly in the urban wards, where in Harpur for example, the figure is nearly 40%.



2.8 The main **retail** location in the borough is Bedford. The town still hosts a traditional market twice a week as well as a gourmet market every Thursday and other specialist markets. The town includes the Harpur Centre as well as pedestrianised shopping streets, both within minutes of the bus station and rail station, although links to both these are in need of improvement.



2.9 The borough has a wealth of **leisure and community facilities**. For a town of Bedford's size, it has a wide choice of facilities. These include Bedford Athletics Stadium, several swimming pools and a number of parks in the urban area (Bedford Park, the Embankment, Priory Country Park, Addison Howard Park, Mowsbury Park and Jubilee Park) as well as Harrold-Odell Country Park in the rural area. The historic and cultural core of the town includes Bedford Museum, Cecil Higgins Art Gallery and the recently enhanced Castle Mound and Gardens. The Corn Exchange is a multi-purpose venue which hosts a variety of arts and entertainment programmes. These facilities serve both residents and visitors. The borough attracts around 3m day visitors and 300,000 staying visitors each year.

2.10 Bedford includes the campus of the **University** of Bedfordshire. The University caters for 3,000 students and over 200 staff based within the town. The University specialises in primary and secondary education, sports and leisure and arts and humanities programmes.

2.11 Approximately 7% of the borough's population are school pupils or full-time students. This is higher than the national average of 5% in England and Wales. In the last academic year GCSE results were lower than the national average. Despite this, the level of skills in the adult population is higher than the national average; 25.6% of the borough's population aged 16-74 have no qualifications, compared to a national average of 29%.







2.12 **Housing** in the borough reflects the historic nature of the county town. Bedford has a Victorian core but significant expansion in the last fifty years has diversified the nature of housing available. The rural areas have developed at various rates, with the larger villages being located on the most popular transport routes. Between 1999 and spring 2006 house prices have doubled, with the average house price rising to £180,049. Neighbouring districts have higher house prices, with the exception of Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire. Despite the national trend for rising house prices, the market for new homes has been relatively weak with fewer homes being built than are planned or already have planning permission.



2.13 The River Great Ouse is a prominent feature of the landscape in the borough. In particular the Ouse valley gives rise to the distinct character of the villages in the north-west of the borough. The river is also a major attractive feature within Bedford itself and provides the basis for sporting and leisure activities. Because of this there are areas of the borough that are at risk of **flooding**. These areas include the centre, east and west of Bedford and parts of the rural area along the route of the River Great Ouse.



2.14 The borough prides itself on the wealth of **open spaces** within the urban areas and the attractive **countryside** that surrounds the rural villages. In the south of the borough however, there are areas of landscape degradation due to the legacy of brickmaking in the Marston Vale. Through the designation of the Forest of Marston Vale the area has become a focus for landscape enhancement. The borough has eight nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and seven designated Local Nature Reserves. The borough also contains 26 conservation areas, 1,363 listed buildings, 69 scheduled ancient monuments and 4 historic parks and gardens.

PART THREE
THE SPATIAL VISION

WHERE WE WANT TO BE

3.1 The Bedford Borough Community Plan provides the foundation for the development of the overarching vision for Bedford's Development Framework. This vision is needed to shape the policies which will provide the means of implementation for the spatial aspects of the community plan.

3.2 The vision has been developed in the context of regional planning guidance but also reflects the aspirations of the community (as stated in the community plan).

THE COMMUNITY PLAN

3.3 The Community Plan (approved in January 2005) has the overarching aim of:

"Working together to improve health and well being"

3.4 In addition, its objective is to improve quality of life for both visitors and those who live and work in the Borough.

The Community Plan has nine key themes:

- Promoting Community Safety
- Providing Housing and Building Communities
- Improving the Environment
- Improving Health
- Strengthening the Economy
- Developing Learning Opportunities and Skills
- Creating Better Transport
- Promoting Leisure
- Including Everyone.

3.5 Appendix D sets out the spatial issues which are relevant to the community plan themes. Appendix F identifies how the policies of the core strategy will contribute towards the delivery of the community plan. Regard has also been had to the Bedfordshire Community Strategy. Bedford Borough Council is a member of the Bedfordshire Local Strategic Forum which deals with strategic issues across the county as a whole.

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.6 Regional policy sets the context for development in the region as a whole. The vision and policies of this plan should be in general conformity with regional policy. Regional policy is set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). At the time of submission of this plan to the Secretary of State, the RSS was made up of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) together with a partial review of that document, the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.

3.7 At the time of submission a review of the RSS, the draft East of England Plan, was nearing completion. While it will replace RPG9, the EEP makes clear that it will not replace the S-RS. The EEP and the S-RS will 'run along side' one another until such time as the EEP is reviewed, estimated at late 2011. At that time the two strands of strategy will be merged into a single document. Until they are merged, the EEP will provide the spatial strategy and generic policies for the Borough as a whole, whilst the S-RS will provide a more detailed strategic framework for that part of the Borough identified as being within the Bedford/Kempston and northern Marston Vale Growth Area.

BOROUGH WIDE SPATIAL VISION

3.8 By 2021 Bedford Borough will have become a place where:

"Change is embraced. Growth focused on the borough's main urban areas and the Marston Vale has fostered a successful economy and expanding sustainable communities, supported by better social and transport infrastructure. At the same time the town centre has been revitalised, acting as a catalyst for growth and leading to a step change in Bedford's role and place within the region. Rural communities have been sustained through meeting local needs and remain viable. All of this will have been achieved in ways which ensure that the development and use of land promotes quality of life, health and well being for everyone as well as celebrating our distinctiveness and protecting the Borough's environmental assets."

3.9 The borough wide vision is expanded below to cover the specific challenges which need to be addressed.

TOWN CENTRE

- Bedford will have reclaimed its role as the county town, building on its distinctive personality.
- It will be a prosperous, bustling, safe place where more people will live and work with a greater quality and range of services and facilities.
- Redevelopment in the Riverside, Castle Lane and bus station areas increasing the quantity and range of retail space, dwellings and leisure facilities will have contributed to the revitalisation of the town centre.

BEDFORD GROWTH AREA (BEDFORD, KEMPSTON AND THE NORTHERN MARSTON VALE)

- Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale will be the areas of the borough that have changed the most.
- The pace of housing delivery in the Growth Area will have increased.
- An expanded local economy will produce good quality jobs which in turn help strengthen the housing market.
- Bedford will increasingly service the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area's knowledge-based economy and become a regional centre for business, arts, creative industries and culture.
- The urban area will have expanded westwards, and to the north and north east with the establishment of high quality neighbourhoods with local facilities and good links to the town centre.
- Wixams new settlement will be a vibrant, developing, sustainable community with a new rail connection to London.
- The Marston Vale will fulfil its potential in becoming a centre for green infrastructure and leisure through the Forest of Marston Vale initiative and potentially the concept of the Bedford - Milton Keynes Canal.
- The transport network infrastructure and the quality of public transport services will have improved.
- East-west communications will be much improved with the completion of the Great Barford bypass and improvements to the A421 west of Bedford and the Oxford - Bedford rail link.

THE RURAL POLICY AREA

- The rural areas will have stayed rural.
- The villages will have retained their separate, distinctive and varied characters.
- The rural area will be a viable place in which to live and work with a range of services and facilities and housing opportunities to meet local needs.
- The transport network will provide accessibility to places of work, leisure and shopping.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

3.10 In order to deliver the vision of the plan, the objectives below have been identified. They have been developed in consultation with the community and provide specific direction to the policies of the plan. Appendix C illustrates which plan policies are derived from which objective.

1. Deliver the planned growth in Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale (Local Plan 2002 commitments – see Figure 2) to achieve a step change in the Borough's role in the region.
2. Ensure future development is based upon sustainable development principles.
3. Provide guidance on where any future growth if required should occur (in the period up to 2021).
4. Provide quality housing to meet current and future needs of all sectors of the community.
5. Foster significant employment growth.
6. Direct retail development to the most appropriate locations.
7. Foster the regeneration of Bedford town centre to enable it to fulfil a greater role within the region.
8. Support the delivery of coordinated transport improvements with the emphasis on non-car modes, improving east-west communications and achieving greater transport interchange.
9. Encourage key rural communities to become more sustainable places to live and work.
10. Achieve high quality design that takes account of character, local distinctiveness and sustainable design principles, enables access and promotes community safety.
11. Protect and enhance the countryside, biodiversity and geodiversity, and the quality and connectivity of green infrastructure in the borough with particular emphasis on enhancing the Marston Vale.
12. Minimise the use of energy and encourage greater use of energy from renewable sources.
13. Provide a mechanism for the delivery of infrastructure (including health, education, transport, community, leisure and recreation facilities) in tandem with new development.
14. Protect and enhance the Borough's built, cultural and community assets and the character of settlements and foster the development of the Borough as a destination for heritage and cultural tourism.
15. Protect the environment by minimising the risk of flooding and the effects of climate change and facilitating improvements in air quality.
16. Involve the community in the decisions about the planning of the Borough so they can influence and shape such decisions.

PART FOUR
THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

HOW WE GET THERE

4.1 The previous section sets out a vision of "where we want to be" by 2021 and suggested some of the key outcomes which we will be looking to achieve. The purpose of this section is to address the question "how do we get there" and to outline the policies needed to realise the plan's vision and objectives.

4.2 The spatial portrait (Section 2) describes the kind of place that Bedford is today. It has many strengths: its strategic location; its environment, built and natural; its people and diverse communities; and its compact town centre positioned on one of the region's great rivers. However it also has weaknesses which were highlighted as issues for this plan to address. Relative to the surrounding area, these include a legacy of under investment, a poorly performing local economy, a weak housing market and an infrastructure deficit. Bedford has increasingly been overshadowed by its neighbours with the result that over time its function and role in the region has been eroded.

4.3 National and regional planning guidance provide the context for the scope and nature of the change which will take place in the borough. Public sector investment programmes will help determine the pace of that change.

4.4 The draft East of England Plan sets out planning policy for the region and thus the whole of Bedford Borough. A part of the borough has been designated as being within the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Growth Area, established in the government's Sustainable Communities Plan of 2003. The sub-regional strategy for the Growth Area designates the urban areas of Bedford and Kempston and the northern Marston Vale as the focal point for growth in north Bedfordshire. Most of this area is within Bedford Borough but a small part of the Marston Vale lies in Mid Bedfordshire District. The Bedford Growth Area (the area within which growth locations are to be defined) is indicated on the Key Diagram (Appendix A).

4.5 Policies for the location of much more modest levels of development in the Rural Policy Area beyond the Bedford Growth Area are set out in the draft East of England Plan. The plan directs development towards market towns and thereafter to the larger villages with a good range of services known as key service centres.

4.6 Acknowledging the influence of the two different regional plans which apply to the borough, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the preferred locations for development in the Growth Area and the Rural Policy Areas beyond. The housing requirements for the two policy areas are discrete. The two housing targets will be monitored separately and not collectively and there will be no transfer of requirements between the two policy areas. However, it is important to note that the requirement for new jobs will be monitored borough-wide. No regional or sub-regional figures are available for the two discrete policy areas though, in line with regional and sub-regional strategies, the Growth Area will be the focus for new employment provision.

4.7 For the purposes of this plan two policy areas are defined; the Bedford Growth Area and the Rural Policy Area (see para 4.6). The Rural Policy Area is the area not covered by the Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale Growth Area. The Growth Area and Rural Policy Area are shown on the Key Diagram.

The following table shows which policies in the plan relate to both the Growth Area and the Rural Policy Area, and which policies do not.

Policy	Applies to the Growth Area	Applies to the Rural Policy Area
CP1 and CP2	✓	✓
CP3 to CP6	✓	✘
CP7 to CP11	✓	✓
CP12 and CP13	✓	✓
CP14	✘	✓
CP15 and CP16	✘	✓
CP17 and CP18	✓	✓
CP19 to CP31	✓	✓

4.8 The growth agenda offers a new impetus and most importantly the commitment on the part of the government and the council to redress the balance. In the coming years, there is a real opportunity to embrace change and to re-establish the borough's position and profile in the region.

4.9 In spatial terms, this means dramatically expanding the local economy to encourage population growth through in-migration and thereby growing the housing market. Housing and employment growth will be concentrated in the Bedford, Kempston and northern Marston Vale Growth Area. This includes development of a new settlement, Wixams, and new strategic employment site(s) to provide quality employment accommodation. New development will be accompanied by improved transport infrastructure including a new Wixams rail station, bypasses and park and ride services. The countryside and smaller villages in the borough will continue to be viable areas for business and leisure. The provision of affordable housing will be a priority in the Borough. The role of the Bedford town centre will be strengthened so that it becomes a place where more people choose to live and shop. This will include new shopping facilities, tourism and cultural provision, improved public transport interchanges and living accommodation. The borough will seek to provide a quality environment. The Council will seek to minimise pollution and the effects of climate change from new developments. Specific environmental measures include the provision of green infrastructure and continued support for the Forest of Marston Vale.

4.10 In essence the role of the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is to provide the spatial framework to manage growth positively and in that context to promote the sustainability of the borough as a whole (see Policy CP2). The Plan forms part of a suite of strategies including the Council's Community Plan, Corporate Plan and economic development strategy "Changing Places", that share this common aim. Strategic approaches to sustainability and climate change issues, such as flood risk management are also relevant, for example, the Marston Vale Surface Waters Plan.

4.11 The impact of the borough's response to this challenge will be dependent upon the support of the Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy and the Regional Transport Strategy which will guide public sector investment; the government's growth area funding programmes; and the efforts of Renaissance Bedford, the Local Development Delivery Vehicle established by key stakeholders to champion growth within the designated Growth Area.

4.12 Two strategic policies are proposed:

POLICY CP1 - SPATIAL STRATEGY

Sustainable levels, locations and forms of development will be sought in accordance with the stated objectives and policies of this Plan and the objectives and policies of the East of England Plan and the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.

POLICY CP2 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The development and use of land will ensure that:

i) Resources and infrastructure are used efficiently with the priority on the re-use of brownfield land; and,

ii) Biodiversity is protected and scarce resources are conserved; and,

iii) Climate change, renewable energy and drainage issues are properly addressed; and,

iv) Buildings and spaces promote the character of townscape and setting of settlements and enhance human health and safety; and,

v) The character and quality of local landscapes are preserved and where appropriate enhanced; and,

vi) Important historic and cultural features are protected; and,

vii) The use of public transport, walking and cycling is encouraged and car use minimised; and,

viii) Opportunities for leisure, recreation and tourism are readily available.



4.13 The remaining policies are structured under five themes. The themes reflect the issues that the plan needs to address and the key elements of the spatial vision and objectives. The five themes are:

THE GROWTH AREA

This section includes:

- The location of development
- Housing
- Employment.

SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

This section includes:

- The framework for development in the Rural Policy Area (outside the Bedford Growth Area).
- The provision of housing and employment.
- The provision of housing to meet local needs.

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND REVITALISATION

This section includes:

- How the town centre will change.
- The impact the town centre will need to have on the Growth Area and borough as a whole.

DISTINCTIVENESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

This section includes:

- Accentuating the borough's positive and distinctive features.
- Quality development to create a sense of place.
- Promoting sustainability in the built and natural environment and protecting our assets.

DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Transport and community infrastructure
- Approach to monitoring.

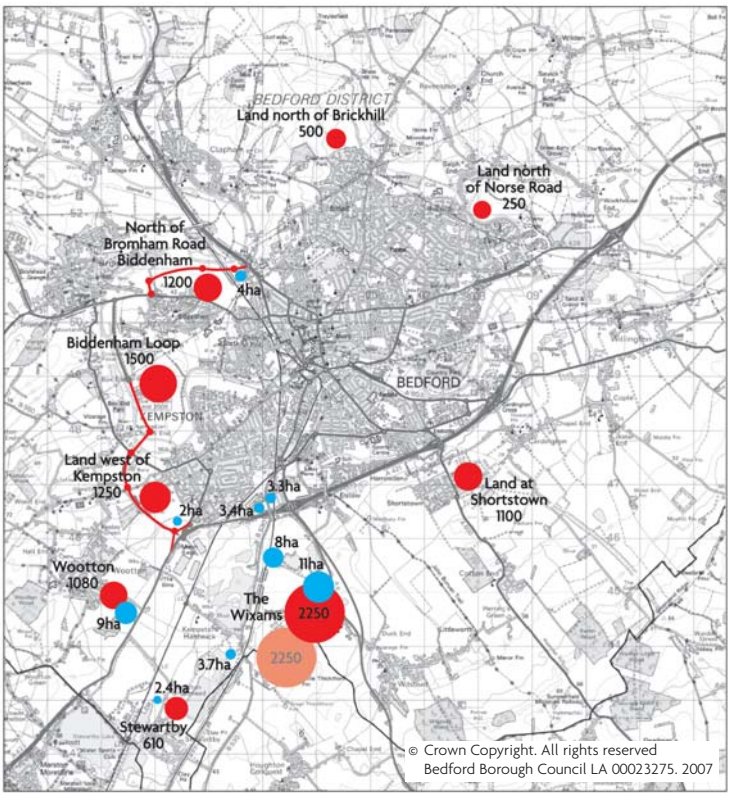
THE GROWTH AREA

THE LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE GROWTH AREA

SEE KEY DIAGRAM IN APPENDIX A

4.14 In relation to determining appropriate locations for development in the Growth Area, the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy states that:

- Bedford Town Centre will be the location for a range of development types including retail, cultural and leisure development and a range of office accommodation. Allocations to meet these requirements are identified in the Town Centre Area Action Plan.
- Housing development is expected to take place principally on sites within the Bedford Growth Area that are existing allocations, in order to foster certainty and continuity. These allocations are identified in the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 and include:
  - Sites within the existing urban area
  - Sites adjoining the urban area within the urban area boundary
  - Defined locations in the Marston Vale at Wootton, Stewartby and Wixams (see Figure 2).
- There is an expectation that specific economic sectors will be fostered, particularly high value knowledge based industries. To provide for the right quality and type of development and to encourage investment, new sites may be required in sustainable locations.



Committed development (housing)

Committed development (employment)

Committed development in Mid Bedfordshire (housing)

Figure 2
Local Plan 2002 Commitments

4.15 The extent of the Growth Area is shown on the Key Diagram. Should the Council determine through monitoring that development delivery from the committed sites is likely to become exhausted and there be a need to make additional land allocations to meet Growth Area delivery targets through the plan-making process, the Council would seek sites by applying Policy CP5. In order to ensure that the most sustainable options were chosen, the Council may need to look beyond the extent of the Growth Area shown on the Key Diagram. If this became necessary, the Growth Area would be expanded to accommodate those sites.

4.16 In this context, Policy CP3 focuses development within the Growth Area on the urban area (including the town centre) and Growth Area key service centres. The Council's 2002 Local Plan established the urban area boundary as a policy tool. The urban area boundary marks the outer limit of the expansion of Bedford and Kempston. The urban area boundary is shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map. Whilst not within the boundary the settlement of Shortstown which immediately adjoins the urban area, is considered in policy terms to be urban. The Shortstown Development Brief 2003 proposes a development limit for the settlement which will be further considered through the Allocations and Designations DPD. In the interim period before the adoption of the Allocations and Designations DPD, the Development Brief boundary will be treated as the SPA boundary for Shortstown.

4.17 In Policy CP4 Wootton, Stewartby and Wixams are identified as key service centres. They are all focal points for the provision of homes, jobs facilities and services. Wixams is shown "bracketed" reflecting the fact that whilst not yet implemented, Wixams has the potential to become a key service centre during the plan period. The methodology for the identification of key service centres is set out in the Supporting Information. The development limits for Wootton and Stewartby are defined by their Settlement Policy Areas (see para 4.52). SPA boundaries in the Growth Area are defined in the adopted Local Plan 2002 and are shown on the Proposals Map Insets. SPA boundaries are to be reassessed, where required, as part of the Allocations and Designations DPD. In the case of Wixams a SPA will be defined through the Allocations and Designations DPD.

4.18 The land outside of the defined limits of the urban area and the key service centres is in policy terms open countryside. The countryside policies CP12, CP13 and CP17 will therefore apply in these areas.

POLICY CP3 - THE LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE GROWTH AREA

The locations for growth will be

i) within the urban area boundary

ii) within the defined limits of Growth Area key service centres

Outside of the areas defined in i) and ii) policies CP12, CP13 and CP17 will apply.

POLICY CP4 - KEY SERVICE CENTRES IN THE GROWTH AREA

The Growth Area key service centres are (will be):

- Stewartby
- Wootton
- (Wixams).

The Growth Area key service centres are identified on the Key Diagram.

SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO THE ALLOCATION OF LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE GROWTH AREA

4.19 The sequential approach set out below in Policy CP5 will be used to provide a framework for any additional allocations which may need to be made (through the Allocations and Designations DPD) in the plan period. The MKSM Sub-Regional Strategy sets the sub-regional housing requirement and clearly endorses the development of housing on committed sites from the Local Plan 2002 to meet the requirement. At 31/03/2007, 10,061 of the required 16,270 dwellings had been completed or had been granted planning permission. A further 3,375 were subject to resolutions to grant planning permission subject to the completion of Section 106 agreements. The current position of housing supply is shown in Appendix F. The Council considers that, with the current reliance on 'windfall' development, the total 16,270 dwellings can be developed without the need for further allocations. However, to enable the policy to be responsive to changes in circumstances and to bring the strategy into line with national guidance on 'windfall' sites, Policy CP5 provides a search sequence for housing allocations.

4.20 The search sequence for residential development endorses the need to target accessible locations and conserve greenfield land. Suitable sites in step 1 may include regeneration sites, re-use of employment land (in accordance with Policy CP11), intensification and mixed use development.

4.21 Monitoring of the delivery of housing within the Growth Area will be undertaken (see Appendix F) and could trigger a review of the Allocations and Designations Development Plan Document (DPD). Policy CP5 will provide the necessary search sequence and guidance to identify sites for housing in such a DPD.

4.22 Steps 2 and 3 enable the site search to be widened where necessary to land adjoining the urban area and Growth Area key service centres subject to sustainability and environmental considerations.



4.23 In relation to employment sites it is recognised that the locational requirements of businesses vary between employment types. These requirements will need to be balanced with a locational approach which seeks to reduce travel to work and targets locations which can be served by energy efficient modes of transport. Suitable sites on previously developed or underused land may include small sites in residential neighbourhoods and reuse of existing employment sites. In accordance with national planning guidance the town centre will be the preferred location for office provision. See also Policy CP19. Urban extension sites will need to be well related to the primary transport network and have or be capable of achieving good connections to the public transport and cycle network.

POLICY CP5 - SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO THE ALLOCATION OF LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE GROWTH AREA

The council will look to allocate sites for development using the steps below in the order shown.

Search sequence for residential development

Step 1: previously developed land and underused land within the existing urban area and Growth Area key service centres

Step 2: urban extensions.

Step 3: extensions to Growth Area key service centres.

Priority in the selection of sites in steps 2 and 3 will be determined in relation to the following factors.

- The need to make best use of previously developed land.
- The need to conserve and enhance the environmental assets of the borough as set out in Policies CP21 – CP26.
- Access to public transport, cycle and walking networks or an ability to provide new or upgrade existing provision.
- Access to jobs and community and leisure provision.
- Adequacy of infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the development or the ability to provide new, or upgrade existing infrastructure.
- The impact which the site may have on the delivery of strategic infrastructure needed to strengthen the housing market and increase the rate of housing delivery.

Search sequence for employment development

Step 1: previously developed land and underused land within the existing urban area and Growth Area key service centres. In the case of office development the town centre will be the preferred location.

Step 2: urban extensions which are well related to the primary transport network and have or are capable of achieving good connections to the public transport and cycle network.

Step 3: extensions to Growth Area key service centres which are well related to the primary transport network and have or are capable of achieving good connections to the public transport and cycle network.

Step 4: other Growth Area locations which satisfy a proven need for a quality or a size of site not available in or on the edge of the urban area or Growth Area key service centres.

Priority in the selection of sites in steps 2 - 4 will be determined in relation to the following factors.

- The need to make best use of previously developed land.
- The need to conserve and enhance the environmental assets of the borough as set out in Policies CP21-CP26.
- Site suitability in the context of the range and quality of business uses required in accordance with Policies CP21-26.
- Access to the primary transport network.
- Good access to public transport, cycle and walking networks or an ability to provide new, or upgrade existing provision.
- Adequacy of infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the development or the ability to provide or upgrade existing infrastructure.

HOUSING IN THE GROWTH AREA

4.24 The Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (MKSM SRS) sets targets for the level of housing provision in the period 2001-2021 and provides guidance on the mix and range of housing which needs to be provided.

4.25 In total 19,500 dwellings are to be provided in the Bedford, Kempston and northern Marston Vale Growth Area as a whole, 16,270 of which are to be located in Bedford Borough. The strategy also expects annual housing completions to rise over the plan period requiring a higher pace of development in the years 2006-2021 (876 dwellings p.a.) compared to the first five years of the plan period (626 dwellings p.a.). Monitoring data for the period 2001-2004/5 shows that there has been an under-delivery of housing to meet the requirement (an average of 438 dwellings per annum). Dwelling completions for the remaining 16 year plan period will need to average 907 per annum to meet the requirement by 2021. At 31/03/2005 there was a supply of over 12,157 dwellings in the Growth Area. The delivery of housing in the Growth Area is expected to accelerate through the remainder of the plan period (see Appendix F for further details). The preparation of an Allocations and Designations DPD is to be commenced in 2007. This will provide flexibility in supply of housing land.

4.26 Priority will be given in phasing residential development to delivering existing commitments (as allocated in the Local Plan 2002) and to the proposals coming forward in the Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan. The priority given to Local Plan allocations reflects the endorsement given by the Local Plan Inspector to sites which together provide substantial commitments (primarily for housing) in accordance with national policy and compatible with the regional guidance now in force. The sites allocated in the local plan (2002) within and adjoining the urban area, and at Wootton, Stewartby and Wixams fit well with the MKSM SRS. These sites must be given the opportunity to play their part in delivering the growth now required in the area. They all have or are near to achieving planning permission and crucially, they provide much of the infrastructure which is vital for improving the borough's strategic accessibility. Thereafter, development of housing will be promoted in accordance with Policy CP6 in step with supporting key infrastructure, such as transport, utilities, health, education and environmental infrastructure. The maintenance of a satisfactory relationship between housing provision and job growth in the borough is also important to prevent an increase in out-commuting from the area.

POLICY CP6 - THE SCALE AND PACE OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE GROWTH AREA

Provision will be made for 16,270 additional dwellings in the Bedford Growth Area between 2001 and 2021 to be phased as follows:

	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016-2021	TOTAL
Bedford Growth Area	3130	4380	4380	4380	16,270

4.27 It is vital to ensure that these new dwellings provide a mix of sizes, types and tenures to meet the identified needs of all sectors of the community. The affordable housing element of schemes must reflect housing need in terms of tenure and housing size and mix. On sites of 15 dwellings and above applicants for planning permission will be expected to submit a statement explaining how they have taken account of housing needs (both market and affordable) in devising their proposed mix of tenures and house types.

4.28 The mix and range of market housing is an important consideration. As household size and housing preferences continue to change it is important to ensure that new housing reflects these housing requirements. These will be kept under review through housing market assessments in line with national government guidance (currently in draft form).

4.29 On the basis of the council's most recent Housing Requirement Study (2003) the borough will need to provide in the region of 224 affordable dwellings each year to address housing needs. Households in housing need are defined in the Housing Requirement Study as those households currently lacking their own housing or living in housing which is unsuitable or inadequate, who cannot afford to buy or rent suitable housing in the open market and who are unable to resolve their situation without assistance.

4.30 Those in housing need span a broad range of household types and some groups within the community have particular housing needs including older people, those with special needs, the homeless and low income groups. There are also differing requirements in relation to size and type of dwelling and affordability. The greatest need continues to be for social rented accommodation but a range of low cost accommodation and intermediate tenures is also required. Applicants should seek early advice from the council as to the requirements for affordable housing so that they can be incorporated into market housing layouts.

4.31 National guidance on affordable housing is set out in PPS3: Housing. The guidance states that the national indicative minimum site size threshold above which an element of affordable housing can be required is 15 dwellings. Lower minimum thresholds can be set where practicable and viable including in rural areas.

4.32 The borough has a good supply of sites in the Growth Area which will provide affordable housing and no reason therefore to lower the threshold below 15 dwellings. In the rural areas however, once the sites allocated in the local plan are completed, a lower threshold will be needed to help maintain affordable housing supply alongside measures to enable affordable housing to meet local housing needs (see Policy CP17).

POLICY CP7 - MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

New housing developments will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling size and type to meet the identified housing needs of the community. Larger sites should provide a broad mix of housing suitable for different household types. On smaller sites, the mix of housing should contribute to the creation of mixed communities.

This policy also applies outside the Growth Area.

POLICY CP8 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE BOROUGH

On sites of 15 units and over (or 0.5ha and over) and in villages having a population of less than 3,000 on sites of 3 dwellings or more (or 0.1ha and over) the council will expect the provision of 30% affordable housing.

The policy will apply where a planning application could have been submitted for a larger site within the above policy threshold. Other than in exceptional circumstances, affordable housing provision should be made on-site.

This policy also applies outside the Growth Area.

4.33 In meeting housing needs the council is required to take account of the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and travelling show people. Although government advice specifically excludes travelling show people from the definition of Gypsies and Travellers, the similarity in the locational requirements of the three groups means that the same policy approach can be adopted.

4.34 Local authorities are required to carry out Gypsies and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) to inform the preparation of Development Plan Documents. A sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was completed in 2007. Government guidance also states that Regional Spatial Strategies must specify pitch requirements for each local planning authority area based on local accommodation assessments (GTAAs). The East of England Regional Assembly is currently carrying out a single issue RSS review to address the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites to which the sub-regional GTAA will provide background evidence.

4.35 Where a need has been identified through the RSS (or, in advance of this, through a GTAA) for the provision of additional Gypsy and Traveller sites, such sites should be located in general accordance with Policies CP3 and CP14. In principle a sequential approach will be followed to identify any necessary allocations as part of the Allocations and Designations DPD process. However, it is recognised that land which is available and affordable within the urban area and within SPAs for these purposes is likely to be limited and, given the working patterns of some Gypsies and Travellers, may not be suitable to meet their needs. In these circumstances, countryside locations may also need to be considered.

4.36 Proposals for sites for travelling showpeople will be assessed against the Policy CP9 criteria. Their specific needs have not been assessed through the GTAA and their need for sites will, therefore, be addressed separately in accordance with the advice in Circular 04/2007: Planning for Travelling Showpeople.

POLICY CP9 - ACCOMMODATION FOR GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

Where a need has been identified through the RSS (or, in advance of this, through a GTAA) for the provision of additional accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, sites will be allocated and planning permission will be granted within or adjoining the urban area or SPAs or, where no such sites are reasonably available or suitable for the use, in the countryside, provided that in relation to all locations, the following requirements are clearly satisfied:

i) Submission of evidence to justify local need for the scale and nature of the accommodation proposed; and

ii) Satisfactory vehicular access from the public highway; and

iii) Siting and landscaping ensure that any impact upon the character and appearance of the locality is minimised, including impacts on biodiversity and nature conservation. In areas of nationally recognised designations planning permission will only be granted where the objectives of designation would not be compromised by the development; and

iv) The amenities of the occupiers of nearby land and property would not be harmed by the development in an unacceptable manner; and

v) Adequate schools, shops and other community facilities are within reasonable travelling distance and preferably can be reached by foot, cycle or public transport; and

vi) The scale of the site or the number of pitches would not be sufficient to dominate the nearest settled community and would not place undue pressure on local infrastructure; and

vii) The site would not be located in an area at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplain.

This policy also applies outside of the Growth Area.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE GROWTH AREA

4.37 A step change in housing delivery will only result from a step change in the local economy of Bedford, as this is necessary to strengthen the local housing market. The Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy sets a target of facilitating a net gain of some 11,400 jobs in the borough as a whole, whilst stating the need to review this figure as part of the preparation of the East of England Plan. (This plan currently indicates that a further 9,000 jobs should be provided in Bedfordshire beyond the Growth Areas but as yet no allocations have been made to individual districts.) The borough council considers the MKSM SRS target to under-estimate both needs and the influence that an expanding economy must have on the delivery of housing growth.

4.38 The MKSM SRS looks to regional economic strategies to be the principal strategic means of building prosperity. The East of England Development Agency's Regional Economic Strategy establishes the regional priorities for economic development. These are applied at sub-regional level by the 'Building a Sustainable Economy', the Bedfordshire & Luton Joint Economic Development Strategy and at local level by 'Changing Places' the economic development strategy for Bedford and the northern Marston Vale. The sub-regional Joint Economic Development Strategy indicates that Bedfordshire's economy needs to grow by 50,000 jobs net during the plan period. This is reflected in 'Changing Places' and is regarded as a realistic target by the Borough Council since local economic growth is a key priority and considerable effort will be required to reverse the trends. Apportioning the 50,000 jobs between the individual Districts indicates that Bedford Borough will need to provide in the region of 16,000 additional jobs to 2021.

4.39 For more than a decade "declining" industries in Bedfordshire have declined at a faster rate than in adjoining areas whilst "growth" industries have grown at a slower rate. The comparative size of the local economy has thus shrunk in marked contrast to other regional centres. Although the expansion of London Luton Airport would be a major economic stimulant in the south of the County, its impact in Bedford is less certain. Most employment sites and centres of excellence are located within the Growth Area - in or near to Bedford.

4.40 The principal obstacles to economic growth have been identified as strategic accessibility (the infrastructure deficit which current programmes are beginning to address), the absence of a positive investment profile (which is about marketing and promotion) and the availability of suitable business premises (both in terms of quantity and quality). The promotion of innovation, enterprise and skill development will also be important and support from local colleges can help in this regard, but achieving the scale of change required will depend upon the extent that businesses move to or expand in Bedford.

4.41 Inward investment measures will naturally focus on the high value knowledge based growth industries. However the local economy needs to expand in all sectors including tourism and there is a need to target more general office and shop based service industries in order to create a balanced economy and support the renaissance of Bedford Town Centre.

4.42 So far, the practice of allocating open-ended employment sites (that allow B1, B2 or B8 to be built) has resulted in mostly warehousing and distribution developments (Use Class B8) being implemented. Whilst this investment interest is welcomed and it is recognised that this use of the particular sites coming forward is the most appropriate, there are concerns that the market is failing to provide a range of accommodation. This has hampered the expansion of the local economy since quality office (B1) and to a lesser extent smaller industrial (B2) premises remain in short supply. The concern is not so much about the density of jobs created by new warehousing but more about the quality of those jobs, the supply of unskilled labour and the limited potential impact that such jobs would have on strengthening the demand for local housing.

4.43 Details of the supply of employment land are shown in Appendix F and will be regularly updated through the Annual Monitoring Report.

4.44 Since the Borough's main business park (Priory Business Park) is now largely developed, the supply of high quality B1 office environments has become critical and, in addition to promoting redevelopment within the town centre (focused on the railway station), it is likely that the local planning authority will need to seek out one or two new strategic business sites. The focus for the allocation of quality B1 space will be the Growth Area in accordance with the search sequence set out in Policy CP5.

4.45 The Council commissioned a review of employment land in the borough (2005) in accordance with guidance issued by the government. The findings of the study support the need for an additional 75ha of quality B1 office space (during the period 2001-2021) and forecast a decline in the B2 and B8 sectors. Information on the supply of land for employment purposes is set out in Appendix F. Table 4 in Appendix F shows a potential supply of about 54ha of B1 land, leaving in the region of 21ha to be identified (up to 30ha if some existing permissions are discounted) in an Allocations and Designations DPD. Whilst the expectation is for B2 and B8 sectors to decline to 2021, recent monitoring shows that the borough is still experiencing some B2 and B8 growth. It is expected that the re-use of existing B2 and B8 sites along with the land supply shown in Table 4 will cater for B2 and B8 demand during this period.

4.46 The retention of existing businesses and the space they occupy is also important since over 20ha of employment sites have been lost to other uses in five years (2000-2005). The criteria for assessing the merits of such sites will be set out in the Allocations and Designations DPD.

POLICY CP10 - THE CREATION OF JOBS

A minimum of 16,000 net additional jobs will be provided in the borough by 2021. Provision for new jobs will be made in accordance with policies CP3 and CP14 to support and/or create sustainable communities.

This policy also applies outside the Growth Area.

POLICY CP11 - EMPLOYMENT LAND

Up to 75 hectares of additional employment land will be provided in the period 2001-2021. In such allocations the emphasis will be on creating new B1 environments providing a range of quality development opportunities to encourage the development of high value knowledge-based industries and smaller units in both urban and rural areas.

The Council will allocate sites specific to the B1, B2 and B8 Use Classes to achieve a mix and range of sites and a balanced economy.

The preferred location for strategic employment sites will be the Growth Area in accordance with CP5.

Land allocated for employment and existing employment sites will only be considered for alternative uses where its retention is unnecessary and specific community and environmental benefits can be demonstrated and achieved.

This policy also applies outside the Growth Area.

SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES

4.47 Beyond the urban areas of Bedford and Kempston, the borough is made up of a large rural area which is home to about a third of the borough's residents. The Ouse valley is a key determinant of the rural settlement pattern with many of the larger villages being located along its course. Away from the river valley the north-east of the borough is, in comparison, much more sparsely populated. In the south of the borough the landscape and settlement pattern has been strongly influenced by the use of the clays of the Marston Vale for brickmaking.

4.48 Although diverse in character the borough's rural communities face similar challenges. The provision of rural facilities and services and affordable housing for local people are key issues.

4.49 The plan's vision is to ensure that the rural area retains its varied character and remains a viable place to live and work.

4.50 For the purposes of this plan two policy areas are defined; the Bedford Growth Area and the Rural Policy Area (see para 4.6). The Rural Policy Area is the area not covered by the Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale Growth Area. The Growth Area and Rural Policy Area are shown on the Key Diagram.

4.51 The primary purpose of this section is to set out the policies for the Rural Policy Area in particular the location of development and the amount of housing development required in the plan period. It should be noted however, that land outside the defined settlement policy areas of key service centres within the Growth Area is treated as open countryside in policy terms and Polices CP12, CP13, CP17 and CP18 apply to it. In addition, there are five policies within the Growth Area chapter of the plan which include borough wide policies and which apply both in the Growth and Rural Policy Areas. These are Policies CP7, CP8, CP9, CP10 and CP11.

SETTLEMENT POLICY AREAS

4.52 The Council's 2002 Local Plan established Settlement Policy Areas (SPAs) as a policy tool. The SPAs define the extent of the built up character of settlements and distinguish between the built-up areas of villages and the surrounding countryside. They promote the sustainability of the countryside and rural communities by:

- Protecting the countryside for its own sake, preventing the coalescence of settlements, ribbon development and the piecemeal extension of villages and promoting rural restraint.
- Focusing development needed to sustain rural communities on the built-up areas of villages.

4.53 SPA boundaries are defined in the adopted Local Plan 2002 and are shown on the Proposals Map Insets. SPA boundaries are to be reassessed, where required, as part of the Allocations and Designations DPD.

POLICY CP12 - SETTLEMENT POLICY AREAS

Settlement Policy Areas are defined for villages with a built-up character. The Settlement Policy Area boundary encloses the main built-up part of the village but excludes undeveloped areas or more loosely knit development.

This policy also applies in the Growth Area.

POLICY CP13 - THE COUNTRYSIDE AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN IT

All land outside the Settlement Policy Areas is defined as countryside. Development in the countryside will only be permitted if it would be consistent with national policy, particularly that in PPS7: Planning and the Countryside.

This policy also applies in the Growth Area.

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL POLICY AREA

4.54 The draft East of England Plan states that in determining appropriate locations for development in the Rural Policy Area:

- Development should be focused in market towns and thereafter in key service centres. (As the borough does not have any market towns the focus will be on key service centres).
- Key service centres (defined as large villages with a good level of services) are identified as the settlements most appropriate for accommodating housing and employment needs.
- In other rural settlements the emphasis is on supporting the rural economy and services and meeting local housing needs.

4.55 In this context Policy CP14 makes a clear distinction between development in the rural key service centres and other settlements with SPAs. Where residential, employment and retail development occurs within the Rural Policy Area it will be focused in key service centres. Limited infill development may also be permitted in other SPAs. Only exceptionally will development be permitted outside SPAs.

4.56 The rural key service centres (Policy CP15) have been identified taking account of:

- The draft East of England Plan.
- Research into the level of services and facilities in each village, their population and the public transport provision in the Rural Policy Area.
- The distribution of settlements within the borough.
- The settlement hierarchies proposed within the neighbouring local authorities.

4.57 The methodology is set out in full in the Supporting Information.

POLICY CP14 - LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL POLICY AREA

In circumstances where there is a proven need for development to be located in the Rural Policy Area, most new development will be focused in or around the edge of key service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together.

In rural settlements defined by a Settlement Policy Area boundary which are not designated as Key Service Centres, such development will be restricted to that which is required to meet local business and community needs and to maintain the vitality of those communities.

POLICY CP15 – RURAL KEY SERVICE CENTRES

The rural key service centres are:

- Bromham
- Clapham
- Great Barford
- Harrold
- Sharnbrook
- Wilstead

The rural key service centres are identified on the Key Diagram.

SCALE AND NATURE OF HOUSING IN THE RURAL POLICY AREA

4.58 The scale of housing development in the Rural Policy Area is defined in the draft East of England Plan which proposes 1300 dwellings in the period 2001-2021. The council's housing monitoring indicates that, at 31/03/2007, completions and planning permissions in the borough outside the Growth Area had already reached 1348. Monitoring data shows that completion rates have exceeded requirements in the early years of the plan period. Completion rates at this level are not expected to continue in the Rural Policy Area throughout the plan period (see Appendix F for further details).

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

4.59 To improve the provision of affordable housing in the rural areas (including the rural areas within both the Rural Policy Area and the Growth Area), the Council will use the following methods:

- To ensure the provision of more affordable dwellings in smaller settlements, affordable housing will be sought on sites of 3 or more dwellings in settlements of under 3000 population. (On sites of 3 dwellings, 1 affordable dwelling will be sought). Elsewhere affordable housing will be required on sites of 15 dwellings and above.
- Where affordable housing need is identified for local 'qualifying persons' within a parish or group of adjacent parishes, affordable housing development will be encouraged. 'Qualifying persons' are defined as a person or persons in housing need (as defined in para 4.26) who live in, or are employed in, or have close local connections with the relevant village or parish or an immediately neighbouring parish.

4.60 In addition parish councils are advised and encouraged to do two things. Firstly to maintain awareness through regular survey as to the extent and nature of local affordable housing needs. Secondly to assist the management of future housing provided in this manner, explore the potential for creating a village trust or similar vehicle, or establish a relationship with a provider of affordable housing who will work with the parish.

POLICY CP16 - HOUSING IN THE RURAL POLICY AREA

- The Rural Policy Area of the borough will provide for a net increase of 1300 dwellings in the period 2001-2021.
- A mix of dwelling type and size will be provided in accordance with Policy CP7.
- Affordable housing will be provided in accordance with Policies CP8 and CP17.

POLICY CP17 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS IN THE RURAL AREA

Exceptionally, permission will be granted for sites providing 100% affordable housing to meet identified local needs. Within the defined area of need and subject to environmental constraints, sites should be identified in accordance with the following search sequence:

- Within a settlement with a SPA.
- Immediately adjoining a settlement with a SPA.
- Within or immediately adjoining a settlement without a SPA.

Permission will only be granted where:

i) Local housing need is evidenced by an up to date survey and the number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to and appropriate to the strict extent of the identified local need; and,

ii) The site meets the locational criteria set out above; and,

iii) The development should contribute positively to the character of the village, maintain landscape character and not lead to coalescence with other settlements; and,

iv) The proposed site is well related to the built up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the structure, form, character and size of the village; and,

v) The housing proposed must be capable of management by the parish council, Registered Social Landlord, village trust or other similar organisation; and,

vi) The housing is provided in perpetuity for qualifying local people.

The provision of affordable housing to meet local needs may also be encouraged by the allocation of an exception site for 100% affordable housing.

This policy also applies in the Growth Area.



EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL POLICY AREA

4.61 The job target for the borough is set out in Policy CP10. The locational requirements of employment development will mean that the majority of new jobs and business activity will be focused on the urban area and thus within the Growth Area rather than the Rural Policy Area. However, it is to be expected that some economic development will occur focused on key service centres and associated with existing employment locations such as those at Wyboston on the edge of the St Neots urban area, Colworth House Sharnbrook and at Thurleigh Airfield and more generally as farms continue to diversify and redundant agricultural buildings are converted for business use. This approach is consistent with PPS7. Development at existing employment sites in the countryside is addressed in saved policies and will be further addressed in a Development Control Policies DPD.

4.62 In addition it is important to retain existing employment and service uses in order to support the sustainability of the Rural Policy Area. Where the loss of existing employment uses are proposed permission will only be granted where justified through the employment land review methodology as explained in Policy CP11.

POLICY CP18 - SUSTAINING THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND SERVICES

The Council will seek to assist the continued viability of the rural economy and support the sustainability of local services by:

i) Resisting proposals which would lead to the loss of sites used for industrial/commercial use in accordance with Policy CP11 or other employment generating uses in the countryside or rural settlements; and,

ii) Restricting the change of use of shops, post offices and public houses where it would impact on local services and communities; and,

iii) Supporting the retention of local community facilities.

This policy also applies in the Growth Area.

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND REVITALISATION



4.63 Bedford Town Centre is the heart of our community and should provide a range of quality shopping and entertainment for residents and visitors and a positive focus for public transport. However, the town centre needs to be far more than this - it is a place where people should live, work and have fun - for most people, the town centre defines what Bedford is.

4.64 The town centre is a very accessible location, particularly by public transport, making it a sustainable location for development and especially those forms of development that attract a lot of people to them. Government guidance on town centres is set out in PPS6 Planning for Town Centres, which lists the main town centre uses as being:

- retail (shops and restaurants)
- leisure and entertainment (including intensive sport and recreation uses such as cinemas, night-clubs, health and fitness centres and bingo halls)
- offices
- arts, culture and tourism (theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

4.65 Much has been done in recent years to improve the town centre - improvements to Harpur Street/Lime Street, Castle Mound refurbishment, the establishment of the Bedford Town Centre Co Ltd, the first ever Business Improvement District, improved car parks etc. However, compared to other centres it has lagged behind and has not been able to attract significant inward investment. In a commercial sense Bedford has stood still for perhaps as many as fifty years.

4.66 With government and regional policy focusing on Bedford's role within the Growth Area there is a compelling need for a major step change in the delivery of an attractive, lively and commercially successful town centre which will take the borough into the twenty-first century.





AREA ACTION PLAN

4.67 In order to provide a proper footing for the renaissance of the town centre, the Council has embarked on the preparation of the Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan, which with the Core Strategy & Rural Issues Plan will form part of the formal statutory framework for the planning of the borough.

4.68 PPS6 states that certain uses should be located as a preference within the town centre or, if there are no available sites, on the edge of the town centre before out of centre sites are considered. In the case of Policy CP19 the term 'town centre' in the second paragraph refers to the town centre boundary as defined on the Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan Proposals Map.

4.69 Over the next few years the town centre has the opportunity to realise its potential and the area action plan aims to meet this challenge and regenerate the town centre. It contains the following objectives:

A MORE COMMERCIALLY ACTIVE AND COMPETITIVE RETAIL CENTRE AND A MORE STRUCTURED AND DISTINCTIVE CENTRE

To provide a framework for the regeneration of the town centre.

To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole whilst promoting reinvestment in the existing retail centre including the High Street.

To create a more diverse and vital mix of uses including a major increase in the town's retail offer.

To achieve the successful integration of new development with the existing town centre.

To strengthen the economy of the town centre and its role as an employment, administrative and educational centre.

A BETTER CONNECTED CENTRE

To improve access to the town centre through the provision of new public transport interchanges, new highway infrastructure, public transport priority when feasible, the use of park and ride facilities and improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, taxis and private hire vehicles. Where and when highway capacity can be increased, priority should be given to modes other than private cars.

To improve the number and quality of the connections within the town centre, and between the centre and the river and railway station.

A MORE ATTRACTIVE AND LIVEABLE CENTRE

To protect, promote and enhance Bedford's natural and built heritage, cultural attractions and role as a tourist destination as an integral part of the strategy to regenerate the town centre.

To achieve high quality urban design with high quality materials and finishes.

A WELL MANAGED TOWN CENTRE

To create a town centre which is safe, attractive and in which people will want to live, shop, work and spend their leisure time.

To achieve high quality public realm improvements including provision for management and maintenance.

To ensure that new development and other partner agencies contribute to the delivery of the council's strategy for the town centre as a whole, including the provision of infrastructure.

The approach being taken by the council as set out in the Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan is an essential part of the council's strategy for the borough.

POLICY CP19 - BEDFORD TOWN CENTRE

The regeneration of the town centre will involve significant structural change, infrastructure improvements and mixed use developments that together will ensure the creation of a bustling, prosperous and safe town centre which is a more efficient, vibrant and attractive focus for the borough and its hinterland.

The town centre is the preferred location for new retail development and other forms of development that attract a lot of people, such as leisure and entertainment, offices, arts, culture and tourism.

RETAIL ISSUES

4.70 The town centre's ability to provide a strong retail focus in the borough is crucial to the strategy set out in the area action plan and must be secured in relation to the nature and scale of retail development occurring elsewhere.

4.71 The draft East of England Plan sets out a regional structure of retail centres, with major regional centres as the highest order centres and regional centres at the next level down. Bedford is defined as a regional centre. Local Development Documents are expected to define the hierarchy of centres below this level that complete the structure of retail provision in their area.

4.72 In order to gain a clear and up to date assessment of retailing in the borough, the council commissioned a study by GVA Grimley in 2005. This showed the following.

- In terms of trade draw, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Peterborough and Cambridge are Bedford's key competing centres. All these centres are set to enhance their retail offer further, with major new retail schemes planned which will strengthen their role.
- The major threats to the town centre arise from the continued expansion of larger, regional shopping centres and from the existing stock of 'out of centre' retail provision in Bedford.
- Bedford remains a vital and viable centre and has benefited from significant environmental improvements.
- The capacity analysis identifies significant scope for additional convenience goods shopping floorspace of about 6,000 sq.m. net by 2011.
- There is a clear quantitative and qualitative need for about 30,000 sq.m. net of additional comparison goods floorspace by 2011, increasing to about 47,000 sq.m. net by 2016, which should be focused in the town centre. The Town Centre Area Action Plan makes provision for 31,200 sq. m. of new retail floorspace on three key sites. The Council has not allocated land in the Town Centre Area Action Plan to meet all of the capacity identified in the 2005 Retail Study. Historically, Bedford has not attracted significant retail investment and, in light of this, it is not realistic to allocate land in the Town Centre Area Action Plan to meet all of the capacity identified. Therefore, the Council's strategy is to focus efforts on the delivery of these three key sites in the period up to 2011. After 2011, following retail development in the town centre, the Retail Study will be updated to review the amount of additional floorspace required to 2021. This will inform the timing of a review of the Town Centre Area Action Plan.

4.73 The Retail Study of 2005 confirms that Bedford town centre should remain the main focus of retailing in the borough. In order to maintain and enhance its role, it is important that the primary shopping area of the town centre continues to be the preferred location for new large scale development. The Primary Shopping Area is defined in the Town Centre Area Action Plan. If monitoring indicates that the identified retail floorspace of the three key sites allocated in the Town Centre Area Action Plan is not likely to be delivered, this will trigger an updated retail capacity study to consider the reasons for this, to review the amount of additional floorspace likely to be needed and to consider the scope for expansion of the Primary Shopping Area. This would take place within the context of a review of the Town Centre Area Action Plan. To do so earlier would compromise the present strategy of delivering the three key sites which are vital to the successful regeneration of Bedford town centre.

4.74 Below this level, the research identifies Kempston as performing the role of a district centre. Below the district centre, the council has identified key service centres as local centres (small groups of shops). Generally, new retail development needs to be of a scale appropriate for the centre to promote internal competition and linked trips and to ensure consistency with transport networks. The hierarchy is stated in Policy CP20.

4.75 Wixams new settlement is a planned comprehensive development of 4,500 houses located in Bedford Borough and Mid Bedfordshire. The adopted development brief recognises that the settlement has the potential to extend into additional areas of land beyond the settlement core. This settlement is expected to include shopping and other community facilities and thus once this development has taken place, Wixams will become an important retail centre. Wixams will therefore become a key part of the retail hierarchy for the borough, and its status in the policy hierarchy will need to be reviewed as the settlement grows.

POLICY CP20 - RETAIL HIERARCHY

The retail hierarchy is as follows :

i) Bedford town centre (regional centre)

ii) Kempston (district centre)

iii) Growth Area key service centres and other Growth Area local centres (local centres)

iv) Rural key service centres (local centres)

v) Other defined retail centres.

The preferred location for large-scale new retail development (in excess of 1,000 square metres net floorspace) will be the Primary Shopping Area of Bedford town centre. New retail development in the centres defined in i) to v) above should be consistent in scale with the size and character of the centre and its role in the hierarchy.







DISTINCTIVENESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

SENSE OF PLACE

4.76 The council's ambition is to generate a positive and, as far as possible, a distinctive sense of place. A sense of place will differentiate the borough from other areas in terms of character and design quality, creating a strong identity that will influence investment and where people will want to live, work and spend their leisure time.

4.77 Creating a sense of place will involve accentuating the borough's best features, ensuring that design standards of development are consistently high, conserving the built, natural and cultural heritage and linking this with the image-building activities of the borough council and Renaissance Bedford.

4.78 The character of the borough is not such that a single sense of place can be defined or created in terms of the built environment. The urban areas, town centre, and discrete parts of the rural area will be encouraged to establish their own personality with reference to the noteworthy. The scale and form of buildings and spaces, building details, materials, boundary treatments, landscape, access and parking are all elements which contribute to distinctive development. It is important therefore that a starting point for new development should be a thorough understanding of the context within which it will sit.

4.79 In certain locations, the immediate setting may give few clues from which to draw inspiration, yet reinforcing an unsatisfactory form of development is not acceptable. In such cases it may be appropriate to look further afield for inspiration.

DESIGNING IN QUALITY

4.80 Design quality is also a key factor in creating sustainable development. The council is committed to achieving good design in all new development and has published a number of development briefs, design guides and design codes for the major development sites in the borough. These contain urban design principles with which new development is expected to comply. Design codes have been used to ensure that new development draws from local character to create places which are locally distinctive. Innovation in design is encouraged.

4.81 If new development is to be sustainable, greater emphasis needs to be given to its integration with non-car modes of transport whilst ensuring that buildings and spaces are accessible by all members of the community. Good design also has a role to play in planning out crime and enhancing community safety and the council has prepared a design guide to assist that process (the Bedfordshire Community Safety Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document).

4.82 In considering the impact of development on the environment, pollution, air quality, noise, water, light and land contamination will all need to be taken into account and mitigation measures applied where appropriate. Policy CP26 deals in greater detail with issues of climate change and pollution.

POLICY CP21 - DESIGNING IN QUALITY

All new development should:

i) be of the highest design quality in terms of both architecture and landscape; and,

ii) have regard to good practice in urban design; and,

iii) fully consider the context within which it will sit and the opportunities to enhance the character and quality of an area and local distinctiveness; and,

iv) preserve and, where appropriate, enhance conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments and other important archaeological remains, and listed buildings and their settings; and,

v) be fully accessible by all members of the community; and,

vi) incorporate measures to promote crime prevention and community safety; and,

vii) address sustainable design principles including renewable energy resources, energy efficiency, recycling, and sustainable construction practices and

- mitigate against the effects of any pollution including air quality, noise, water, light and land contamination;
- improve the character and quality of the area.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

4.83 Green infrastructure includes recreation and sports facilities, pathways and routes, natural and historic sites, canals and waterspaces, accessible countryside and other open areas that contribute to the character of towns and villages. It is required to enhance the quality of life for present and future residents and visitors and to deliver 'liveability' for sustainable communities.

4.84 Spatially, green infrastructure is important in creating and connecting quality environments both in and beyond the urban area and to provide leisure opportunities for borough residents and visitors.

4.85 The Green Infrastructure Consortium is a multi-disciplinary group of professionals working in partnership at the county level to assist the development of green infrastructure policy.

4.86 In 2006 the consortium commissioned consultants to draw together existing green infrastructure information and produce a strategic green infrastructure plan at the county scale. As a desk exercise, the purpose of the countywide Green Infrastructure Plan is to identify strategic assets and opportunities and inform more detailed green infrastructure planning at the district and borough levels.

4.87 Bedford Borough Council has embraced the need for a more detailed understanding of local need for greenspace by appointing consultants to undertake a PPG17/greenspace study (2005). The primary purpose is twofold:

- to develop local standards for open space provision for inclusion in the Bedford Development Framework; and
- to inform a local Greenspace Strategy that will guide the location and nature of new provision as well as guide investment in and management of existing assets.

4.88 In time the opportunity exists to broaden this study to take in additional elements of green infrastructure at the more local level.

4.89 The Borough Council supports in principle the Bedford to Milton Keynes canal project along a route that would bring waterway traffic through the town. As well as linking Bedford to the regional waterway network, the canal would represent an additional focus for green infrastructure through the heart of Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale. A concept route is shown on the Key Diagram, which takes account of the provision made for the canal route in the approved masterplan for the Wootton strategic development.

POLICY CP 22 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing green infrastructure of both local and strategic importance will be protected from development.

Where appropriate, development will provide green infrastructure in accordance with adopted local standards. Where provision on site is not possible or preferred, a contribution towards off-site provision or where appropriate, enhancement will be required.

Both on site and off site provision/enhancement will be made with regard to the priorities identified in the council's Greenspace Strategy.

As a contribution to the greenspace network, tourism and the vitality of the town centre, the creation of the Bedford to Milton Keynes canal will be supported.

Where necessary and appropriate the council will seek the use of planning obligations to secure a contribution towards the cost of future management and maintenance of green infrastructure.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

4.90 In addition to ensuring new development of the highest quality, it is also important that the borough's heritage is protected for its own sake. This includes ancient monuments, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and conservation areas (and the county Historic Landscape Characterisation database may be of assistance) but also extends to the consideration of other aspects of cultural heritage.

4.91 The borough has a diverse cultural heritage which in turn makes the borough the place it is. The area has a rich prehistoric, roman and medieval heritage which includes nationally important sites of all these periods. Bedford itself is a historic town which grew originally around one of the few crossing points on the River Great Ouse and expanded considerably with the industrial revolution and the coming of the railway. Much of that industrial heritage has disappeared as the town has moved away from heavy industry and manufacturing to service and high-tech industries. Individual communities such as Stewartby (brickmaking), Shortstown (airships), Harrold and Odell (leather working) have strong associations with the borough's industrial past.

4.92 In addition to its heritage, a significant part of what makes the borough distinctive is the diversity of its population. This to a large extent reflects the industrial heritage, with people moving to the area to work in local industry throughout the last century. Today there are large Italian, Polish, Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Irish and black Caribbean populations in addition to those that have been here longer. This is reflected in Bedford's shopping, places of worship, community facilities, clubs and cultural events.

POLICY CP23 – HERITAGE

Development will be required to protect and where appropriate enhance:

i) the character of conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, listed buildings and other important historic or archaeological features; and,

ii) the borough's cultural assets, including its landscape, in order to underpin sense of place, cultural identity and promote quality of life.

LANDSCAPE

4.93 The borough has a varied landscape character. The clay vale, Greensand Ridge and Ouse valley all contribute to giving the borough its sense of place. For example, the underlying limestone geology of the Ouse valley gives rise to the distinct character of the stone villages in the north west of the borough. Landscape Character Assessment is a tool which can be used to understand the important features that make a landscape distinctive. A borough wide landscape character assessment had been prepared. The assessment identifies the features that typify each character area and sub-area in the borough and will be a key influence on the design and location of new development.

4.94 Landscape enhancement is an important issue in the rural area of the borough where there are smaller villages and the impact of development could have a detrimental impact on the landscape if not appropriately controlled. It is therefore important to consider the impact of development on the landscape at both the macro and micro scale by considering views, the need for screening and the impact on existing landscape features.

4.95 The clay vale to the south has in recent times been impacted by the dual activities of mineral extraction and landfill and is now the subject of a major enhancement initiative through its designation as the Forest of Marston Vale. Continued landscape and environmental restoration of the Marston Vale is advocated to improve the area characterised by brick making and mineral extraction. As this area is within the Growth Area, development has the potential to contribute significantly to the enhancement of landscape character. It is expected that detailed policies will be brought forward in other development plan documents to define the area within which development contributions will be sought.

POLICY CP24 - LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

The landscape and character of the borough will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced.

The Marston Vale will be the focus for landscape enhancement and restoration and the council will continue to support the Forest of Marston Vale.

New development should protect and where appropriate enhance the quality and character of the landscape. The nature and scale of development should be appropriate within the wider landscape.

Management measures will be required where new development or activities are proposed in the rural area.

BIODIVERSITY

4.96 In the last century there has been a dramatic increase in development and a resultant loss of biodiversity. Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity has come to be seen as an essential element of sustainable development. The Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Action Plan and Biodiversity Characterisation provide guidance for securing the future sustainability of the borough's biodiversity resource. It is important to protect designated sites (both biodiversity and earth heritage sites) and where possible reduce the damage to and enhance biodiversity and earth heritage resources.

4.97 The sub-region's important environmental and cultural assets, some of which are of national or regional significance, need not only to be protected but also, where appropriate, enhanced and connected in a network of natural areas. This is addressed by Policy CP22.

POLICY CP25 - BIODIVERSITY

The biodiversity and geodiversity of the borough and in particular priority habitats, species and geodiversity features, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.

Where harm to biodiversity and/or geodiversity is likely to be a result of development, appropriate mitigation and/or compensation will be required. Any replacement assets should be of a comparable or enhanced value.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION

4.98 Controlling potentially polluting developments and the location of sensitive developments in proximity to existing sources of pollution are material planning considerations.

4.99 As a result of the monitoring of air quality, raised levels of nitrogen dioxide have been recorded in parts of the town centre and on the A421 at Great Barford associated with heavy traffic flows in these areas. This led the council to declare three Air Quality Management Areas. Emissions of sulphur dioxide from the brickworks at Stewartby have resulted in the council (with Mid Bedfordshire District Council) declaring an Air Quality Management Area in the Marston Vale.

4.100 More globally, there is a need to plan for climate change and to ensure that the buildings and spaces we design today will still function satisfactorily in the future and will neither be affected by, nor exacerbate flooding. In addition, an integral part of sustainable development is the reduction in carbon emissions, which can be achieved by measures to save energy and by incorporating renewable energy. Recycling and the use of sustainable practices in the construction of new buildings are also important in contributing to sustainability. Following a sustainable construction code such as that produced by the Building Research Establishment (BREEAM and EcoHomes) can help demonstrate the sustainability of development.

4.101 The draft East of England Plan provides clear guidance and support for the use of policy to ensure that the effects of climate change are minimised. The plan also includes targets for renewable energy production and the management of waste.

4.102 Further detailed guidance on the following policy will be included in a supplementary planning document. This will explain how the predicted carbon emissions of a proposed building and the effect of energy efficiency measures can be calculated. It may be appropriate to relax these requirements if it can be demonstrated that they would make development unviable or be contrary to other objectives of the plan.

4.103 Policy CP26 iv) below sets out requirements which are, in part, derived from Policy ENG1 of the emerging East of England Plan. These requirements will be employed flexibly to guide the development until the viability of more locally-specific policies can be assessed. This will be pursued as a matter of urgency in more detailed Development Plan Documents.

POLICY CP26 - CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION

The council will require development to:

i) Minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment; and,

ii) Have regard to cumulative impacts of development proposals on air quality, in particular in relation to air quality management areas; and,

iii) Minimise the consumption and use of energy, including fossil fuels by design and choice of materials; and,

iv) Unless it can be demonstrated that – having regard to the type of development involved and its design - these requirements are not feasible or viable, achieve a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions (below the normal requirement set by the Building Regulations) in all new residential developments and above a threshold of 500m^2 in new non-residential developments by measures which shall include, in new developments above a threshold of 1000m^2 or 50 dwellings, the supply of at least 10% of the energy consumed in the new development to be provided from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources.

v) As a minimum, meet the national standards for building performance set by the current Building Regulations. Through the Allocations and Designations DPD process the Council may identify local development or site specific opportunities which justify the adoption and application of higher standards of building performance as set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes. Such higher standards may also be required by the Council where justified by changes in national guidance.

vi) Utilise sustainable construction techniques; and,

vii) Incorporate facilities to minimise the use of water and waste; and,

viii) Limit any adverse effects on water quality, reduce water consumption and minimise the risk of flooding.

Developers will be expected to submit a sustainability statement and energy audit with proposals for development.



DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

INFRASTRUCTURE

4.104 Aspirations to increase the scale and pace of housing and employment development and achieve sustainable growth cannot be fully realised without a range of supporting infrastructure. Infrastructure can include transport links such as roads, rail links and footpaths, green infrastructure such as sports facilities and open spaces, and community infrastructure such as library services, places of worship or village halls.

4.105 Alongside contributions achieved through development, public investment from national government is critical to the delivery of infrastructure. Government must fulfil its role in the delivery of infrastructure if growth at the required rate is to be achieved.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

4.106 The borough council has no direct responsibilities for the condition or provision of transport and the role of this plan is to support the plans, policies and programmes of other agencies.

4.107 Strategic transport infrastructure is critical to the implementation of the growth proposals in the borough. Bedford has suffered poor connectivity to the strategic network, congestion and reliance upon the car. This longstanding infrastructure deficit hampers accessibility, safety and convenience. It also suppresses investment to the disbenefit of the local economy and frustrates public transport improvements. The early implementation of strategic infrastructure projects is therefore critical to the growth agenda.

4.108 Bedfordshire County Council promotes more local schemes through the Local Transport Plan. The plan (LTP2) sets out the strategy and programme which seek to prepare for growth, support the economy, manage transport assets, manage congestion, enhance access, make travel safer and improve air quality. It recognises the important role of walking, cycling and public transport. The transport schemes in Policies CP27 and CP28 are all included in the LTP 2006/07 – 10/11, see Appendix F Table 1 for further details.

POLICY CP27 - STRATEGIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

The borough council will support the early provision of the following strategic infrastructure proposals:

- Great Barford Bypass (under construction)
- A421 improvements west of Bedford including M1 junction 13
- Thameslink 2000
- East-West rail scheme (Oxford to Bedford)
- National Cycle Network routes

POLICY CP28 - LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The borough council supports the objectives, strategy and programme set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP2), and expects that the following projects will be incorporated in the programme and implemented at the earliest opportunity:

- Bedford Western Bypass
- Park and Ride sites and services
- Bedford town centre improvements, including river bridge.

The Council will also support the following developer led initiatives:

- A6 realignment in association with Wixams development
- Wixams railway station
- The re-provision of Bedford railway station

POLICY CP29 - ACCESSIBILITY

To encourage sustainable modes of transport and reduce reliance on the car, development will be located and designed to include facilities which provide convenient access to local services by foot, cycle and public transport.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

4.109 The Local Plan 2002 provides that the major strategic development sites deliver an appropriate range of new or enhanced infrastructure to enable residents to have suitable access to services, facilities and utilities. These requirements are or will be secured through a combination of planning conditions and statutory legal agreements. Other developments arising during the plan period, for example in the town centre, will also need to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to address community needs.

4.110 The need to provide community infrastructure may arise when development proposals either individually or cumulatively create a need for additional or improved provision. Developers will be expected to address the impacts of their proposals either through the provision of facilities on site as part of the new development or improve facilities in the surrounding area. Requirements will be related in scale and kind to the development proposed.

4.111 Where the combined impact of a number of developments creates the need for new or improved infrastructure the council will consider pooling contributions to allow the infrastructure to be secured in a fair and equitable way.

4.112 Those matters which may give rise to the need for contributions may include but are not limited to:

- Roads, foot and cycleways, public transport facilities and services.
- Community facilities (meeting halls, library services and places of worship)
- Schools/education
- Healthcare facilities
- Green infrastructure
- Affordable housing
- Drainage facilities
- Play provision
- Public art
- Sport and recreation provision
- Public access and rights of way
- Renewable energy initiatives
- The historic environment
- CCTV
- Public realm
- Crime and disorder initiatives



POLICY CP30 - DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Where implementation of a development would individually or cumulatively create a need to provide additional or improved infrastructure, amenities or facilities, or would exacerbate an existing deficiency in their provision, the developer will be expected to make or contribute towards such provision by means of planning condition or legal obligation.

PLAN, MONITOR AND MANAGE

4.113 The identification of part of the borough as a Growth Area brings with it a requirement to achieve a step change in the pace of development. The council is already taking active steps to achieve this as far as it is able by allocating and granting planning permission for sites identified in the Local Plan 2002. These sites must now be given the opportunity to play their part in delivering the growth and infrastructure required in the borough. The effort required to deliver this step change however, extends beyond the responsibilities and resources of the borough council, for example, in relation to the provision of strategic infrastructure and the effect that the condition of the national economy has on the level of investment activity and the local housing market. In addition landowners and developers must be proactive in bringing forward land and implementing proposals. In this context, and to help accelerate the pace of development, the government has provided additional resources through the Growth Area Fund and supported the setting up of a Local Delivery Vehicle 'Renaissance Bedford'. The council welcomes this assistance and is working with Renaissance Bedford to speed delivery of houses and jobs.

4.114 The draft East of England Plan recognises that development in the region will be dependent upon the delivery of essential infrastructure and the maintenance of a satisfactory relationship between housing provision and job growth. In these circumstances it will be particularly important to track the alignment between the delivery of infrastructure, jobs and homes. The council will adopt a plan, monitor and manage approach to the provision of new development keeping under review progress towards meeting regional targets.

4.115 The plan's objectives and policies will be monitored through an Annual Monitoring Report which will be submitted each year to the government. The Annual Monitoring Report will assess the success of the plan and show if targets are being met. In particular it will monitor progress against the key indicators and targets which are set out in the plan's monitoring and implementation framework (see Table 2 of Appendix F). Appendix F also sets out how the policies will be implemented (Table1). If monitoring indicates that targets are not being met, consideration will be given to amending the Local Development Scheme and reviewing Local Development Documents as appropriate.

POLICY CP31 – PLAN MONITOR AND MANAGE

The council will adopt a plan, monitor and manage approach to the provision of new development. In particular this will include:

- Giving priority to the delivery of existing commitments (as allocated in the Local Plan 2002) and the proposals coming forward in the Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan and where necessary making further allocations in line with the sequential test outlined in Policy CP5.
- Monitoring the progress against the requirements of the East of England Plan and the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.
- Monitoring the provision of strategic infrastructure and the growth of the local economy and the impact this has on the strength of the local housing market.
- Undertaking an annual monitoring exercise to indicate the priority to be given to the review/preparation of local development documents.

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Key Diagram
Appendix B	Background
Appendix C	Table showing relationship between objectives, policies and which saved policies are to be replaced
Appendix D	Regional Planning Policy and the Community Plan
Appendix E	Glossary
Appendix F	Implementation and Monitoring Framework

APPENDIX A
KEY DIAGRAM



- Rural Policy Area
- Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy Growth Area
- Bedford/Kempston Urban Area
- Committed development site
- Growth Area Key Service Centre
- Rural Key Service Centre
- Road / Road Improvements
- Proposed Railway Station
- Park & Ride
- Concept route of Milton Keynes/Bedford Canal
- Railway
- River Great Ouse

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX B
BACKGROUND

B

THE BEDFORD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

B.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has introduced a new system for the preparation of development plans. Under the new system there will be two key elements to the development plan:

- The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) incorporating, in Bedford's case, the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, prepared by the regional planning body; and
- The Local Development Framework, to be known locally as the Bedford Development Framework, to be prepared by the Borough Council.

The new system will gradually replace the current regional, county and local plans.

B.2 The Bedford Development Framework will be made up of a number of documents. The documents which the Council proposes to prepare by the end of 2007 are set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme and summarised below:

- *The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan* - setting out the spatial vision for the Borough as a whole and the objectives and strategic policies to guide development.
- *Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan* - setting out a vision for the town centre along with allocations and policies to implement that vision.
- *Statement of Community Involvement* (Adopted 17th May 2006) - giving the Council's approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of the Bedford Development Framework.

B.3 Both the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan and Bedford Town Centre Area Action Plan are termed development plan documents as they will form part of the new development plan. Along with the Statement of Community Involvement they must be prepared in accordance with a process which includes examination by an independent Inspector who will produce a binding report.

B.4 In addition, the Development Framework will also include supplementary planning documents providing detailed guidance on a number of policy areas. Three of these have already been approved by the council:

- *The Bedfordshire Community Safety Design Guide* - identifying the design principles which will assist in planning out crime.
- *Land north of Bromham Road Biddenham: Design Guide* - giving detailed guidance for this major site.
- *Shopfronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas Design Guide* - covering design of shopfronts and advertisements in conservation areas.

B.5 The final element of the Development Framework is the Annual Monitoring Report which will monitor progress against key indicators and targets and if plans need to be changed the Local Development Scheme can be adjusted.

THE CORE STRATEGY AND RURAL ISSUES PLAN

B.6 The purpose of the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan is to provide the basis for decisions about the planning of the borough by setting out a spatial vision and spatial objectives; from these are developed the policies and proposals required to deliver the vision. In addition to the policies the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan also contains a Key Diagram to illustrate the key features of the plan.

B.7 Underlying the process of preparing the plan is a simple set of questions that have helped to structure the plan.

- Where are we now?
  What is the borough like today and what are its key social, physical and economic characteristics? What are the main issues facing the borough? This analysis forms the basis of the spatial portrait.
- Where would we like to be?
  Looking forward to the end of the plan period, how do we hope the borough will have changed and developed? This forms the basis of the plan's vision and objectives.
- How do we get there?
  The plan's policies are the means of delivering the vision.

B.8 Initial consultations included:

- A number of facilitated workshops for members of the Citizens' Panel, stakeholders and elected council members held in July 2005 to discuss the issues which the plan should address.
- Awareness raising through Bedford News, the council's website and a leaflet distributed to a range of consultees seeking comments on the issues.
- Consultation on policy options document circulated to council members, local councils and other consultees outlining possible policy approaches.
- A specific consultation with parish councils on possible policy approaches for the rural areas, in particular the approach to be taken in developing a rural settlement hierarchy.

B.9 The council then produced and consulted on the preferred option plan. The representations received were taken into account in producing the submission plan.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX C

TABLE SHOWING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND SAVED POLICIES

Local Plan policies were initially 'saved' until 27th September 2007. On the 18th September 2007, the Council received a Direction from the Secretary of State to extend the 'saved' period. Not all Local Plan policies were included in the 'saved' list. Policies S8, NE1, NE2, NE5, NE15, NE25, NE26, NE27, NE28, NE29, BE10, BE12, BE14, BE17, BE33, H4, H15, H16, H17, H19, H20, H21, H22, H35, H36, E3, E7, SH1 and TC2 of the Local Plan are not saved beyond 27th September 2007.

SUBMISSION PLAN		RELATED OBJECTIVE	LOCAL PLAN POLICY WHICH HAS BEEN REPLACED
CP1	Spatial Strategy	All	
CP2	Sustainable development principles	2,8,10,11,12, 13,14,15	
CP3	The location of development in the Growth Area	1, 2, 3	S1 Urban policy S4 South west Bedford Strategic Corridor
CP4	Key Service Centres in the Growth Area	1, 9	S7 Rural settlement hierarchy
CP5	Sequential approach to the allocation of land for residential and employment development in the Growth Area	2, 3	
CP6	The scale and pace of housing development in the Growth Area	1, 4	H1 Provision of housing land
CP7	Meeting housing needs	4	H32 Mix and range of housing type and size
CP8	Affordable housing in the Borough	4	H31 The provision of affordable housing
CP9	Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople	4	
CP10	The creation of jobs	1, 5	E1 Employment land supply
CP11	Employment land	1, 5	E12 Loss of employment
CP12	Settlement Policy Areas	9, 11	S6 Settlement policy areas
CP13	The countryside and development within it	9, 11	
CP14	Location of development in the Rural Policy Area	2, 3, 9, 11	
CP15	Rural key service centres	9	S7 Rural settlement hierarchy
CP16	Housing in the Rural Policy Area	4, 9	H1 Provision of housing land
CP17	Affordable housing to meet local needs in the Rural Policy Area	4, 9	H30 Local needs housing in Rural Policy Areas
CP18	Sustaining the local economy and services	5, 9	
CP19	Bedford Town Centre	6, 7	
CP20	Retail hierarchy	6	SH2 Shopping development in the town centre
CP21	Designing in quality	10, 12, 14, 15	
CP22	Green infrastructure	11, 13	S5 Marston Vale
CP23	Heritage	11, 14	
CP24	Landscape protection and enhancement	11	NE14 Area of Great Landscape Value
CP25	Biodiversity	11	
CP26	Climate change and pollution	15, 12	BE6 Renewable energy
CP27	Strategic transport infrastructure	8	T1 Strategic road network
CP28	Local Transport Plan	8, 13	
CP29	Accessibility	8, 12	
CP30	Developer contributions	13	S9 Facilities in tandem with development
CP31	Plan, monitor and manage	1, 2	

APPENDIX D

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND THE COMMUNITY PLAN

RSS - EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN

D.1 The draft East of England Plan was published in December 2004; it was a draft revision to the existing Regional Spatial Strategy. Following the publication of the draft, the East of England Regional Assembly withdrew its endorsement of the plan principally due to concerns about infrastructure delivery. EERA remains committed to the policy content of the plan, subject to the infrastructure being provided to sustain the level of growth proposed. The Examination in Public was held and the Report of the Panel was published in June 2006. The Proposed Changes to the East of England Plan were then published in December 2006. The publication of the RSS was expected in mid 2007 but has been delayed as the Government Office for the East of England announced in June 2007 that it had commissioned further work to assess the plan against the requirements of the European Habitats Directive. Once finalised, the plan will cross refer to the relevant Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy policies that affect the region.

D.2 The plan contains planning policy for the whole of the east of England region, which incorporates the six counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk and the unitary authorities of Luton, Peterborough, Southend and Thurrock.

D.3 The plan takes account of European and national planning policy, in particular the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan of 2002 which identified four growth areas. Three of these growth areas are within the East of England region and thus are key aspects of the plan.

D.4 The vision of the RSS (Proposed Changes) document is 'By 2021 the East of England will be realising its economic potential and providing a high quality of life for its people, including by meeting their housing needs in sustainable and inclusive communities. At the same time it will reduce its impact on climate change and the environment, including through savings in energy and water use and by strengthening its stock of environmental assets.'

D.5 The objectives of the plan are:

i) To reduce the Region's impact on, and exposure to, the effects of climate change by:
- Locating development so as to reduce the need to travel:
- Effecting a major shift in travel towards public transport, walking and cycling and away from car use; and
- Maximising the energy efficiency of development and promoting the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources;
- Reducing the risk of damage from flooding.

ii) To increase housing opportunities for people in the region by:
- Securing a step change in the delivery of additional housing throughout the region, particularly the Key Centres for development and change; and
- Giving priority to the provision of affordable housing to meet identified needs.

APPENDICES

iii) To realise the economic potential of the region and its people by:

- Facilitating the development needed to support the region's business sectors and clusters, improving skills and widening opportunities in line with the Regional Economic Strategy;
- Providing for job growth broadly matching increases in housing provision and improving alignment between the locations of workplaces and homes;
- Maintaining and strengthening the region's inter-regional connections by improving connections to economic opportunities in London; and
- Ensuring adequate and sustainable transport infrastructure.

iv) To improve the quality of life of the region's people by:

- Ensuring new development fulfils the principles of sustainable communities, providing a well designed living environment adequately supported by social and green infrastructure;
- Promoting social cohesion by improving access to work, services and other facilities, especially for those who are disadvantaged;
- Maintaining cultural diversity while addressing the distinctive needs of each part of the region;
- Promoting regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas;
- Increasing community involvement in the implementation of the strategy at the local level.

v) To improve and conserve the region's environment by:

- Ensuring the protection and enhancement of the region's environmental assets, including the built and historic environment, landscape and water;
- Re-using previously-developed land and seeking environmental as well as development gains from the use of previously-undeveloped land;
- Protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing biodiversity through the protection of habitats and species and through creating new habitats through development;
- Providing a network of multi-function greenspace accessible to the region's people; and
- Reducing the demand for and use of water and other renewable resources and reducing waste and increasing the sustainable management of waste.

D.6 The plan includes general policies for the region as a whole, policies relating to sub-regions and regional policies relating to specific topics. The East of England Plan (Proposed Changes) tells us:

- Bedford/Kempston and the northern Marston Vale is a Key Centre for Development and Change where new development will be focused (SS3).
- Development in rural areas should be focused in market towns and thereafter in key service centres (SS4).
- Bedford/Kempston is a priority area for regeneration (SS5).
- Within the overall housing target, LDDs should set appropriate targets for affordable housing (H3).
- Policies for Key Centres for Development and Change in Bedfordshire are contained in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.
- The indicative job growth target in Bedford and Mid Bedfordshire will be 27,000 jobs in the period 2001-2021 (E1).
- Bedford is a Major town centre of strategic importance (E5).
- Housing development in the Borough (outside of the Growth Area) will be 1300 dwellings in the period 2001-2021 (H1).
- Bedford Borough is within the Bedfordshire Housing Strategy sub-region.
- Bedford is a Regional Transport Node where improvements to inter-urban public transport should be focused (T5).

- The Plan states that the dualling of the A421 from Bedford to the M1 is currently programmed for delivery.
- The Plan states that the Bedford Western bypass is currently programmed for delivery.
- The Plan states that Wixams railway station has been identified in the Regional Funding Allocation but not yet approved.
- The Borough is mainly within the landscape character area of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire claylands.
- In the Borough new woodland creation should be targeted specifically at, inter alia, the Forest of Marston Vale Community Forest with the aim of increasing woodland cover to 30% by 2030 (ENV5).

D.7 The above bullet points are a summary of the key aspects of the plan as they relate to Bedford Borough; they do not represent a summary of the plan as a whole and do not cover every topic covered by the plan.

D.8 Once the RSS has been finalised (see D.1 above), the RSS will be reviewed to cover the period to 2031. A Draft Revised RSS is anticipated by the end of 2009, with the final version to be published by late 2011.

MILTON KEYNES & SOUTH MIDLANDS SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGY

D.9 The Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy was published in March 2005. It represents an alteration to the existing Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England that was adopted in March 2001.

D.10 The strategy covers a sub-region that includes the Growth Areas of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough to the north, Northampton to the west, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale to the east and Aylesbury, Leighton Linslade, Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis to the south.

D.11 The purpose of the sub-regional strategy is to:

- Provide strategic guidance on the scale, location and timing of development and associated employment, transport and other infrastructure to 2021 and the necessary delivery mechanisms; and
- Provide a longer-term perspective for the sub-region to 2031 in the form of uncommitted planning assumptions subject to later review.
- Provide guidance for local authorities in the production of their planning documents and other bodies in the production of their plans.

D.12 The document sets out new house building figures for parts of Bedfordshire. These figures are to form part of the overall housing figures for the region to be contained within the RSS (East of England Plan) when it is finalised.

D.13 The objectives of the sub-regional strategy are:

1. To achieve a major increase in the number of new homes provided in the area, meeting needs for affordable housing and a range of types and sizes of market housing.
2. To provide for a commensurate level of economic growth and developing skills in the workforce, particularly in the high value, knowledge-based sectors.
3. To locate development in the main urban areas to support urban renaissance, regeneration of deprived areas, recycling of land and sustainable patterns of travel.
4. To ensure that development contributes to an improved environment, by requiring high standards of design and sustainable construction, protecting and enhancing environmental assets (including landscape and biodiversity) and providing green space and related infrastructure (green infrastructure).
5. To meet existing infrastructure needs and provide for requirements generated by new development, by investing in new and improved infrastructure, by planning to reduce the need to travel and by creating a shift to more sustainable mode of travel.
6. To create sustainable communities by ensuring that economic, environmental, social and cultural infrastructure needs are met in step with growth.

D.14 The key priorities for Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale are:

- Revitalising the town centre of Bedford and enhancing retail, cultural and leisure facilities.
- Developing the local economy to provide an increase in employment by fostering a range of growth sectors, particularly the knowledge-based sectors.
- Creating a focus for offices in the town centre.
- Securing a higher rate of housing delivery through the implementation of existing commitments.
- Reducing the need to travel by private vehicle, specifically including the revitalisation of Bedford bus station.
- Providing new cultural and heritage facilities and attractions in Bedford and enhancing existing to develop heritage-focused tourism.
- Environmental regeneration of the Marston Vale and enhance green infrastructure.

D.15 In terms of implications for Bedford Borough, the plan tells us:

- Bedford is a major location for growth.
- The role of Bedford as a key centre should be strengthened through economic regeneration and growth.
- In Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale the priorities will be urban renaissance, improved economic performance and harnessing the potential of the northern Marston Vale.
- In Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale, 19,500 new homes are to be provided 2001-2021; the suggested split is 16,270 within Bedford Borough and 3,230 in Mid-Bedfordshire (SP1, BLP1).
- The Growth Area has sufficient land already committed for housing development to meet the requirements identified up to 2021, as a result of existing planning permissions and local plan allocations.
- Achieving high levels of dwelling provision will require accelerated economic performance and the delivery of key local infrastructure (BLP1).
- In Bedford Borough and Mid Bedfordshire District employment growth of 19,800 jobs will be sought; this equates to 11,400 in Bedford Borough and 8,400 in Mid Bedfordshire (although these figures are to be reviewed through the process of finalising the draft East of England Plan).
- The east-west rail link from Oxford to Bedford will be considered by the Department for Transport Rail Strategy 2007-2016.
- The east-west rail link from Bedford to Cambridge/Stansted will be considered by the Department for Transport Rail Strategy in the future.
- The A421 improvements from the M1 to Bedford are committed for the period 2007-2011.
- The A421 Great Barford bypass is committed for the period 2002-2006.
- New station at Wixams is under consideration 2002-2011.
- The A6 improvements at Wixams is committed 2002-2006.
- The Bedford Western bypass (southern section) is committed 2002-2011.
- The Elstow Park and Ride is committed 2002-2006 (now in operation).
- The Bedford Western bypass (North Bromham section) to be delivered by developer contributions is under consideration 2007-2011.
- The quality bus corridors are under consideration for 2002-2011.
- The Biddenham Loop Park and Ride is under consideration for 2007-2011.
- The Park and Ride at Clapham is under consideration 2007-2011.

COMMUNITY PLAN

TABLE TO SHOW HOW SPATIAL ISSUES OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN ARE INCORPORATED INTO THE CORE STRATEGY

Town Centre AAP Policy references relate to the submitted plan. Policy numbers may change when the plan is adopted.

COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	SPATIAL ISSUE IDENTIFIED	CSRIP OBJECTIVE	CSRIP POLICIES MOST RELEVANT	OTHER FUTURE LDF POLICY
Promoting community safety	Designing out crime as a means of promoting community safety	10	CP2 CP21	DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Reducing the fear of crime through support for CCTV.	10	CP2 CP21	Town Centre AAP Policies TC35 and TC40
Providing housing and building communities	Delivering new homes across a range of tenures	1, 2, 3, 4	CP6 CP7 CP8 CP16 CP17	Town Centre AAP Policy TC25. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Promoting balanced communities and housing markets	2, 3, 4, 9	CP7	Town Centre AAP Policy TC25. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Meeting housing needs including special needs	1, 3, 4, 9	CP6 CP7 CP8 CP16 CP17	Town Centre AAP Policy TC25. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Maintaining the quality of existing residential areas	10	CP2 CP21	Town Centre AAP Policy TC39. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Utilising empty homes	4	CP2	Town Centre AAP Policy TC26. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Keeping jobs and homes in balance	1, 2, 3	CP31	DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Building in high standards of design and energy efficiency	10, 12, 15	CP2 CP21 CP26	Town Centre AAP Policies TC36, TC39 and TC41. DC policy in DC DPD, site specific guidance in A&D DPD and Climate Change SPD
	Ensuring that infrastructure is available to meet the needs of new communities.	7, 13	CP1 CP11 CP19 CP22 CP27 CP28 CP29 CP30 CP31	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC36. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
Improving the environment	Involving the community in improving the environment	16	CP19 CP21 CP22 CP23 CP24 CP25	Adopted SCI May 2006. Consultation Statement CSRIP and Town Centre AAP

COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	SPATIAL ISSUES IDENTIFIED	CSRIP OBJECTIVE	CSRIP POLICIES MOST RELEVANT	OTHER FUTURE LDF POLICY
	Ensuring that new development is based on sustainable principles	2, 9	CP2 CP5 CP14 CP20 CP26 CP29 CP31	Town Centre AAP Strategic Policy and site specific policies. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Creating a network of green spaces	11	CP22 CP24 CP25	Town Centre AAP Policy TC31. DC policy in DC DPD, site specific guidance in A&D DPD and Development Briefs for Local Plan housing allocations
	Protecting the heritage and cultural value of the built environment	14	CP23	Town Centre AAP Policies TC9, TC10 and TC27. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Protecting the natural environment, biodiversity and landscape.	11, 15	CP22 CP23 CP24 CP25	Town Centre AAP Policies TC31 and TC36. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
Improving health	Supporting the development of local health services including GP surgeries.	13	CP30 CP31	Town Centre AAP Policy TC40 DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
Strengthening the economy	Bringing forward sites to encourage companies to locate in Bedford	1, 3, 6	CP10 CP11 CP18 CP31	Town Centre AAP site specific policies. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Supporting tourism related activities	14	CP19	Town Centre AAP Strategic Policy and Policy TC28. DC policy in DC DPD
	Delivering infrastructure to support the government growth agenda	2, 8, 13	CP19 CP27 CP28 CP30 CP31	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC40. DC policy in DC DPD, site specific guidance in A&D DPD and Development Briefs for Local Plan housing allocations
	Improving connections to the strategic transport networks and reducing peak hour congestion in the urban area.	8	CP19 CP27 CP28 CP30 CP31	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC40. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
Developing learning opportunities and skills	Supporting access to education, training, education and employment.	1, 13	CP30	Town Centre AAP Policies TC2, TC5, TC6 and TC14. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD

COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	SPATIAL ISSUES IDENTIFIED	CSRIP OBJECTIVE	CSRIP POLICIES MOST RELEVANT	OTHER FUTURE LDF POLICY
Creating better transport	Creating better, more sustainable, integrated transport networks for the Borough of Bedford.	8, 13	CP19 CP27 CP28 CP29 CP30	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC40. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Improve transport networks for the Borough of Bedford.	8, 13	CP19 CP27 CP28 CP29 CP30	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC40. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Improve transport networks for cars, bus, rail, cycle and walking.	8, 13	CP19 CP27 CP28 CP29 CP30	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC40. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Provide park and ride.	8, 13	CP28	Town Centre AAP Policies TC18 – TC24 and TC40. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
Promoting leisure	Supporting leisure and cultural development	7, 13, 14	CP19 CP23	Town Centre AAP Policies TC9 and TC10. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Providing an infrastructure for leisure which in turn helps foster a sense of community	13	CP19	Town Centre AAP Policies TC9 and TC10. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
Including everyone	Creating mixed and balanced sustainable communities	2, 4	CP2 CP7 CP18 CP31	Town Centre AAP Policy TC25. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Providing the basis for a diverse economy	3, 5	CP10 CP11 CP18	Town Centre AAP Policies TC2, TC5, TC6 and TC7-TC17. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Providing infrastructure to enable all people to take their place in the community	13, 16	CP30	Town Centre AAP proposals. DC policy in DC DPD and site specific guidance in A&D DPD
	Consulting widely.	16	CP31	Adopted SCI May 2006. Consultation Statement CSRIP and Town Centre AAP

APPENDICES

APPENDIX E
GLOSSARY

A Community Plan for the Borough of Bedford	The plan for Bedford Borough Council published in January 2005. The key themes are promoting community safety, providing housing and building communities, improving the environment, improving health, strengthening the economy, developing learning opportunities and skills, creating better transport, promoting leisure, and including everyone.
Air Quality Management Area	An area where it is predicted that any one of the national air quality standards and objectives will not be achieved as required by Part 4 of the Environment Act 1995.
Allocations	Sites specifically identified on the Proposals Map for development.
Annual Monitoring Report	Report that monitors the progress with and the effectiveness of the production of the Bedford Development Framework. It is produced each financial year.
B1 Uses	Businesses including offices, high tech and light industry.
B2 Uses	General industrial development.
B8 Uses	Storage and distribution including warehousing.
Bedford Development Framework	The local name of the Local Development Framework.
Bedford Partnership Board (Local Strategic Partnership)	A multi – agency group which brings together representatives from the statutory, voluntary and business sectors in an effort to produce a long term visionary plan for the borough and its diverse communities.
Bedford Town Centre Company Limited	Independent company formed with the object of promoting the prosperity and attractiveness of the town centre and through a subsidiary company managing the programmes associated with Bedford Business Improvement District.
Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Action Plan (2001)	A framework for the delivery of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for areas in Bedfordshire and Luton. It identifies priorities and establishes a programme for the conservation of local and nationally important biodiversity.
Biodiversity	The variety of life on earth or in a specified region or area.
Business Improvement District	An area of the town centre where businesses have agreed to pay an extra levy on top of business rates to achieve the prosperity and attractiveness of that area of the town centre.
Climate change	Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.
Conservation Areas	Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, local planning authorities are able to designate as conservation areas any "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".
Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan	The long-term spatial vision and strategy for the local planning authority area, including the key strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision. The plan has status of a Development Plan Document.
Corporate Plan	The council's priorities are that the council will be a listening council, a clean and green borough, a safer borough, a prosperous borough, an enjoyable borough and achieve a balanced housing market.

F

Designations	Areas shown on the Proposals Map to which specific policies apply (not allocations).
Design Codes	A set of specific rules or requirements to guide the physical development of a site or place. The aim of design coding is to provide clarity as to what constitutes acceptable design quality and thereby provides a level of certainty for developers and the local community alike that can help to facilitate the delivery of good quality new development.
Development Briefs	Prepared by the borough council as a detailed statement of its planning policies for a particular site and its aspirations in terms of uses, layout and design principles.
Development Plan	Under the Planning Acts, this is the prime consideration in the determination of planning applications. Under the new system it consists of all Development Plan Documents and the Regional Spatial Strategy.
Development Plan Document (DPD)	Spatial planning document prepared by the local planning authority that is subject to an independent public examination. They can cover a range of issues, and will set out the main spatial strategy, policies and proposals of the council.
East of England Plan	Provides the comprehensive planning regional spatial strategy for the whole of the Eastern Region and, in Bedford's case, will provide development targets for the part of the borough not covered by the Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, landforms and soils along with the natural processes that shape the landscape.
Green infrastructure	Recreation and sports facilities, pathways and routes, natural and historic sites, canals and waterspaces, accessible countryside and other open areas that contribute to the character of towns and villages.
Growth Area	The area of the Borough identified by the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy. The area is described as Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale and is shown on the Key Diagram.
Housing Requirement Study	An assessment of housing requirements in the borough (published 2003).
Joint Economic Development Strategy	Produced by the Bedfordshire and Luton Economic Development Partnership, a joint strategy to stimulate the local economy and create new jobs in the county.
Key Diagram	The diagrammatic interpretation of the spatial strategy.
Key Service Centres	Large villages with a good level of services.
Landscape Character Assessment	A tool which can be used to understand the important features that make a landscape distinctive.
Listed Buildings	Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Secretary of State for National Heritage has a statutory duty to compile lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Graded I, II* or II to reflect their importance; permission is required for works which may affect their character or appearance.
Local Delivery Vehicle	An organisation set up to help deliver planned growth in the area.
Local Development Documents (LDDs)	Generic term for documents that can be included in the Local Development Framework. It comprises Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Local Development Framework (LDF)	A portfolio of Local Development Documents that provides the framework for delivering the spatial strategy of the area.
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	Rolling three-year project plan for the preparation of Local Development Documents.
Local Nature Reserves	Areas of land which are of significant nature conservation value at the local level.
Local Plan	*Part of the Development Plan under the old system. Statutory district-wide document prepared under the old system that sets out land use policies and proposals for the area.*
Local Plan Commitments	Land identified for development in the Adopted Local Plan.
Local Transport Plan	Five-year strategy prepared by the County Council for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. It is used to bid to government for funding transport improvements.
Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy	Strategy relating to the part of the borough (Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale) which has been identified by the government as a Growth Area.
Mixed Use Development	In the past there has been a tendency to define areas of single land uses. Mixed use development promotes the integration and diversity of land uses which has benefits such as reducing the need to travel and deterring criminal activity by generating different activities at different times of the day.
Planning Policy Guidance	*Statements of Government policy on a range of issues – being replaced over time by Planning Policy Statements.*
Planning Policy Statement	New name for Planning Policy Guidance – statement of Government policy on a range of issues.
Preferred Options Document	Produced as part of the preparation of Development Plan Documents, and is issued for formal public participation as required by Regulation 26.
Previously Developed Land	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed-surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development.
Primary Shopping Area	The area where Class A1 Uses (shops) predominate.
Proposals Map	Illustrates policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.
Public Art	Permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the general public, whether part of a building or freestanding. For example, sculpture, lighting effects, street furniture, paving, railings and signs.
Public Realm	Public spaces which include streets and squares.
Regional Economic Strategy	A framework for improving the Region's economic performance produced by the East of England Development Agency.
Regional Housing Strategy	Sets out the strategic direction for the delivery of housing in the East of England and informs affordable housing investment decisions.
Regional Planning Guidance	*Non-statutory guidance under the old system, approved by the Government setting out regional planning policy - being replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy.*

Regional Spatial Strategy	A statutory document under the new system that replaces Regional Planning Guidance setting out regional spatial strategy and policies. New Local Development Documents will have to be in accordance with it. Bedford Borough Council's Regional Spatial Strategy is currently the draft East of England Plan.
Regional Transport Strategy	Produced as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy informed by the delivery programmes of the Highways and Rail Authorities.
Renaissance Bedford	An organisation set up to help deliver planned growth in the Bedford area.
Renewable Energy	Energy derived from sources that are available in an unlimited supply.
Rural Policy Area	The area of the Borough not covered by the Bedford, Kempston and northern Marston Vale Growth Area. This area is shown on the Key Diagram.
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, the Secretary of State for National Heritage is required to compile and maintain a schedule of monuments of national importance. The monuments are statutory protected in a similar way to listed buildings.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Statutorily notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being nationally important sites of special nature conservation interest. Sites of Special Scientific Interest's may include wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Sets out the approach of the authority to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and review of Local Development Documents and in the consideration of significant planning applications.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Environmental assessment of policies, plans and programmes required under the European SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.
Structure Plan	*Part of the old Development Plan system which is now being phased out– It will be largely replaced when the East of England Plan is approved.*
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	Statutory documents that expand upon policies or proposals in Development Plan Documents. These replace Supplementary Planning Guidance.
Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	*Non-statutory guidance prepared under the old system to expand upon policies and proposals in the Local Plan or Structure Plan. Being replaced by Supplementary Planning Documents.*
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	A social, economic and environmental appraisal of strategy, policies and proposals that is required for the Regional Spatial Strategy, all Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. To be undertaken jointly with Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Sustainable Development	"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).
Town Centre Area Action Plan	Plan to provide a planning framework for areas of change within Bedford town centre. The Plan has status of a Development Plan Document.
Vitality and Viability	Essential elements in the stability and future prosperity of town centres. They stem not only from a variety of retail uses but from the range and quality of activities in town centres and their accessibility to people.

Note - entries shown in *italics* relate to terms relating solely to the old planning system

APPENDICES

APPENDIX F

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

F.1 This plan has been prepared by the Borough Council for the period 2001 - 2021 having had regard to the likelihood of available resources, the likely costs that may be incurred and the realistic view of what can be achieved in the timescale.

F.2 The Borough Council is aware that some policy aims cannot be achieved solely through the grant or refusal of planning permission. Table 1 below identifies which policies will require the coordination of multiple agencies to be achieved and includes delivery mechanisms and anticipated timescales. Some policies are intended to be ongoing throughout the life of the Plan and apply to all development proposals. As such it is not appropriate to set a timescale for their implementation.

TABLE 1 -
TABLE OF POLICIES AND RELATED DELIVERY AGENCIES, MECHANISMS AND TIMESCALES

POLICY	COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	DELIVERY AGENCIES	DELIVERY MECHANISMS	TIMESCALES
CP1 - Spatial Strategy	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	All service providers	Service providers' strategies, Allocations DPD	None
CP2 - Sustainable Development Principles	• Promoting community safety • Improving the environment • Creating better transport • Promoting leisure	Developers, Borough Council, Renaissance Bedford	Allocations DPD, Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP3 - The location of development in the Growth Area	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	All service providers	Allocations DPD	None
CP4 - Key Service Centres in the Growth Area	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	All service providers	Allocations DPD, service providers' strategies	None
CP5 - Sequential approach to the allocation of land for residential and employment development in the Growth Area	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	Borough Council	Allocations DPD	None
CP6 - The scale and pace of housing development in the Growth Area	• Providing housing and building communities	Developers, RSLs, Renaissance Bedford	Allocations DPD	By 2021
CP7 - Meeting Housing Needs	• Providing housing and building communities	Developers, RSLs	Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP8 - Affordable Housing in the Borough	• Providing housing and building communities	Developers, RSLs, Borough Council, Partners	RSL funding, Housing Corporation	None

POLICY	COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	DELIVERY AGENCIES	DELIVERY MECHANISMS	TIMESCALES
CP9 - Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople	• Providing housing and building communities	Borough Council	Allocations DPD	None
CP10 - The creation of jobs	• Strengthening the economy	Developers, Borough Council, Renaissance Bedford, EEDA, BLEDP	Allocations DPD	By 2021
CP11 - Employment land	• Strengthening the economy	Developers, Borough Council, Renaissance Bedford, EEDA, BLEDP	Allocations DPD	None
CP12 - Settlement Policy Areas	• Improving the environment	Developers, Borough Council	Allocations DPD, Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP13 - The countryside and development within it	• Improving the environment	Developers, Borough Council	Allocations DPD, Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP14 - Location of development in the Rural Policy Area	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	All service providers	Allocations DPD	None
CP15 - Rural Key Service Centres	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	All service providers	Allocations DPD, service providers' strategies	None
CP16 - Housing in the Rural Policy Area	• Providing housing and building communities	Developers, RSLs	Allocations DPD	None
CP17 - Affordable Housing to meet local needs in the Rural Policy Area	• Providing housing and building communities	Developers, RSLs, Borough Council	RSL funding, Housing Corporation	None
CP18 - Sustaining the local economy and services	• Strengthening the economy	Developers	Allocations DPD	None
CP19 - Bedford Town Centre	• All themes	Developers, Renaissance Bedford	Town Centre AAP	None
CP20 - Retail Hierarchy	• Strengthening the economy	Developers, Borough Council	Town Centre AAP, Development Control Policies DPD, Allocations DPD	None
CP21- Designing in quality	• Promoting community safety • Improving the environment	Developers	Development Control Policies DPD	None

POLICY	COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	DELIVERY AGENCIES	DELIVERY MECHANISMS	TIMESCALES
CP22- Green Infrastructure	• Improving the environment • Promoting leisure	Developers, Renaissance Bedford, Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire County Council, county-wide green infrastructure consortium	Allocations DPD, Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP23 - Heritage	• Improving the environment	Developers	Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP24 - Landscape protection and enhancement	• Improving the environment	Developers	Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP25 - Biodiversity	• Improving the environment	Developers	Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP26 - Climate change and pollution	• Improving the environment • Improving health	Developers, all service providers	Climate Change SPD, Building Regulations	None
CP27 - Strategic transport infrastructure	• Creating better transport	Highways Agency, East West Rail Consortium, Renaissance Bedford		Great Barford Bypass - Highways Agency scheme completed 2006 (LTP – NR1) A421 - Highways Agency priority major scheme, Public Inquiry Dec 2007, Environmental works start Sept 2008, main works Jan 2009, likely completion 2010 (LTP – NR3) Thameslink Programme - Local Transport Plan major programmed scheme, anticipated opening 2013 (LTP – PT14) East-West rail Oxford to Bedford – East West Rail Consortium scheme under consideration, anticipated opening by 2013 (LTP – PT16)

POLICY	COMMUNITY PLAN THEME	DELIVERY AGENCIES	DELIVERY MECHANISMS	TIMESCALES
CP28 - Local Transport Plan	• Creating better transport	Developers, Bedfordshire County Council, Renaissance Bedford	Local Transport Plan	Bedford Western Bypass – Developer led (with some public sector contributions) priority major scheme, LTP funding approved, Contract let and works to start Oct 2007, anticipated opening 2008/09 (LTP – LR9) Park & Ride sites – Elstow site open, further 2 park and ride schemes at Biddenham and Clapham to be delivered 2009/10 and 2010/11 Batts Ford Bridge and town centre improvements - Local Transport Plan priority major scheme as part of an overall transport package, likely completion 2012/13 (LTP – LR20) Wixams A6 Re-Alignment – Developer led (with some public sector contributions) programmed scheme, work has commenced, anticipated opening 2008 (LTP – LR6) Wixams rail station –Developer led and Growth Area Funded major transport scheme, first funding agreement signed Sept 2007, under consideration in the period to 2010/11 (LTP – PT17) Bedford Rail Station - Developer led (with some public sector contributions) major transport scheme under consideration in the period 2011/12 to 2015/16 (LTP – PT24)
CP29 - Accessibility	• Creating better transport • Including everyone	Developers, Bedfordshire County Council	Allocations DPD, Development Control Policies DPD	None
CP30 - Developer contributions	• All themes	Developers, Borough Council, Renaissance Bedford		None
CP31- Plan, monitor and manage	• Providing housing and building communities • Strengthening the economy	Borough Council		None

F.3 Upon adoption, this plan will be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will be published each December and cover the previous financial year 1st April - 31st March.

F.4 Table 2 sets out how the council proposes to monitor the effectiveness of the Plan in delivering its objectives. Each of the 16 objectives is to be delivered by a specific policy or policies in the plan. The table below sets out how each objective will be monitored in the AMR by setting a series of indicators. Many of the indicators in the table are already collected by the council in the AMR. Where new indicators are proposed, they are marked as 'new'. The table also includes any relevant targets and milestones, the progress towards which will also be monitored.

TABLE 2 - TABLE OF PLAN OBJECTIVES AND RELATED POLICIES, INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Not all of the policies have targets due to their strategic nature. Where relevant, indicators (along with their reference number from the AMR) are listed.

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
1. Deliver the planned growth in Bedford, Kempston and the northern Marston Vale (Local Plan 2002 commitments – see Figure 2) to achieve a step change in the borough's role in the region	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP3 The location of development in the Growth Area CP4 Key Service Centres in the Growth Area CP6 The scale and pace of housing development in the Growth Area CP10 The creation of jobs CP11 Employment land CP31 Plan, monitor and manage	CP6 target: Housing development of 16,270 in the Growth Area between 2001-2021 CP10 target: Minimum of 16,000 jobs to be provided in the borough by 2021 CP11 target: Up to 75has of employment land to be provided in the Borough by 2021.	C2a: Housing Trajectory L1 a-e: Gypsy and Traveller indicators L4: Proportion of development within the Growth Area and Rural Policy Area L14: Number of jobs created in the Borough	C2a: If delivery varies by more than 20% of the dwelling requirement, reasons for this should be established and appropriate responses considered; this could include a review of the Allocations and Designations DPD. Delivery against the dwelling requirement will be measured over a 5 year rolling period. L14: If job growth falls 20% below the job growth target (800 p.a.) a review should be undertaken to establish reasons for this. This could be undertaken at District, County, sub-regional or regional level. Delivery against the job growth requirement will be measured over a 5 year rolling period.
2. Ensure future development is based upon sustainable development principles	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development CP3 The location of development in the Growth Area CP5 Sequential approach to the allocation of land for residential and employment development in the Growth Area CP14 Location of development in the Rural Policy Area CP31 Plan, monitor and manage		L4: Proportion of development within the Growth Area and Rural Policy Area	

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
3. Provide guidance on where future growth should occur (in the period up to 2021)	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP3 The location of development in the Growth Area CP5 Sequential approach to the allocation of land for residential and employment development in the Growth Area CP14 Location of development in the Rural Policy Area		L4: Proportion of development within the Growth Area and Rural Policy Area	
4. Provide quality housing to meet current and future needs of all sectors of the community	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP6 The scale and pace of housing development in the Growth Area CP7 Meeting housing needs CP8 Affordable housing in the Borough CP9 Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople CP13 The countryside and development within it CP16 Housing in the Rural Policy Area CP17 Affordable housing to meet local needs in the Rural Policy Area	CP6 target: Housing development of 16,270 in the Growth Area between 2001-2021 CP16 target: Increase of 1300 net dwellings in the Rural Policy Area 2001-2021	C2a: Housing Trajectory C2d: Affordable housing completions L1 a-e: Gypsy and Traveller indicators	C2a: If delivery varies by more than 20% of the dwelling requirement, reasons for this should be established and appropriate responses considered; this could include a review of the Allocations DPD. Delivery against the dwelling requirement will be measured over a 5 year rolling period.

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
5. Foster significant employment growth	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP10 The creation of jobs CP11 Employment land CP16 Housing in the Rural Policy Area CP18 Sustaining the local economy and services CP31 Plan, monitor and manage	CP8 target: Minimum of 16,000 jobs to be provided in the Borough by 2021 CP11 target: Up to 75has of employment land to be provided in the borough by 2021. CP16 target: Increase of 1300 net dwellings in the Rural Policy Area 2001-2021	C1a: Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type C2a: Housing Trajectory L14: Number of jobs created in the Borough New: Jobs created in the Rural Policy Area	C2a: If delivery varies by more than 20% of the dwelling requirement, reasons for this should be established and appropriate responses considered; this could include a review of the Allocations DPD. Delivery against the dwelling requirement will be measured over a 5 year rolling period. L14: If job growth falls 20% below the job growth target (800 p.a.) a review should be undertaken to establish reasons for this. This could be undertaken at District, County, sub-regional or regional level. Delivery against the job growth requirement will be measured over a 5 year rolling period.
6. Direct retail development to the most appropriate locations	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP19 Bedford Town Centre CP20 Retail hierarchy	Capacity of 6,000 sq.m. net convenience goods floorspace by 2011 and 30,000 sq.m. net comparison goods floorspace by 2011 increasing to 47,000 sq.m. by 2016. (The Town Centre Area Action Plan allocates 31,200 sq.m. of retail floorspace, the delivery of which will be monitored by that plan).	C4a: Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development C4b: Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres	C4a&b: If the identified retail of the three key sites allocated in the Town Centre Area Action Plan is not likely to be delivered, an updated retail capacity study should be undertaken to consider the reasons for this, to review the amount of additional floorspace likely to be needed and to consider the scope for expansion of the Primary Shopping Area.

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
7. Foster the regeneration of Bedford town centre to enable it to fulfil a greater role within the region	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP19 Bedford Town Centre CP20 Retail hierarchy		C4a: Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development C4b: Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development in the town centre L15: Percentage of vacant units within the primary shopping area of Bedford town centre L17: Footfall levels in the town centre	
8. Support the delivery of coordinated transport improvements with the emphasis on non-car modes, improving east-west communications and achieving greater transport interchange	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP27 Strategic transport infrastructure CP28 Local Transport Plan CP29 Accessibility CP31 Plan, monitor and manage		L3: Level of proposed transport infrastructure set out in the RSS and LTP2 that has been achieved L23: Mode of transport to work	

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
9. Encourage key rural communities to become more sustainable places to live and work	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP3 The location of development in the Growth Area CP4 Key Service Centres in the Growth Area CP6 The scale and pace of housing development in the Growth Area CP12 Settlement Policy Areas CP13 The countryside and development within it CP14 Location of development in the Rural Policy Area CP15 Rural Key Service Centres CP16 Housing in the Rural Policy Area CP17 Affordable housing to meet local needs in the Rural Policy Area CP18 Sustaining the local economy and services	CP6 target: Housing development of 16,270 in the Growth Area between 2001-2021 CP16 target: Increase of 1300 net dwellings in the Rural Policy Area 2001-2021	C2a: Housing Trajectory L4: Proportion of development within the Growth Area and Rural Policy Area L11: Rural households within 13 minutes walk of an hourly bus service New: Proportion of development in the Rural Policy Area outside of key service centres New: Level of services in Rural Policy Area New: Jobs created in the Rural Policy Area	C2a: If delivery varies by more than 20% of the dwelling requirement, reasons for this should be established and appropriate responses considered; this could include a review of the Allocations DPD. Delivery against the dwelling requirement will be measured over a 5 year rolling period.
10. Achieve high quality design that takes account of character and local distinctiveness, enables access and promotes community safety	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP21 Designing in quality		L20: Quality of new development in terms of design and landscaping and respecting local character L25: Planning permissions granted with conditions relating to good access provision for disabled people	

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
11. Protect and enhance the countryside and the quality and connectivity of green infrastructure in the borough with particular emphasis on enhancing the Marston Vale	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP12 Settlement Policy Areas CP13 The countryside and development within it CP14 Location of development in the Rural Policy Area CP22 Green infrastructure CP23 Heritage CP24 Landscape protection and enhancement CP25 Biodiversity		L5: % of SSSIs in favourable condition. L6: Increase in areas of woodland in the Growth Area L18: Amount of open space in new housing developments granted planning permission	
12. Minimise the use of energy and encourage greater use of energy from renewable sources	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP21 Designing in quality CP26 Climate change and pollution CP29 Accessibility		C9: Renewable energy capacity installed by type	
13. Provide a mechanism for the delivery of infrastructure (including health, education, transport, community, leisure and recreation facilities) in tandem with new development	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP10 Strategic transport infrastructure CP22 Green infrastructure CP28 Local Transport Plan		L3: Level of proposed transport infrastructure set out in the RSS and LTP2 that has been achieved New: Completed infrastructure schemes secured from planning permission legal agreements	

DPD OBJECTIVE	DPD POLICIES RELATED TO THAT OBJECTIVE	ASSOCIATED TARGETS	INDICATORS	TRIGGERS
14. Protect and enhance the Borough's built, cultural and community assets and the character of settlements and foster the development of the Borough as a destination for heritage and cultural tourism	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP21 Designing in quality CP23 Heritage CP30 Developer contributions		L7: Listed buildings at risk L20: Quality of new development in terms of design and landscaping and respecting local character New: Income from tourism as a % of total GDP	
15. Protect the environment by minimising the risk of flooding and the effects of climate change and facilitating improvements in air quality	CP1 Spatial Strategy CP2 Sustainable development principles CP21 Designing in quality CP26 Climate change and pollution	C7: Zero planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.	C7: Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality C9: Renewable energy capacity installed by type L19: Designated air quality management areas	
16. Involve the community in the decisions about the planning of the borough so they can influence and shape such decisions	CP1 Spatial Strategy		New: Number of respondents to planning consultations The effectiveness of the Council's community engagement in planning will be monitored against the Statement of Community Involvement and reported in the AMR	

F.5 The information in this Appendix is taken from the Bedford Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report and the Housing Monitoring Report. For up to date information please see the Annual Monitoring Report published each December.

HOUSING

BEDFORD, KEMPSTON AND THE NORTHERN MARSTON VALE GROWTH AREA

F.6 The table below shows the dwelling supply in the Growth Area for the period 2005-2021.

TABLE 3 - DWELLING SUPPLY AS AT 31/03/2007

SOURCE OF SUPPLY	SITE	NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS	INDICATIVE SPLIT BETWEEN BROWNFIELD AND GREENFIELD		PLANNING STATUS AT 31/03/2007
			PDL	GREENFIELD	
Completions 2001 - 2006/07		2433	1627	806	Complete
Planning permissions at 31/03/2007	Other sites	7628	3757	3871	Planning permission granted
Local Plan commitments at 31/03/2007	H2 Britannia Works Phase E	255	255		Application under consideration
	H2 Britannia Works Phase F	100	100		Estimated additional site capacity
	H8 Land north of Bromham Road	1200		1200	Resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreement
	H9 Land at Shortstown	130		130	Resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreement
	H11 South of Fields Road, Wootton	500		500	Resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreement
	H12 North of Fields Road, Wootton	580		580	Resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreement
	H13 Stewartby	610		610	Resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreement
Additional capacity estimate	Wixams	500		500	
Town Centre Area Action Plan	TC7, TC10, TC11, TC13, TC15, TC16, TC17 and other sites	635	635		
Other windfall commitments at 31/03/2007	Small sites with resolution to grant	173	117	56	Resolution to grant planning permission subject to S106 agreement
Windfall allowance 2007/08 -2021*	125 p. a.	1750			
Total supply and completions 2001 - 2021		16494			
MKSM Policy requirement		16270			
Progress of supply towards meeting MKSM target		+224			

*Note: In line with advice contained in PPS3: Housing the Council will not rely on housing delivery from 'windfall' sites to satisfy the first 10 years of housing supply. The allowance for 'windfalls' in Table 3 above will be replaced by provision derived from the managed release of brownield/employment sites and/or other land allocation identified through the Allocations and Designations DPD process.

F.7 This appendix states that if, in the future, housing delivery varies by more than 20% from the requirement, the Council will undertake a review in order to establish the reasons. The AMR for the period to 31/03/2007 indicated that housing delivery in the Growth Area has fallen more than 20% below the housing requirement.

To date, the main reasons for under-delivery are considered to be:

- Market performing below regional expectations
- Infrastructure constraints (A421 and western bypass)
- Remediation of land

The under-delivery of housing is not expected to continue for the following reasons:

- There is now a programme for the A421 dualling and western bypass
- At 31/03/2007 there were 7628 unimplemented planning consents in the Growth Area
- At 31/03/2007 a further 3020 units had received resolutions to grant planning permission subject to legal agreements being agreed.

RURAL POLICY AREA

F.8 The following data indicates the housing delivery position for the Rural Policy Area (area outside of the Growth Area) as at 31/03/2007 – see Annual Monitoring Report.

Dwelling requirement	2001 – 2021	=	1300
Dwelling completions	2001 – 2006/07	=	1078
Outstanding requirement	2006/07 – 2020/21	=	270

At 31/03/2007 housing delivery in the Rural Policy Area was 48 dwellings above the requirement.

F.9 This appendix states that if housing delivery varies by more than 20% of the requirement, the Council should establish the reasons for the trend. The AMR for the period to 2004/05 indicates that housing delivery has risen more than 20% above the housing requirement. The Council is confident this trend will not continue. The trend has been caused by a combination of factors including:

- Changes in national housing policy which increased dwelling density on Local Plan allocated sites (over 300 more dwellings were delivered than were originally identified).
- The rapid delivery of dwellings on many Local Plan housing allocations in the Rural Policy Area.
- In the period from 2005/06 to 2021 there are a further 193 dwellings allocated for housing in the Rural Policy Area through the Local Plan. Infill and affordable dwellings to meet local need are also expected (see Policies CP14, CP16 and CP17). Thus the requirement of 1,300 is not expected to be greatly exceeded and the over-delivery of the requirement at 31/03/2007 does not cause concern.

EMPLOYMENT LAND

F.10 The following table shows potential sources of employment land 2001 - 2021. In quantitive terms there appears to be a healthy supply of B1/B2/B8 land, but as the table notes explain, there is doubt about whether some of the sites will be delivered.

TABLE 4 – EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF EMPLOYMENT LAND A summary of 2006/07 monitoring data		
	All (B1, B2 & B8)	B1 (estimate)
Completions 2001- 2007	**52.75 (net)** 78.40 (gross)	**13.50**
Sites with planning permission		
Growth Area		
• B1	2.55	2.55
• B1/B8		
• B2/B8	0.22	
• B8	0.13	
• B1/B2/B8	39.68	5.22
Total	**42.58**	**7.77**
Rural Policy Area		
• B1	9.10	9.10
• B1/B2	17.80	9.00
• B1/B8	1.26	0.45
• B2	0.21	
• B8	0.20	
• B1/B2/B8	7.59	3.02
Total	**36.16**	**21.57**
Sites with resolution to grant planning permission		
Growth Area		
• H13 Stewartby (B1/B2/B8)	2.40	1.00
• H11 Wootton (B1/B2/B8)	9.00	2.00
• H8 Land North of Bromham Rd (B1/B2)	4.00	2.00
Total	**15.40**	**5.00**
Sites without planning permission		
Growth Area		
• E4 Land west of B530	3.40	1.00
• E5 Land east of B530	1.36	1.00
• E10 Elstow Brickworks	8.00	2.00
• TC13 Railway station (TCAAP)	2.00	2.00
Total	**14.76**	**6.00**
Overall total	**161.65ha**	**53.84ha**

At 2007 planning permission had been granted for the loss of a further 2.87ha of employment land to uses outside the 'B' range. This reduces the overall total of 161.65ha to 158.78ha.

It is unlikely that all sites with planning permission will come forward. For example:

- Growth Area sites with planning permission include 12ha to the rear of the airship sheds at Cardington. Following the appeal decision of the former RAF site to the north (2005) this site is unlikely to be developed for employment because of access difficulties. Taking the 12ha from the 158.78ha total leaves 146.78ha. The estimated B1 figure takes account of the fact that this site is unlikely to be delivered.
- Rural Policy Area sites (sites outside the Bedford, Kempston and northern Marston Vale) with planning permission include a large site at Thurleigh Airfield. This was first granted planning permission in 2001 and its delivery is uncertain. Without the 18ha at Thurleigh Airfield, the 146.78ha total is reduced to 128.78ha. The B1 total includes an estimate of 9ha B1 at Thurleigh. Removing this from the B1 total leaves potential for 44.84ha.

CORE STRATEGY
& RURAL ISSUES PLAN



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