Contents



	Com	menting on the Document	4
1	Intro	duction	5
2	The I	Borough of Wellingborough	11
3	Visio	n and Outcomes	15
4	Spat	ial Strategy	17
	4.1	Settlement Hierarchy	17
	4.2	Village Boundaries	18
5	Gree	n Infrastructure Framework	20
	5.1	Delivery of Green Infrastructure Corridors	21
	5.2	Protection of Existing Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation	24
	5.3	Enhancement and Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation	25
6	Deliv	ering Economic Prosperity	31
	6.1	Established Industrial Estates	32
	6.2	Employment Outside the Established Industrial Estates	36
7	Deliv	ering Homes	37
	7.1	Urban Housing	38
	7.2	Rural Housing	41
	7.3	Housing Mix and Tenure	44
	7.4	Housing Trajectory	52
	7.5	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	53
8	Deliv	ering Retail	56
	8.1	Convenience Shopping	56
	8.2	Comparison Shopping	56
	8.3	Retail Hierarchy	57
	8.4	Local Impact Threshold	60
9	Welli	ngborough Town Centre	62
	9.1	Role of the Town Centre	63
	9.2	Primary Shopping Area	64

Contents



	9.3	The N	Aarket	66
	9.4	Publi	Realm and Shop Fronts	68
	9.5	Town	Centre Sites	70
	ç	9.5.1	Former Post Office Sorting Depot/BT Exchange, Midland Road	70
	ç	9.5.2	High Street/Jackson Lane	70
	ç	9.5.3	Alma Street/Cambridge Street	71
10	Site	Specif	ic Policies	73
	10.1	1 Susta	inable Urban Extensions	73
	•	10.1.1	Wellingborough East	74
	•	10.1.2	Wellingborough North	77
	10.2	2 Georg	ge Cox Shoes, 46 Westfield Road	78
	10.3	3 Wind	sor Road	79
	10.4	4 Land	between Finedon Road and Nest Lane	80
	10.5	5 Park	Farm Way/Shelley Road	81
	10.6	6 East	of Eastfield Road	82
	10.7	7 Milne	r Road, Finedon	83
	10.8	3 Sywe	Il Aerodrome	84
11	Deli	ivering	Infrastructure	86
12	Moı	nitoring	and Review	87
A	ppe	endici	es	
A	Glo	ssary		88
В	Cor	nsultatio	on Undertaken	93
C	Dra	ft Polici	es Maps	96
	C.1	Boze	at	96
	C.2	Easto	n Maudit	98
	C.3	Ector	l	100
	C.4	Fined	on	102

Contents



C.5	Great Doddington	104
C.6	Great Harrowden	106
C.7	Grendon	108
C.8	Hardwick	110
C.9	Irchester	112
C.10	Isham	114
C.11	Litttle Harrowden	116
C.12	Little Irchester	118
C.13	Mears Ashby	120
C.14	Orlingbury	122
C.15	Strixton	124
C.16	Sywell	126
C.17	Wilby	128
C.18	Wellingborough - Town Centre	130
C.19	Wellingborough - Town	132
C.20	Wellingborough - Borough	135

Commenting on the Document



Commenting on the Document

This document is part of an early stage of consultation for the preparation of part 2 of the local plan for Wellingborough and we want to know your views. In particular, we would like to know whether you agree with the policies we are proposing or whether there are any other topics you think that the plan should cover.

The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS), which deals with strategic issues for the whole of North Northamptonshire (the districts/boroughs of Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire) will form part 1 of the local plan. These strategic issues are not open for consultation as part of this document.

How can you comment on this document?

- By using our online consultation portal (our preferred method): http://wellingborough.limehouse.co.uk/portal/
- Send us an email to: <u>policyandregeneration@wellingborough.gov.uk</u>
- Write to us at: Planning Policy and Regeneration, Borough Council of Wellingborough, Swanspool House, Doddington Road, Wellingborough, NN8 1BP

All comments on this document should be received by 5pm on Friday 27 May 2016.

What will happen to your comments?

- Your comments will be acknowledged either by email or in writing.
- A summary of the results of the consultation will be publicly available.
- Your comments will be considered by the council before a revised version of the plan is prepared.
- All comments will be made available for public viewing. Your personal details <u>except for</u> your name will however remain confidential.
- In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 your details will be retained on our database for the purposes of preparing the local plan and other related planning policy issues, they will not be used for any other purpose.

Where can you get further information?

- Further information about the plan including several background papers and the evidence base used to prepare the Plan is available from our website www.wellingborough.gov.uk/emergingdraft.
- Copies of the plan and background papers will be available at local libraries.
- You can visit our Swanspool House reception during normal office hours to speak to an officer from the Planning Policy team.
- You can email us: policyandregeneration@wellingborough.gov.uk
- You can telephone us on 01933 231926, 231903 or 231985



1. Introduction

Why is a Plan Being Prepared?

- **1.0.1** The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (PBW) is being prepared to help guide future planning decisions in the area. Together with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS), it will form the 'local plan' for the borough. The 'local plan' is a specific policy term used in national guidance which means a plan for the future development of the local area.
- **1.0.2** The adopted North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) is currently being reviewed and it is anticipated that the revised plan will be adopted in 2016. The revised JCS was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 31 July 2015, the hearing sessions took place in November 2015 and consultation on proposed modifications ended on 16 March 2016. Details are available from the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit website. (i)
- **1.0.3** The PBW will replace the policies in the Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP adopted in 2009) and the saved policies from The Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan which derive from 1999 or 2004. These documents were prepared before the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was issued by government and they need to be updated. We need to respond to changes that have happened since the original plans were prepared.
- **1.0.4** The new local plan will also replace work that was undertaken on the Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document (SSPDPD) that reached a preferred options stage in 2010.
- **1.0.5** Town planning operates in a plan-led system. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions made under any of the planning acts 'shall be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.' This means that the development plan for a given area is the most important factor to be taken into account when making planning decisions, most commonly when making decisions on planning applications, either by the council or by planning inspectors at appeal.
- 1.0.6 The importance of an up-to-date development plan is also clear in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where paragraph 12 states: 'proposed development that accords with an up-to-date local plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise' (NPPF, DCLG, March 2012). On the other hand, where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, the NPPF makes clear that the policies in that document prevail which includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The Process and Timetable

1.0.7 Government guidance and legislation sets out how local plans must be prepared. The process and current timetable is summarised below.



Stage	Timetable	
Regulation 18 Consultation (identifying the scope of the plan)	21 March to 2 May 2014	
Evidence gathering, stakeholder engagement and commissioning of consultants	May to Dec 2014	
Report issues and options document and background papers to committee	15 Dec 2014	
Consultation on issues and options	26 Jan to 9 March 2015	
Evidence gathering, options testing, consideration of representations, stakeholder engagement and writing draft plan	March 2015 to March 2016	
Report emerging draft plan to committee	April 2016	
Consultation on emerging draft plan and commissioning of consultant work to test plan	April to May 2016	
Consideration of representations and consultant reports and preparation of pre-submission plan	June to July 2016	
Report pre-submission plan to committee	September 2016	
Consultation on pre-submission plan (publication of plan)	September to November 2016	
Report submission plan to committee	December 2016	
Submission of plan to Secretary of State	December 2016	
Examination	December 2016 to June 2017	
Adoption	July 2017	

1.0.8 This document is part of an engagement stage which seeks to show the direction of the plan following consideration of the issues and options. At the issues and options stage, 79 consultees responded making a total of 663 comments. These have all been taken into account, together with other evidence that has been prepared, to produce an emerging approach to the plan. Responses to the comments received at the issues and options can be found on the council's <u>website</u>. This emerging plan is prepared based on the submission plan version of the JCS together with the proposed main modifications. Should there be any amendments to the JCS following the receipt of the Inspector's Report, these will be reflected in later versions

ii

https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7030/issues_and_options_responses



of this plan. Engagement and consultation will take place in accordance with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This was adopted on 14 November 2013 by the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee in relation to jointly prepared documents and by the borough council on 14 January 2014 in relation to its responsibilities.

1.0.9 Whilst this emerging plan is being consulted, on the council will commission consultants for work on viability testing, transport modelling, sustainability appraisals and habitats regulation assessments. These will be proportionate, given that the JCS has already been subject to such appraisals. It may, however, be necessary to make further amendments to the approach based on the results of these assessments before preparing a pre-submission plan. This plan will be subject to further consultation before being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

Context for the Plan

- **1.0.10** The PBW will not exist in isolation and there are basic conditions that a local plan must satisfy. It must be consistent with national policy and it must enable the delivery of sustainable development. The local plan will also have regard to other relevant plans and strategies including the community strategy.
- **1.0.11** When the local plan is examined by an independent inspector, that person's duty will be to ensure that it has been prepared in accordance with the 'duty to cooperate,' that legal and procedural requirements have been followed and to assess whether the local plan is 'sound.' To be found sound a local plan must be:
- Positively prepared the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to
 meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure needs, including unmet
 requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent
 with achieving sustainable development;
- Justified the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
- Effective the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
- Consistent with national policy the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

Evidence Base

1.0.12 Each local planning authority should ensure that the local plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area. Paragraphs 158-177 of the NPPF set out the type of evidence that may be required. The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains that this is not a prescriptive list; the evidence should be focused tightly on supporting and justifying the particular policies in the local plan.

iii http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/info/200132/local_development_framework/1165/statement_of_community_involvement

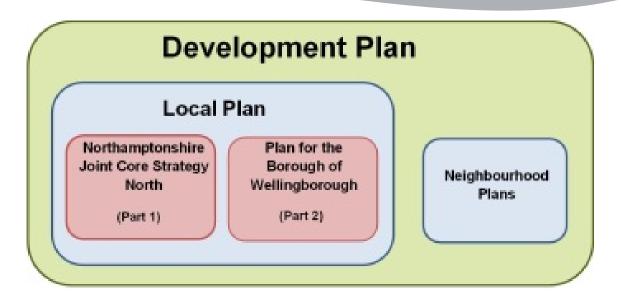


1.0.13 Evidence gathering has taken place to support the JCS and much of this will be relevant to supporting the PBW. Work was also undertaken during the preparation of the SSPDPD and this will also in many cases still be relevant. The evidence base is in the process of being updated. A list of current evidence is available on the council's <u>website</u>. Further evidence will be published on the website as and when it becomes available.

What will the Plan Cover?

- 1.0.14 The North Northamptonshire JCS, as 'part 1' of the local plan deals with strategic issues such as the overall spatial strategy, level of growth required and its distribution. These issues are, therefore, not addressed within this plan. It also sets out the strategic policies for the area together with place shaping principles and general development management policies. Part 2 plans will not need to replicate any of these policies, but will provide greater local detail in relevant areas to ensure that the development vision for the area is delivered. The JCS covers a set of core policies which relate to protecting and enhancing assets (such as the historic environment, landscape and biodiversity) and ensuring high quality development. The part 2 plan will only need to add to these policies if there are any locally specific issues or site specific details that could add to the interpretation of these policies. The PBW will cover the entire area of the Borough of Wellingborough for the period 2011 to 2031. This plan period is the same as part 1 of the local plan.
- **1.0.15** The NPPF sets out government planning policy for England and how this is expected to be applied. It must be taken into account in the preparation of plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. There is therefore no need to repeat any of those policies in the local plan.
- 1.0.16 The PBW will be accompanied by a 'Policies Map'. This map will be from an Ordnance Survey base and will set out where various policies will apply. Draft maps are included in Appendix C. These draft maps include policies and proposals from this emerging plan only. The final map will include other designations and constraints such as wildlife designations, scheduled ancient monuments, conservation areas and floodrisk areas as well as policies from other development plans such as the JCS, neighbourhood plans and the minerals and waste local plan. The council will work with neighbouring authorities and the JPU on the preparation of a web-based, interactive Policies Map.
- **1.0.17** 'Neighbourhood Plans' are relatively new tools to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their area and deliver the sustainable development they need. These plans need to be in general conformity with the local plan. Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' on 19 January 2016. There are a number of other neighbourhood plans currently in progress within the borough (Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester; Wollaston and Ecton). The part 2 plan will not cover any non-strategic policies in an area where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation. Once made, the neighbourhood plans will form part of the overall development plan for the area.





Duty to Cooperate

- **1.0.18** The 'duty to cooperate' (the duty) was introduced by the Localism Act in November 2011. The act inserted section 33A into the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This placed a legal duty on all local authorities and public bodies (defined in regulations) to 'engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis' to maximise the effectiveness of local and marine plan preparation relating to strategic cross boundary matters.
- **1.0.19** The NPPF provides advice on how strategic planning matters should be addressed in local plans (paragraphs 178-181). Local planning authorities are expected to work 'collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local authority boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in local plans' (paragraph 179). Local planning authorities should follow the 'strategic priorities' set out in paragraph 156 of the NPPF.
- **1.0.20** Specific guidance on how the duty should be applied is included in the PPG. This makes it clear that the duty requires a proactive, ongoing and focused approach to strategic matters. Constructive cooperation must be an integral part of plan preparation and result in clear policy outcomes which can be demonstrated through the examination process.
- 1.0.21 The council already works closely with other partners and authorities in North Northamptonshire, through the preparation of the JCS which sets out the strategic priorities for the area. This has included the preparation of a joint evidence base on many topics including the need for homes and jobs, retail and other commercial development and the provision of infrastructure to support that development. Through the preparation of the JCS there has been significant collaborative work to ensure that strategic issues that cross boundaries have been appropriately dealt with. The council will continue to engage constructively with other bodies and authorities outside of the North Northamptonshire area to identify any duty to cooperate issues that need to be dealt with in the part 2 plan.



1.0.22 At the regulation 18 consultation stage, a cross boundary issue was identified by Northampton Borough Council relating to the potential need to accommodate some of Northampton's growth post 2026. The exact nature and extent of Northampton's growth has not been identified at present. To inform the next review of the JCS it is anticipated that the council and the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit will work with Northampton Borough Council, the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and any other relevant partners to ensure that the commissioning of population studies to establish objectively assessed housing needs align in terms of cross boundary needs and appropriate timeframes and develop and test options for meeting Northampton's longer term development needs.

Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.0.23 Every local plan must be accompanied and informed by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). This allows the potential environmental, economic and social impacts of the local plan to be systematically taken into account and will have a key role throughout the plan making process. The SA plays an important part in demonstrating that the local plan delivers sustainable development and has considered reasonable alternatives. The SA will incorporate a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to meet the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive).
- **1.0.24** The first stage in preparing a SA is to undertake a scoping report. This has been prepared and is available on the council's <u>website</u>. (v) It was consulted on between 4 July and 8 August 2014. The report sets out a baseline assessment of the borough, identifies key sustainability issues and sets out how the appraisal will be conducted.
- **1.0.25** The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits which runs through the borough is identified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site of international importance. The local plan will therefore also be assessed in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
- **1.0.26** An initial Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment of the emerging draft plan will be undertaken whilst wider consultation is being undertaken. The results of these assessments will be used to inform preparation of the pre-submission plan.



2. The Borough of Wellingborough

The Plan Area

2.0.1 The Borough of Wellingborough is shown in Figure 1 below. It covers an area of 163 sq km, situated in the eastern half of Northamptonshire, and lies about 65 miles from both London and Birmingham. It is located at the most southern tip of the East Midlands Region and, together with Kettering, Corby and East Northamptonshire, it forms part of the area known as North Northamptonshire.

Wellingborough Ecton © Crown Copyright and database rights 2014, Ordnance Survey 100018694

Figure 1 Map of the Borough of Wellingborough



2.0.2 Wellingborough has close links with Northampton, Milton Keynes and Bedford. Figure 2 below shows the location of the borough in relation to other towns in the wider area.



Figure 2 Location of Wellingborough

2.0.3 Wellingborough town forms the urban centre of the borough and is surrounded by 19 villages which range in size from Earls Barton (population 5,387) and Irchester (population 4,745) to Hardwick (population 70) and Strixton (population under 50). Much of the borough remains essentially rural and is primarily comprised of gently undulating farmland.

Population

- **2.0.4** The population of the borough is 75,356 (2011 Census). Approximately 49,000 people (65% of the borough) live within the town of Wellingborough with the rest living in the rural area. The population grew by 4% from the 2001 Census which is at a lower rate than the national average (7.2%) and surrounding districts.
- **2.0.5** It is estimated that in 2015 there were 14,500 people aged over 65 in the borough 18.8% of the population. This is predicted to rise to 24% of the population by 2030 20,100 people. (i)

i Source: Projecting Older People Population Information System (www.POPPI.org.uk). These figures are taken from Office for National Statistics (ONS) subnational population projections.

The Borough of Wellingborough



2.0.6 In terms of ethnicity, the borough has a relatively diverse population and the diversity is increasing. In the 2011 census, approximately 81% of residents described themselves as white British; this has reduced from 88% in the 2001 Census.

Economy

- **2.0.7** Wellingborough town forms the focal point of the local economy. Most of the retail offer is located within the town centre of Wellingborough, whilst industrial and commercial development is primarily located on several estates at Park Farm, Denington Road, Finedon Road, Ise Valley, Irthlingborough Road and Victoria Business Park on the A45.
- **2.0.8** Between 2001 and 2015, 3,820 new homes were built in the borough to provide for residents and to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. Of this figure, 2,769 new dwellings or 72.5% were built in the town whilst rural areas had 1051.

Environment

- 2.0.9 Much of the borough remains essentially rural and is comprised of gently undulating farmland a significant proportion of which is of good agricultural quality. The most significant landscape and biodiversity features are the rivers. The River Nene bisects the borough from west to east with the River Ise running north to south and flowing into the Nene to the south-east of Wellingborough. Sand and gravel extraction along the Nene Valley has created many large, water-filled gravel pits at the expense of the wet meadows which once flanked the river. In biodiversity terms, this has enabled species to colonise these pits to such an extent that some are now of national importance and have, therefore, been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- **2.0.10** In 2011, part of the Nene Valley was recognised as being of international importance when it was designated as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site for birds under the habitats directive. Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) cover only 3.45% of the borough, compared to about 7% of the country as a whole.
- **2.0.11** The borough has a rich built heritage and evidence of settlements stretching back 2,000 years. 536 buildings have been listed as of special architectural or historic interest and there are eleven scheduled ancient monuments. Much of the historic built environment is of high quality, adding significantly to the character and identity of the area.

Social Characteristics

2.0.12 According to the Indices of Deprivation 2013, Wellingborough was ranked at 133 out of 326 local authorities in England, where 1 was the most deprived area and 326 the least deprived. These indices provide a measure of multiple deprivations, based on indicators such as income, employment, education, health and crime.

The Borough of Wellingborough



- **2.0.13** According to the 2011 Census, the majority of the population who state a religion describe themselves as Christian (57.69%). This has fallen since the 2001 Census when 68.19% described themselves as Christian. There have been increases in the percentage of people describing themselves as Hindu (3.6%), Muslim (1.6%), Sikh (0.2%), other religion (0.5%) and no religion (29.2%).
- **2.0.14** In Wellingborough, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSEs grade 'A' to 'C' has increased significantly over the last few years, from 46% in 2008 to 58% in 2012. There is however, a greater proportion of adults with no qualifications in Wellingborough than in the East Midlands and compared with the national average.

Accessibility and Movement

- **2.0.15** Wellingborough benefits from good road connections and has a number of key transport corridors. The A45 provides an east-west route and leads directly to junctions 15, 15A and 16 of the M1. The A509 provides a north-south route which links via the A14 to the M1, M6 and the east coast ports.
- **2.0.16** Wellingborough's railway station is on the Midland Mainline linking it direct to London, Nottingham, Leicester, Derby and Sheffield. The average journey time to London (St Pancras) is 60 minutes and the station is served by at least 2 trains per hour.
- **2.0.17** Just over 66% of people travel to work in Wellingborough by car. Wellingborough town is served by public transport and is relatively compact which means there are opportunities to walk and cycle. Nine percent of people walk to work and 1.5% of people cycle according to the 2011 census. These figures have dropped slightly since 2001, despite attempts to encourage these modes.
- **2.0.18** Most people in the borough live within 0.4 km of a bus stop and within 0.6km of a primary school. There are areas within the town and the rural area that are not within the 1.0 km catchment of a GP surgery. Large areas of the rural area are more than 1.5 km from a secondary school and none of the rural area is within 2.0 km of a sports centre.
- **2.0.19** Further details about the borough and its characteristics can be found in the <u>scoping</u> report⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ for the sustainability appraisal.

ii



3. Vision and Outcomes

3.0.1 The PBW, as part 2 of the local plan, will support and deliver the vision and outcomes set out in the JCS which represents part 1 of the local plan. The submission JCS sets out the following vision and outcomes:

By 2031, North Northamptonshire will be a showpiece for modern green living and well managed sustainable development: a resilient area where local choices have increased the ability to adapt to the impacts of climate change and to global economic changes. The special mixed urban-rural character of North Northamptonshire will have been maintained through urban-focussed growth supporting a strong network of vibrant and regenerated settlements, which each maintain their separate and distinct character within an enhanced green framework of living, working countryside.

North Northamptonshire will be outward looking, taking advantage of its excellent strategic transport connectivity to be a nationally important growth area and focus for inward investment. Plan led change will have made North Northamptonshire, its northern and southern sub-area and individual settlements more self-reliant, with more choices available locally. Investment in infrastructure, services and facilities and growth in high quality jobs will have led to less need to travel and will have shaped places in a way that meets the needs and aspirations of local people. A strong focus on growing investment in tourism, leisure and green infrastructure will be balanced with the protection and enhancement of the area's landscape character and its valuable built and natural environment.

North Northamptonshire will be an exemplar for construction based innovation and the delivery of low carbon growth. Its high quality environment and prosperous economy will ensure it has a stronger profile within the UK and Europe; widely recognised as a safe, healthy, affordable and attractive area for residents and visitors, and an excellent place for business to invest in.

Ecosystems will be protected and enhanced and provision of ecosystem services increased where demand exists. The Rockingham Forest will be re-invigorated through major new tree planting, providing carbon storage and a focus for tourism, recreation and sustainable wood fuel production. Restored and newly created habitats in the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area, will deliver improvements for both wildlife and people and a step change in nature conservation whilst recognising its tourism potential.

Contributing to this overall vision:

 Corby will be well on the way to doubling its population and will offer international class culture and sport facilities. Enterprise areas will have promoted the town as a base for businesses leading the way in high performance technologies, creative industries and the green economy. Smart and innovative regeneration and growth will have delivered a transformed, vibrant and growing Town Centre and sustainable



urban extensions; together with a network of accessible natural green spaces forming the urban gateway to the wider Rockingham Forest.

- East Northamptonshire will be the heartland of small and medium sized enterprises, based on regenerated and thriving market towns with an enhanced role for Rushden as the District's Growth Town. Implementation of the consented development at Rushden Lakes will have provided a new out of centre retail and leisure offer serving residents in the southern area of North Northamptonshire and delivering significant environmental benefits in the Nene Valley. Diverse, sustainable villages and a living, working countryside will provide the backdrop for tourism, creative industries and low carbon businesses to locate at the meeting point of the Nene Valley and Rockingham Forest.
- Kettering will be the largest retail centre and its vibrant town centre, regarded for being characterful, distinctive and fun, will provide a focus for its surrounding market towns and villages. The town will be the focus for healthcare and will lead the way in renewable energy investment to strengthen the green economy. Its business community will capitalise on its excellent connectivity, including its position on the Trans-European (E24 route) A14 and on the electrified Midland Mainline rail route.
- Wellingborough will be the gateway to North Northamptonshire for businesses looking for good rail connections to the south east and Europe, with a high profile office development centred on the railway station. Its historic core will be the heart of the community, serving the town and its prosperous satellite villages with a diversified retail, leisure and heritage offer.

Achieving the Vision by 2031 depends on the successful delivery of the following outcomes:

- 1. Empowered and proactive communities
- 2. Adaptability to future climate change
- 3. Distinctive environments that enhance and respect local character and enhance biodiversity
- 4. Excellent services and facilities easily accessed by local communities and businesses
- 5. A sustainable balance between local jobs and workers and a more diverse economy
- 6. Transformed connectivity
- 7. More walkable places and an excellent choice of ways to travel
- 8. Vibrant, well connected towns and a productive countryside
- 9. Stronger, more self-reliant towns with thriving centres
- 10. Enhanced quality of life for all residents



4. Spatial Strategy

4.0.1 The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) sets out the strategic spatial strategy for Wellingborough, defining the roles that various settlements will play in building a more sustainable and self-reliant North Northamptonshire, which maintains the special mixed urban/rural character. The JCS general approach is to meet needs as locally as possible, recognising that facilities serving more than one settlement should be in the most sustainable location. This Part 2 local plan has derived a local, more detailed spatial strategy for the borough, which is in keeping with the JCS, to ensure that local circumstances are properly accounted for.

4.1 Settlement Hierarchy

- **4.1.1** A settlement hierarchy is a way of categorising the borough's settlements in order to recognise their different roles and identify how they should be planned for in the future. A hierarchy groups together the settlements that have similar characteristics and roles. At the top of the hierarchy are the settlements that are the most sustainable and least constrained and at the bottom of the hierarchy are the settlements that are least sustainable and most constrained. A hierarchy helps to determine the level of growth that settlements ought to be able to sustainably accommodate in the future.
- **4.1.2** The JCS settlement hierarchy consists of four tiers; Growth Towns, Market Towns, Villages and Open Countryside. In this borough the town of Wellingborough is identified as a Growth Town and is the focus for the majority of growth. The rest of the settlements fall under the 'Villages' category. There are no Market Towns identified in this borough. The JCS allows part 2 local plans to identify a more detailed settlement hierarchy based on local evidence. The local hierarchy looks at further categorising the settlements in the borough which fall within the villages tier.
- **4.1.3** A <u>Settlement Hierarchy background paper</u>⁽ⁱ⁾ was produced in order to assess whether there is any need to identify a local settlement hierarchy. The assessment included consideration of sustainability indicators, environmental constraints and settlement profiles. The paper concluded that it is not necessary for any rural settlements to accommodate more growth than their local needs and no specific needs for facilities or services were identified that would justify additional housing in any of the settlements. There were however some settlements where development ought to be more restricted. Easton Maudit, Hardwick, Strixton and Sywell Old Village were identified as settlements that were either the least sustainable in terms of services and facilities, had environment constraints or would have difficulty suitably accommodating additional growth. Table 4.1 outlines the local settlement hierarchy identified through the paper.
- **4.1.4** The local settlement hierarchy is defined by four tiers: Growth Town, Villages, Restraint Villages and Open Countryside. The strategy for the local settlement hierarchy seeks to treat the majority of the rural settlements the same, does not seek to identify that some should accommodate more than their own local needs, but identifies some rural settlements which because of their special characteristics or lack of services or facilities should have more restricted

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7028/settlement_hierarchy_background_paper_-_april_2016



levels of development. In these villages, unless the community wish to accommodate new development to meet specific local needs through the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan or the Community Right to Build, then development should normally be restricted to the re-use or conversion of suitable buildings. The approach is consistent with the JCS and in accordance with the NPPF. It provides flexibility for local communities in preparing Neighbourhood Plans.

Tier Definition Settlement Village Village is able to accommodate some small Wollaston, Earls Barton, Finedon, scale infill development to meet its own Irchester, Bozeat, Sywell, Great need or a level of growth has been identified Doddington, Wilby, Isham, Ecton, in the JCS or a Neighbourhood Plan Little Irchester, Grendon, Mears Ashby, Little Harrowden, Orlingbury, Great Harrowden Easton Maudit, Hardwick, Strixton, Restraint Some small rural settlements will be designated as restraint villages which will Sywell Old Village Village be treated as open countryside where development will be strictly managed. Open Development will be strictly managed to Settlements of a dispersed form Countryside safeguard the character and beauty of the countryside and maintain separate settlements

Table 4.1 Rural Settlement Hierarchy

4.2 Village Boundaries

- **4.2.1** Village boundaries are a common planning tool for guiding, controlling and identifying limits to development for an individual village, mainly to prevent the unregulated encroachment of development into the countryside.
- 4.2.2 The local settlement hierarchy, as outlined in Table 4.1, states that development will be limited in the Villages and restricted in the Restraint Villages and Open Countryside. The limited development allowed in villages will be to meet local need through small scale infilling or rural exception sites. The need identified in the JCS for the four largest villages in the borough (Earls Barton, Finedon, Irchester and Wollaston) will be meet through Policy H 2 of this plan or through neighbourhood plans. In order to clarify where limited development to meet local need will be most appropriate and sustainable, village boundaries have been designated for the Villages identified in Table 4.1. Village boundaries have not been designated for the Restraint Villages, as development here will be treated the same as in the Open Countryside in order to protect the rural character of the settlements.



4.2.3 Village boundaries have been identified on the Policies Maps using the criteria outlined in Table 4.2. The Village Boundaries background paper (ii) explains how the criteria were derived.

Table 4.2 Village Boundaries Criteria

Boundaries will include:

- A. Buildings and curtilages which are contained and visually separate from the countryside
- B. Areas of land with planning permission at 1 April 2015 which relate closely to the main built up areas
- C. New allocations in the plan

Boundaries will exclude:

- D. Areas of employment and leisure uses that are detached or peripheral to the village
- E. Caravan or mobile home sites
- F. Individual or groups of dwellings and agricultural buildings that are detached or peripheral to the village.
- G. Public open space and undeveloped land that is detached or peripheral to the village
- H. Areas of land that protect key vistas and/or the setting of heritage assets
- I. Large gardens which are visually open and relate to the open countryside, whose development would harm the form and character of the village

Policy SS 1

Villages

The Village Boundaries as shown on the Policies Map will be used to interpret whether sites are within or adjoining villages for the purposes of Policies 11 and 13 of the Joint Core Strategy.

Development within the Restraint Villages of Easton Maudit, Hardwick, Strixton and Sywell Old Village will be strictly managed. Development will normally be restricted to the re-use or conversion of suitable buildings. Any locally arising needs from these settlements should be met through Neighbourhood Plans, the Community Right to Build or directed to more sustainable nearby villages.

ii http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7033/village_boundary_background_paper_-_april_2016



- **5.0.1** Green infrastructure (GI) is a network of 'multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'. (i) It includes blue infrastructure comprising watercourses and wetlands which provides a range of ecosystem services. Ecosystem services are the benefits that the natural environment provides to humans including the production of clean water and many raw materials used for economic activities and cultural benefits such as aesthetic value and recreational opportunities.
- **5.0.2** Green infrastructure also contributes to the setting of settlements and their surrounding landscape. The provision of high quality accessible green infrastructure is seen as increasingly important to regeneration and creating places that are based upon local distinctiveness. Quality environments also attract quality investment in terms of housing, the economy, jobs and skills. Investments in open spaces and green networks should, therefore, be seen as an important aspect of regeneration in the local communities.
- **5.0.3** Open space includes all areas of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity. Furthermore, open spaces provide benefits such as mitigating climate change, flood alleviation, and ecosystem services. Open spaces, sport and recreation facilities also have direct and indirect impacts on people's physical and mental health. Access to open space and sports facilities is linked to higher levels of physical activity which helps to reduce levels of obesity and long term conditions such as heart disease. Open space and access to nature is also linked to reduced stress levels, reduced depression and improved social interaction.
- **5.0.4** Open space is an integral natural and physical asset for local communities in both urban and rural areas of the borough. For this reason, it is important to protect and enhance the green spaces. It is also beneficial to provide additional spaces within new developments, and to link these places back into the town to make them more accessible.
- **5.0.5** The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning should encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, carbon storage, and food production).
- **5.0.6** The borough council has commissioned new evidence on open space, sports and recreational facilities⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ to enable the part 2 local plan to identify specific needs and qualitative or quantative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreation. This study provides a robust local evidence base to support the development of detailed planning policies for the PBW. The three central planning objectives that have guided this study to ensure that open space, sports and recreational facilities meet the required demand are 'protection, enhancement

NPPF, 2012

ii TEP (November 2015) Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit and Assessment



and provision'. Protection of sites seeks to safeguard them from loss as a result of development; enhancement is carried out through improving sites' quality accessibility and management; and provision of new sites ensures future needs are met.

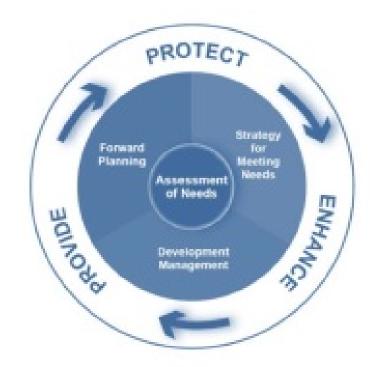


Figure 3 Open space, sport and recreation objectives

Planning Objectives diagram from Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities 2014

5.0.7 Policy 19 of the JCS supports the protection, delivery and enhancement of GI assets. It also takes account of changes in provision, planned development, local needs and changes in the planning policy context.

5.1 Delivery of Green Infrastructure Corridors

- **5.1.1** Figure 17 of the JCS identifies sub-regional and local networks/corridors across North Northamptonshire and beyond. Within the borough, the sub-regional corridors follow the valleys of the River Nene and the River Ise, whilst the three identified local corridors connect Ecton to Wilby, Sywell reservoir to Broughton and Hockley Lodge to Finedon. Increasing the range of uses within local green infrastructure corridors will improve benefits at the community level.
- **5.1.2** Policy 19 of the JCS provides a framework for managing development and investment, protection and enhancements of green infrastructure networks. It states that priority of investment and enhancement of local green infrastructure networks should be in areas where net gains can be made to the range of functions, particularly those that improve access between the



towns and countryside and remedy local deficiencies in open space provision and quality. This means that the borough council will work with key stakeholders including developers to ensure that GI corridors are delivered in areas much needed by the local communities.

- **5.1.3** It is proposed that, at a more local level, the sub-regional and local corridors identified in the JCS are supplemented by additional local GI corridors. Figure 4 below shows these additional local corridors and how they link to those identified in the JCS. GI corridors provide opportunities for sustainable movement (principally by foot or cycle) from the town to the countryside. Well connected GI performs a range of important functions relating to the natural environment, climate change mitigation and adoption and quality of life.
- **5.1.4** The GI corridors are indicative, aiding decision making. This is intended to help highlight where Green Infrastructure investment is most likely needed. These GI corridors attempt to link all types of green infrastructure within the town and the countryside to improve accessibility for both people and wildlife.

Policy GI 1

Local Green Infrastructure Corridors

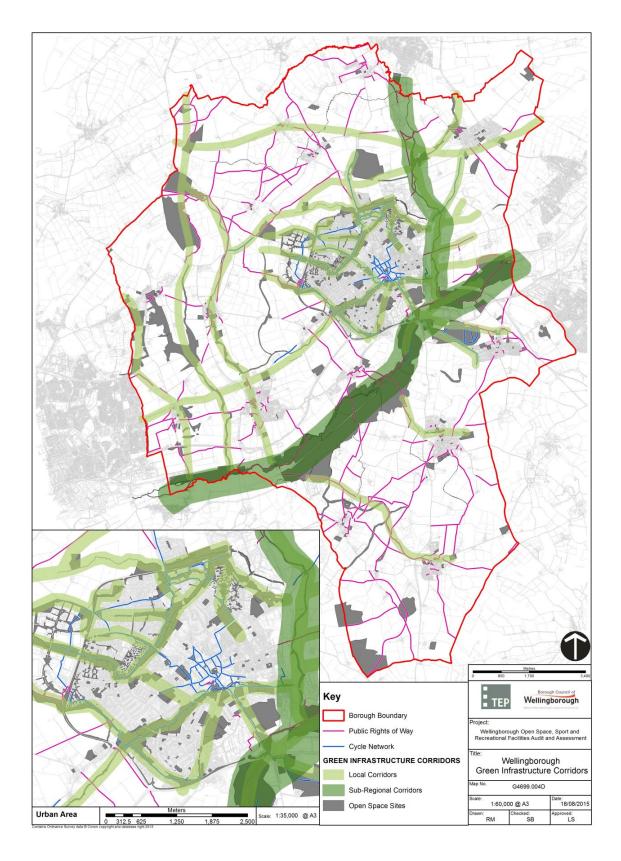
All development must be designed to protect and enhance existing Green Infrastructure networks, and the connections between them.

Local GI corridors as identified on the Policies Map, will be safeguarded and enhanced by:

- A. Ensuring that new development will not compromise the integrity of the green infrastructure network;
- B. Ensuring new development provides appropriate connections to the existing green corridors:
- C. Ensuring that wherever possible new open space connects to or is provided within the green infrastructure corridors;
- D. Prioritising investment in enhancement of open space, sport and recreation in green infrastructure corridors; and
- E. Using developer contributions to facilitate improvements to their quality



Figure 4 Green Infrastructure Corridors





5.2 Protection of Existing Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation

- **5.2.1** The NPPF, PPG and the JCS (notably policy 7) provide a context for the protection of existing open space. The NPPF (paragraph 74) suggests that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields should be protected unless:
- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, building or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the need for which clearly outweigh the loss.
- **5.2.2** The NPPF (paragraphs 76-78) goes on to say that local communities through local plans and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. Designation of land as 'Local Green Space' would generally rule out new development, but this designation would not be appropriate for most green areas or open space.
- **5.2.3** Areas of open space within the borough are currently protected in the saved policies of the Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan as Environmental Important Open Space (EIOS) in Policy G19 and/or Important Amenity Areas (IAA) in Policy L5. The council has produced an Open Space Designations background paper (iii) which reassesses these designations in light of the NPPF and the recent open space, sport and recreation audit and assessment. (iv) This paper concludes that the plan should continue to identify two types of open space designations within the borough, but refined to reflect the NPPF. The designations proposed are Local Open Space and Local Green Space.
- 5.2.4 Local Open Space will comprise the: parks and gardens; natural and semi-natural open space; amenity greenspace; linear greenspace; children's play areas; allotment and community gardens; cemeteries and churchyards; and outdoor sports and recreational facilities within the borough. Local Green Space will apply to those open spaces of particular special importance which meet the criteria set out in the NPPF. These areas cannot be replaced elsewhere but are important to the community because of a particular local significance such as their historic value or contribution to the character of an area.

Policy GI 2

Local Open Space

Local Open Space, as designated on the Policies Map, will be protected and development will only be permitted in the following exceptional circumstances:

iii

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/download/2617/emerging_draft_plan_background_papers

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6896/tep_open_space_sports_and_recreation_report



- A. Loss of the site would not result in a deficiency in that type of open space within the locality^(v) and the site could not be used to meet a deficiency in any other type of open space; or
- B. Provision is to be made on an alternative and appropriate site which is easily accessible and provides equivalent or better community benefit; or
- C. Development relates to a small part of the site where this is agreed to represent the best means of retaining or enhancing the open space; or
- D. The site is of poor quality and cannot be enhanced to meet the quality standards identified in Table 5.1 and development represents the best option for achieving an alternative open space elsewhere; and
- E. Loss of the site will not result in a break in the connection of a green infrastructure corridor as shown on the Policies Map

Policy GI 3

Local Green Space

Development which will result in the loss of a site designated as Local Green Space on the Policies Map will not be permitted.

5.3 Enhancement and Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation

- **5.3.1** It is important to provide a balance between different types of open space in order to meet local needs. New housing developments create an additional need for both open space and sport and recreational facilities. New development should, therefore, provide opportunities to enhance existing poor quality open space and/ or provide new open spaces to meet this additional need. This provision could be either on or off-site depending on the scale and nature of development and the level and quality of existing facilities in the vicinity.
- **5.3.2** Locally based open space, sport and recreation standards have been developed based on the assessment of needs in the study, and proposals for new residential development should contribute to the provision or enhancement of open space based on these standards.

v as defined in the TEP open space report or other more up-to-date assessment



Table 5.1 Local Open Space, Sport and Recreation Standards

Quantity	Quality	Accessibility			
Parks and Gardens – e.g. urban parks and formal gardens					
Urban: 1.5 ha per 1000 population Rural: 1.0 ha per 1000 population	A welcoming, clean and litter free site providing a wide range of leisure, recreational and enriched play opportunities for all ages, varied and well-kept vegetation, lighting with attractive and appropriate boundaries to promote the feeling of safety. The appropriate location and level of ancillary accommodation (including benches, signage, notice boards, toilets, litter bins and dog bins) with accessibility by various forms of transport. To encourage informal recreation with clear access and footpath surfacing which improves accessibility.	Borough Wide:15 minutes- walk (equates to 1000 metres walking distance)			
Natural and Semi-Natura meadows	Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces – e.g. country parks, nature reserves, woodlands, neadows				
Urban: 1.8 ha per 1000 population Rural: 6.0 ha per 1000 population	A varied site that encourages wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness, making the most of natural features such as the watercourses. To encourage informal recreation, clear access and footpaths with surfaces which improve accessibility, signage and noticeboards, dog/litter bins and other appropriate ancillary accommodation should be provided. Boundaries should be attractive and promote a feeling of safety.	Borough Wide:15 minutes-walk (equates to 1000 metres walking distance)			
menity Greenspace – e.g. spaces within residential areas for formal and informal recreation					
Urban: 1.0 ha per 1000 population Rural: 0.5 ha per 1000 population	A clean and well maintained site, with appropriate ancillary accommodation (benches, signage and noticeboards, dog fouling bins etc.) and landscaping in the right places, enhancing the local environment and conveniently located close to housing that is easily accessible and big enough to encourage informal play. Boundaries should be attractive and promote a feeling of safety	Borough Wide:10 minutes-walk (equates to 700 metres walking distance)			



Quantity	Quality	Accessibility			
	with improved surfacing facilitating accessibility across the site.				
Linear Greenspace – e.g. footpaths, cycleways, canal and river corridors					
Urban: 1.6 ha per 1000 population Rural: 8.0 ha per 1000 population	A well-lit and clean route that provides well-maintained sustainable transport methods and varied vegetation linking major open spaces together with ancillary facilities such as bins and seating in appropriate places. Opportunities to increase or enhance greenspace links between existing open spaces and the rural and urban areas should be taken where possible, in particular where this can enhance Green Infrastructure Networks.	Borough Wide: 15 minutes-walk (equates to 1000 metres walking distance)			
Provision for Children an	d Young People – e.g. sites with equipped pla	ay facilities			
Borough wide: 0.65 no. of facilities per 1000 population (equivalent to) Borough wide: 0.065 ha per 1000 population (based on an average site size of 0.1 ha)	A site providing a mix of well-maintained formal equipment and enriched play environment for all young people, in a clean, safe and attractive setting with appropriate ancillary accommodation (such as benches, dog fouling and litter bins) and accessible to all.	Borough Wide: 10 minutes-walk (equates to 700 metres walking distance)			
Allotments and Community Gardens – e.g. growing produce, promoting sustainability, healt social inclusion					
Urban: 0.38ha per 1000 population Rural: 1.2ha per 1000 population	A site that encourages sustainable development, biodiversity, healthy living and education objectives that is clean and well-maintained with clear footpaths, boundaries, good security and quality soils. Ancillary facilities to meet local needs including car parks, toilets and water supply should be provided where appropriate.	15 minutes-walk (equates to 1000 metres walking distance)			
Cemeteries and Churchyards – e.g. including disused and other burial grounds					



Quantity	Quality	Accessibility
No quantity standard set for this typology.	A well-maintained, clean site with a known burial capacity and a plan for the future. Provision of seating areas, clear footpaths and varied vegetation that provides a sanctuary for wildlife, where appropriate and particularly in areas devoid of greenspace. The primary function of the decent and dignified interment of human remains should be respected at all times.	No accessibility standard set for this typology.
Civic Spaces – e.g. hard	surfaced areas usually located in town or city	centres
No quantity standard set for this typology.	A clean, safe and attractive site that is fit for purpose, providing landscaping where appropriate and ancillary accommodation (e.g. benches, toilets) should be provided to meet local needs.	No accessibility standard set for this typology.
Outdoor Sports and Recre and artificial pitches	oitches, greens, courts	
Borough wide: 2.40 ha per 1000 population Football: 1.18 ha Cricket: 0.88 ha Rugby: 0.29 ha Synthetic Turf: 0.05pitches Bowling Greens: 0.21ha Tennis: 0.21 ha Athletics tracks: 0.04 no. Golf Bays: 0.24 no. Closed Road Cycle:0.0023 no.	A comprehensively well planned sports facility site, well drained and well-kept surfaces, appropriate ancillary accommodation including changing accommodation and toilets, suitable lighting, good site access and varied and attractive landscaping. Outdoor sports facilities should be accessible by a variety of modes of transport.	15 minutes-walk (equates to 1000 metres walking distance)



Quantity	Quality	Accessibility			
Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities – e.g. includes indoor sports halls, gyms, swimming pools					
Swimming Pools: 13m² Sports Halls: 0.4 courts Health and Fitness:2.85 stations Indoor Bowls: 0.08 rinks Indoor tennis: 0.02 ha Indoor athletics: 0.0023 no. Gymnastics: 0.0023 no.	A comprehensively well planned sports facility site, with well maintained facilities, appropriate ancillary accommodation including changing accommodation and toilets, suitable lighting and good site access. Indoor sports facilities should be accessible by a variety of modes of transport.	15 minutes-walk (equates to 1000 metres walking distance)			

- **5.3.3** All residential developments could be expected to contribute to open space by either providing new areas or improving the quality or accessibility of existing open space. This may, however, affect the viability of small schemes and may not prove cost effective for the council to administer. Therefore a threshold of 10 or more dwellings or 0.3 ha or more site area will be set for requiring development contributions to open space provision or enhancement.
- **5.3.4** In order to translate the above standards when dealing with planning applications the following people generation figures^(vi) will be used unless a more up-to date assessment is available or the applicant can show that people generation will be markedly different. Where dwelling sizes are not available for example when dealing with outline applications an average of 2.35 people per dwelling^(vii) will be used.

Table 5.2 Population Generation from New Development by Dwelling Size

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Bed
People per dwelling ratio	1.23	2.00	2.71	3.06

5.3.5 The location and design of new areas of open space is important. They should be easily accessible by those who are to use the site and be overlooked by housing, pedestrian routes or other well used public facilities. Wherever possible, new sites should be located within or connected to the green infrastructure corridors as set out in Policy GI 1. Exceptions to this would

vi Source: Northamptonshire County Council (January 2015) Creating Sustainable Communities: Planning Obligations Framework and Guidance Document

vii Source: 2011 census shows average population per household for Wellingborough of 2.35



be play areas designed to serve a local catchment which, if moved to an identified corridor, would not meet the accessibility criteria in Table 5.1. Sites should, wherever possible, be multi-functional for example areas set aside for Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SUDs) can also be natural and semi-natural open spaces and incorporate play areas.

5.3.6 Small areas of open space can be difficult to maintain and can be of limited recreational value. It is therefore considered that normally new open spaces should be a minimum of 400m². This is the minimum size for the provision of a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP). If the standards above would result in a smaller area than this being provided, it will normally be better to provide funding to enhance existing areas instead. The only exception would be if the area is designed primarily for non recreational use. For example areas to enhance the public realm such as landscaped or planted areas.

Policy GI 4

Enhancement and Provision of Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities

All residential development of 10 or more dwellings (or 0.3ha or more site area) should contribute to the provision or enhancement of open space, sports and recreational facilities based upon the local quality, quantity and accessibility standards set out in Table 5.1 above.

New open space, sports and recreation facilities should be provided where the quantity or accessibility standards are deficient in the locality. In all other cases contributions to enhancing the quality of existing open space, sports and recreation facilities will be required. Contributions will be calculated based on the quantity standards for the scale of development proposed.

The long term management of new local open space, sports and recreational facilities must be secured.

New open space should be designed to:

- A. form an integral part of the development layout, be easily accessible by means of pedestrian connections and be overlooked;
- B. meet the quality standards set out in Table 5.1;
- C. wherever possible be multi-functional; and
- D. be a minimum of 400m² in size.



6. Delivering Economic Prosperity

- **6.0.1** Wellingborough is a key industrial location in North Northamptonshire. It benefits from good road and rail connections. The A45 provides an east-west route and leads directly to junctions 15, 15A and 16 of the M1 at Northampton and the A14 at Thrapston. The A509 provides a north-south route which links via the A14 to the M1, M6 and the east coast ports. The Midland Mainline railway line with a station at Wellingborough provides links to the St Pancras London (average 60 minute journey time) and to mainland Europe.
- **6.0.2** The borough has well established industrial estates. It is home to key major employers including Kuehne + Nagel, Lotus Lightweight Structures, Monsoon/Accessorise, the Open University Press, Scott Bader, Weatherbys, and Whitworths. Over the years the economy has undergone a transformation from one based on manufacturing, particularly footwear and engineering, to a more diverse economy with a growing service sector. Its strategic location makes it a viable alternative for occupiers seeking commercial property around the M1 corridor.
- **6.0.3** Logistics remains an important growth sector in North Northamptonshire, as well as high performance technologies (particularly related to transport); renewable and low carbon energy; and green technologies. Significant planned investments in infrastructure to support housing and commercial developments, mainly at the committed Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) and at Appleby Lodge are underway in the borough.
- **6.0.4** The <u>employment background paper</u>⁽ⁱ⁾ identifies that Wellingborough has a close balance between the number of people working and the number of economically active people in the borough (excluding those in full time education). At 0.91, this ratio is higher than the North Northamptonshire ratio of 0.85. The paper suggests, however, that its proximity and accessibility to larger centres means there is a relatively high level of out commuting with approximately 45% of its resident labour force working in the borough. Northampton, the closest larger centre, employs 19% of Wellingborough's working population. (iii)
- 6.0.5 The objective of the local plan is to support and diversify the economy while maintaining a broad balance between homes and jobs in order to achieve self-reliance. Policy 22 of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides the policy framework for achieving this. It seeks to ensure that sufficient high quality sites are identified to support the delivery of job targets; gives priority to the enhancement of existing employment sites and regeneration of previously developed land; safeguards existing and committed sites; supports initiatives which promote skills and training and safeguards and enhances tourism and cultural assets of the borough.
- **6.0.6** Policy 23 of the JCS identifies the need for new jobs in the borough for the plan period up to 2031. It sets out an overall target for the creation of 6,100 new jobs in Wellingborough. This target is ambitious, higher than the jobs required to match the forecast growth in labour force in order to reduce further reliance on out-commuting. The policy also supports the scale and mix of employment uses in the approved master plans of the sustainable urban extensions and other large strategic employment sites. This is important in the case of the Station Island

i North Northamptonshire Employment Background Paper - January 2015

ii 2011 Census data

Delivering Economic Prosperity



at Wellingborough East, identified as an opportunity for providing high quality offices (Grade A)⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ which do not exist elsewhere in the borough. The JCS anticipates that approximately 65% of new jobs (3,965) will be generated in B class job uses (B1 - Offices; B2 - Manufacturing related activities and B8 - Warehousing and Distribution) and 2,135 (35%) Non-B jobs, mainly in the service sectors such as retailing, leisure, professional and public services. The identified need translates to a requirement for approximately 60 ha of new employment land for a mix of B uses.

6.0.7 The Employment Land Review (ELR)^(iv) identifies approximately 132 ha of committed employment land, a significant amount of which is set out in the approved master plans of large consented schemes at Wellingborough East, Wellingborough North and Appleby Lodge^(v). This means the borough has a significant surplus of committed employment land in the region of 70 ha which allows it flexibility to adapt to future changes in economic and business needs. The ELR demonstrates that the borough's portfolio of committed sites is sufficient to meet business needs and flexible enough to adapt to changing economic circumstances. Therefore, part 2 of the local plan will not allocate more employment land.

Development Management Policies

- **6.0.8** The PBW builds on the strategic policies in the JCS. It sets out detailed policies which will be used to assess planning applications for employment uses. The policies below should be read in conjunction with more detailed design policies in the JCS, particularly Policies 8: North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles; 9: Sustainable Buildings and Allowable Solutions and 24: Logistics (for B8 proposals).
- **6.0.9** The JCS sets out policies to deal with other matters relating to employment: including skills and training (Policy 22: Delivering Economic Prosperity) and opportunities to develop and diversify the rural economy (Policy 25: Rural Economic Development and Diversification). Policy 26: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy deals with opportunities in green industries. These policies will be used for development management purposes and will not be repeated in this plan. Sywell Aerodrome is dealt with in this plan through Policy Site 9.

6.1 Established Industrial Estates

- **6.1.1** The existing established industrial estates are the main supply of employment land in the borough. These are:
- Victoria Business Park
- Park Farm Industrial Estate
- Finedon Road Industrial Estate (including Ise Valley)
- Leyland Trading Estate
- Denington Industrial Estate

iii This means the highest quality

iv http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7027/employment land review background paper - april 2016

v Appleby Lodge is shown on the Policies Maps as a committed Strategic Employment Site

Delivering Economic Prosperity



- **6.1.2** The main characteristics of these estates are that they are fully established, serviced and offer wider choice to the market. The review of the commercial property market^(vi) in the borough concludes that these estates are key to the local economy and remain attractive options for occupiers. The estates are identified on the Policies Map.
- 6.1.3 Victoria Business Park is a modern distribution area and is fully let. It is located on the A45. Park Farm Industrial Estate is the next most modern employment area with good accessibility and a wide range of quality units. It was built in the 1980s and boasts an attractive environment. Finedon Road Industrial Estate was developed around 1965 and has a wide range of building types, sizes and ages, some of which have undergone refurbishments. The Leyland Industrial Estate comprises a scheme of terraces of modern industrial/warehouse/workshop units. Denington Industrial Estate was developed in the mid-1960s. Its general environment and occupancy levels remain reasonable but most of its buildings now require some refurbishment to modernise them.
- 6.1.4 The ELR assesses these industrial estates in terms of their location, accessibility, quality of environment, market attractiveness, mix of uses, occupancy levels and other criteria. Whilst some of the estates are fairly modern with good accessibility and a wide range of good quality units, some estates will require refurbishment of older buildings and some general improvements to access. In general, the occupancy rates at the industrial estates are currently high. The council will continue to monitor their performance in order to review their function and role as established industrial estates. Triggers for a review in the future will include: high levels of vacancies over a prolonged period of time; an increase in the number of planning enquiries; planning applications for alternative uses and proportion of non-B uses; and signs of general deterioration in the physical environment.
- **6.1.5** Policy 22 of the JCS seeks to safeguard existing and committed employment sites for employment. It also seeks to enhance existing employment sites/premises through refurbishment and to regenerate previously developed land. These employment areas should be properly managed to ensure they provide the maximum benefit to the local economy and remain available to accommodate a wide range of investment. At the same time, these industrial areas must remain sustainable and provide an environment which is appealing for people to work in and to which operators wish to locate.
- **6.1.6** Development proposals which modernise the industrial areas or enhance the physical environment and infrastructure within these areas will be supported. To enhance attractiveness and sustainability of these areas for future investment and to support existing and future occupiers, some 'walk-to' ancillary facilities such as children's nurseries, crèches, meeting and conference facilities, small scale leisure/sports uses, local shops and café uses will also be permitted.
- **6.1.7** Policy E1 sets out the framework for managing the above objectives.

The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough - Emerging Plan



Policy E 1

Established Industrial Estates

Proposals for employment uses (B1; B2 and B8) and for modernising and/or enhancing the physical environment and infrastructure within established industrial estates will be supported.

Ancillary services, including (but not limited to) cafes/canteens, convenience shopping, creches, financial services, leisure /sports uses, meeting and conference facilities will be supported where they:

- are small scale; and
- primarily support the needs of the industrial areas; and
- enhance the attraction and sustainability of the area for investment.

The policy relates to the following established industrial estates as identified on the Policies Map:

- Finedon Road Industrial Estate (including Ise Valley)
- Park Farm Industrial Estate
- Leyland Trading Estate
- Denington Industrial Estate
- Victoria Business Park

Non-Employment Uses in Established Industrial Estates

- **6.1.8** The locational and environmental advantages of the established industrial estates subjects them to development pressures for non-employment uses (non-B uses), other than the ancillary services considered under policy E1. Encroachment by such uses could undermine the attractiveness and viability of the industrial areas, thereby undermining further investment. Loss of these sites can also harm local businesses which may find it difficult to find suitable replacements. The Aspinal Verdi report^(vii) describes the market for small industrial units in the borough as very active, suggesting this might be attributed to the resurgence of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) post the recession.
- **6.1.9** The council will seek to retain the established estates for uses primarily falling within B use classes in order to ensure there are opportunities for both relocation and incoming businesses. However, it will not continue to seek to retain existing employment sites where there is no reasonable prospect that the sites will be used for that purpose in the future. Policy 22 of the JCS allows for the flexibility to use the sites for alternative uses in such circumstances.

Delivering Economic Prosperity



These opportunities mainly arise where buildings have become desolate, obsolete or vacant and marketed for a long period of time or there are infill sites. Persistent renewals of planning permission may also be a sign of delivery constraints.

6.1.10 Alternative uses may be acceptable depending on the impact the proposals will have on the industrial and business areas and on other policies in the local plan. These new uses should not compromise or hinder the future operation and/or expansion of adjoining businesses by placing unreasonable restrictions on them because of changes in nearby land uses. Proposals for the alternative uses will need to demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect that the sites will be used for employment purposes. Where continued viability of a site for employment use is in question, applicants will be required to demonstrate that the site has been actively marketed with a commercial agent at a realistic price for a continuous period of at least 2 years. Depending on the traffic implications of the developments, the proposals may also be required to address issues of accessibility, including the provision of travel plans where appropriate. The council will resist proposals which are sensitive to industrial operations, especially where there is not sufficient mitigation to address issues such as noise, vibration and lighting.

6.1.11 Policy E2 identifies the criteria against which proposals for the non-employment uses within the established industrial units will be considered.

Policy E 2

Non Employment Uses (non-B) in Established Industrial Estates

Proposals which involve non-employment uses (other than ancillary uses in accordance with Policy E 1) within the established industrial estates as defined on the Policies Maps will be permitted where they satisfy the following:

- A. they will not have a negative impact on the character of the industrial estate and its role as an industrial and business location by, in isolation or in combination with other completed or committed development, prejudicing the maintenance of the overall balance of B uses within the area;
- B. they will not prejudice the current and future operations of adjoining businesses;
- if the proposal involves vacant buildings, there is clear and robust evidence of prolonged marketing with registered commercial agents at a reasonable price to demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect for continued employment use;
- D. if the existing land or premises has environmental or amenity problems, there is clear evidence that these problems cannot be overcome, or the land or premises is not capable of adaptation for business or industrial use.

Delivering Economic Prosperity



6.2 Employment Outside the Established Industrial Estates

- **6.2.1** Outside the established industrial areas there are numerous groups of industrial units or individual units across the borough. The majority of these units are small scale B1 and B2 uses. These are close to, or within, predominantly residential areas and are an important source of employment. The units can provide the types of premises suitable for small firms and new enterprises (SMEs) and minimise travel to work.
- **6.2.2** Some older industrial floor space in the borough is vacant, in poor condition, or has poor access and contributes towards the poor image of an area. Where these buildings are in mainly residential areas, they can cause problems for local households through for example noise or traffic problems. Over the years, these industrial and commercial premises have continued to be redeveloped for other purposes, usually housing. However, some of these buildings offer suitable and affordable buildings for small businesses and offer a good alternative to premises on employment estates. The council places great importance on local business and jobs. The plan will aim to, wherever appropriate, promote the retention of these businesses and premises in business and industrial use.

Policy E 3

Employment Outside Established Employment Estates

Proposals for change of use or re-development of land and premises currently in industrial or business (B1; B2 & B8) to other uses will be supported where they satisfy the following:

- A. They accord with the spatial strategy for the borough;
- B. They will not prejudice the current and future operations of adjoining businesses;
- C. If the building is vacant, there is clear evidence that the site/premises has been marketed for a reasonable period of time;
- D. If the existing land or premises has environmental or amenity issues, there is clear evidence that these problems cannot be overcome;
- E. The proposal will resolve existing conflicts between land uses.



7. Delivering Homes

- **7.0.1** The government, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), places great emphasis on significantly boosting the supply of housing. Local planning authorities are required to identify the full objectively assessed housing needs for market and affordable housing in the area, and then meet this need in their local plan as far as is consistent with the NPPF. They are also required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirement together with an additional buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.
- **7.0.2** The Joint Core Strategy (JCS), as the strategic part of the local plan, identifies the housing needs for the whole of the North Northamptonshire area and sets out the broad distribution. The purpose of this part 2 local plan is to ensure that there are sufficient suitable sites available to deliver housing to meet that identified need within this borough.
- **7.0.3** Policy 28 of the JCS sets out a requirement for the local planning authorities to maintain a rolling supply of deliverable sites to provide five years worth of housing (plus a buffer as required by the NPPF) and to identify developable sites or broad locations of growth for the rest of the plan period against the requirements as set out below:

Table 7.1 Share of objectively assessed needs in the Housing Market Area identified in the JCS

		Annual average dwellings 2011-31	Total 2011-2031
Corby Borough	Requirement	460	9,200
	Strategic Opportunity	(710)	(14,200)
East Northamptonsh	nire District	420	8,400
Kettering Borough		520	10,400
Borough of Wellingb	orough	350	7,000
North Northamptonshire		1,750	35,000
		(2,000)	(40,000)

- **7.0.4** Policy 28 of the JCS also requires the planning authorities to work proactively with applicants to bring forward sites to meet these identified housing requirements in line with the spatial strategy set out in Policy 11 and to realise the strategic opportunity for additional development at the Growth Town of Corby.
- **7.0.5** Policy 29 of the JCS sets out that housing will be accommodated in line with the spatial strategy with a strong focus at the Growth Towns as the most sustainable locations for development, followed by the Market Towns. The re-use of suitable previously developed land



and buildings will be encouraged with further development requirements focused on the delivery of the Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) and other strategic housing sites. These sites are the key building blocks for growth in the area. Provision needs to be made for housing as set out below in this borough.

Table 7.2 Housing delivery in named settlements - extract from Table 5 of the JCS

	Settlement	Housing Requirement (2011-31)
Wellingborough Total		7,000
Growth Town	Wellingborough	5,750
Villages	Earls Barton	250
	Finedon	150
	Irchester	150
	Wollaston	160
Rural housing (outside the four named villages)		540

7.1 Urban Housing

7.1.1 Sufficient housing sites need to be identified to meet the requirement identified in the JCS and to ensure that the council can maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing land throughout the plan period. Because of the requirement to identify a five year supply which takes account of previous under-delivery and has a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market, some level of over-supply is likely to be required in the borough. In accordance with the overall urban focus of the JCS, additional housing to accommodate this flexibility and address the borough's shortfall will be directed to the town.

Table 7.3 Urban Housing Requirement

JCS Requirement for the borough 2011- 2015 (350 x 4)	1400
Completions in the borough 2011-2015	877
Shortfall	523

7.1.2 There has been a shortfall of 523 dwellings when measured against the anticipated delivery of the JCS since 2011. This shortfall needs to be added to the overall town housing requirement. In addition, the NPPF requires a 5% buffer to ensure competition and choice in the market. If there has been persistent under delivery then the buffer rises to 20%. Since 2011



the JCS housing requirement has only been met on one occasion (2014/15) in the borough. Before this, that level of growth was last achieved in 2007/8. The council has previously accepted the use of the 20% buffer as part of its five year supply calculations.

7.1.3 The following table identifies the current supply of sites with planning permission against the JCS requirement. It is reasonable to assume that not all planning permissions will be implemented. A 12% allowance for non-implementation has therefore being applied to sites of less than 10 dwellings. The justification for this figure is set out in the <u>Town Housing Allocation Methodology and Site Selection Background Paper</u>. (i)

Table 7.4 Urban Housing Supply

JCS Requirement for the town 2011 - 2031	5750
Borough wide shortfall	523
20% buffer	105
Total requirement	6378
Completions in the town 2011 - 2015	692
Sites of 10 or more dwellings with planning permission as at 31 March 2015:	
Wellingborough East - Land between Finedon Road and the railway (WP/2004/0600)	3100
Wellingborough North - Land north of Niort Way (WP/2012/0525)	1500 ⁽¹⁾
2-4 Arthur Street (WP/14/00809)	12
56-58 Nest Lane (WP/2007/0152)	15
Land adjacent Corn Mill Close (WP/2012/0482)	13
Melton Works, Brook Street (WP/2012/0533)	82
32 Compton Road (WP/2013/0075)	14
Land off Bourton Way (WP/2013/0228)	19
Gilmore & Vale Ltd, Mill Road (WP/2013/0571)	14

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6998/town_housing_allocation_methodology_background_paper_-_april_2016



Oxford House, Oxford Street (WP/2013/0669)	44
Railway Sports and Social Club, Broad Green (WP/2014/0029)	30
Railway Sports and Social Club, Broad Green (WP/2014/0030)	48
Garages, Buckwell Place (WP/2014/0097)	15
50-52 Midland Road (WP/2014/009)	12
Phase 2B land east of Eastfield Road (WP/2014/00243)	157
Paragon Hotel, 4 Knox Road (WP/2014/0515)	12
Land Adjacent 43 – 65 Chapman Road (WP/2014/0526)	19
Hemmingwell Lodge, 121 Nest Farm Crescent (WP/2014/0548)	26
Former Waendel Centre, 86 Stanley Road (WP/2014/0626)	14
Sites of less than 10 dwellings with planning permission as at 31 March 2015	95
12% lapse rate on sites of less than 10 dwellings	-11
Total completions and commitments	5922

The site has consent for 3000 dwellings however there are currently uncertainties over the delivery of a link road and this road needs to be in place before phases 2 and 3 are occupied. This effectively limits the scheme to 1500 at the present time.

- **7.1.4** Table 7.4 shows that the majority of the current housing supply is from the two SUEs of Wellingborough East and Wellingborough North.
- 7.1.5 Additional sites will be required to ensure local housing needs are met and to maintain a five year housing land supply. All local planning authorities are required to prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period. The North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), May 2013, identifies a number of potential housing sites and assesses their suitability, availability and achievability. It provides the evidence base to support the preparation of the local plan, but it does not determine which sites should be allocated for development. An additional background paper has been prepared to supplement that report and set out the methodology to identify which sites should be allocated for development. The methodology was consulted upon at the issues and options stage of this plan and has been amended to take account of comments received.



7.1.6 A number of sites are proposed for allocation. They include a mix of site sizes to ensure choice and competition in the market and will ensure the borough does not remain overly reliant on a few large strategic sites. All sites have been identified as suitable, available and achievable.

Policy H 1

Urban Housing Allocations

The following sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are allocated for residential development. Sites should be developed in accordance with the development principles set out in Sections 9.5 and 10. where relevant.

Site	Anticipated dwelling capacity
Former swimming baths, Croyland Road	30
George Cox Shoes, 46 Westfield Road (Policy Site 3)	25
Windsor Road (Policy Site 4)	147
Hardwick Park	45
Land between Finedon Road and Nest Lane (Policy Site 5)	188
Park Farm Way/Shelley Road (Policy Site 6)	600
East of Eastfield Road (Policy Site 7)	75
Land at High Street (Policy TC 7)	109
Alma Street/Cambridge Street (Policy TC 8)	50
Former Post Office sorting depot, Midland Road (Policy TC 6)	23
Land off Castle Mews	24

7.2 Rural Housing

7.2.1 The overall approach of the JCS for the rural area is to support development to meet local needs and aspirations. Policy 29 of the JCS identifies specific housing requirements for the named settlements of Earls Barton, Finedon, Irchester and Wollaston as set out in Table 7.2, and sets an overall requirement for the remainder of the rural area. These figures are derived from local evidence of need. The council and the relevant parish councils have been



involved in the process of identifying these figures. A neighbourhood plan has been prepared for Earls Barton which meets and exceeds the need for that village. Neighbourhood plans are also in the process of being prepared for Irchester and Wollaston. It is therefore anticipated that these plans will identify how that housing requirement should be met in those villages. If those neighbourhood plans are not formally made, then the PBW will seek to address those housing requirements instead. In the meantime, this plan will concentrate on how the housing requirements for Finedon and the remaining rural area should be identified and met.

Finedon

7.2.2 The JCS sets out a requirement to identify sites for 150 dwellings in Finedon between 2011 and 2031. The table below shows what has been built since 2011 and what further sites have planning permission.

Table 7.5 Existing housing commitments in Finedon against JCS requirement

JCS requirement 2011-2031	150
Net completions 1 April 2011-31 March 2015	-26
Sites with planning permission or under construction at 31 March 2015	-76
12% lapse rate on sites with planning permission for less than 10 dwellings (12% of 24 dws)	+3
Residual requirement	51

7.2.3 The part 2 local plan therefore needs to identify sites to deliver a minimum of 51 dwellings at Finedon. A number of sites within and around Finedon have been assessed for their suitability, availability and achievability. Full details of the sites and the assessments are available in the Rural Housing Allocations Methodology Background Paper. The methodology was consulted upon at the issues and options stage of this plan and has been amended to take account of comments received. Two adjacent sites from the assessment are recommended for allocation as a single site. This site is likely to deliver slightly more than the JCS requirement, but this additional housing will assist with delivery of the five year housing supply.

Policy H 2

Finedon Housing Allocation

Land at Milner Road and south of Kenmuir Road, Finedon, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for housing development. The site should be developed in accordance with the development principles set out in Policy Site 8.

ii

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7026/rural_housing_allocation_methodology_background_paper_-_april_2016



Rural Housing Outside of the Four Named Villages

7.2.4 Policy 29 of the JCS identifies that provision should be made for 540 dwellings outside of the four named villages between 2011 and 2031. The figure is based upon a continuing supply of sites coming forward at a similar rate to recent years. The table below shows what has been built since 2011 and which further sites have planning permission.

Table 7.6 Existing commitments outside the four named villages

JCS requirement 2011-2031	540
Net completions 1 April 2011- 31 March 2015	-68
Sites with planning permission or under construction at 31 March 2015	-144
12% lapse rate on sites with planning permission for less than 10 dwellings (12% of 22 dws)	+3
Residual requirement	331

7.2.5 The table above shows a residual requirement for 331 dwellings, or 21 dwellings per year, for the remainder of the plan period. The following table shows past completions in these villages since 2001.

Table 7.7 Net housing completions by settlement

Settlement	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	20014/15	Total
Bozeat	3	2	17	2	2	17	11	8	7	4	21	2	4	11	111
Easton Maudit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecton	4	0	-1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	13
Great Doddington	17	3	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	2	5	1	10	0	43
Great Harrowden	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Grendon	1	2	0	1	10	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	19
Hardwick	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	-1	0	1	7
Isham	0	1	2	1	-1	2	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	13
Little Harrowden	7	5	0	3	10	1	1	0	8	0	0	1	0	-16	20
Little Irchester	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	25	0	0	0	3	0	32
Mears Ashby	2	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	0	3	15
Orlingbury	8	2	1	0	2	20	1	1	1	3	0	0	2	1	42
Strixton	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Sywell	3	6	0	3	0	0	0	1	-1	11	1	3	1	0	28



Settlement	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	20014/15	Total
Wilby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	4
Total	46	23	20	15	24	43	27	22	42	21	29	9	23	7	351

- 7.2.6 This shows that an average of 25 dwellings per year have been delivered since 2001 in these villages without any sites being allocated for development. They have arisen as the result of infill plots, conversions and exceptions sites on the edge of villages for affordable housing. These collectively are known as windfall sites. Policies 11 and 13 in the JCS seek to ensure that development to meet local needs will be supported. The council is committed to a rolling programme of preparing Housing Needs Surveys for each of the villages in the borough and to work with parish councils to identify sites to deliver the identified need. It is therefore anticipated that these sites will continue to come forward as an important source of housing supply. Villages may also choose to identify housing sites through neighbourhood plans.
- 7.2.7 Issue 63 of the Issues and Options paper asked whether there was a need to allocate any sites in the remainder of the rural area or whether sufficient sites will be delivered through windfall sites, exception sites and neighbourhood plans to meet local needs. Parish councils and rural residents generally considered that there was no need for housing allocations, whilst several house builders suggested that serious consideration should be given to identifying a small number of specific deliverable, available, achievable and developable sites in the rural area, particularly in the most sustainable villages. A number of potential housing sites were also put forward for consideration by landowners and developers.
- **7.2.8** Issue 64 of the Issues and Options paper asked whether there are any particular needs or opportunities in the rural area that could be addressed by identifying higher levels of growth than identified in the JCS. No specific needs such as open space or community facilities have been identified by communities which additional housing could help to deliver. Similarly, no local opportunities such as underused sites within villages have been identified.
- **7.2.9** It is therefore considered that there is no need to allocate sites in the remaining villages within this plan; sufficient sites will be delivered through windfall sites, exception sites and neighbourhood plans to meet local needs.

7.3 Housing Mix and Tenure

- **7.3.1** The NPPF requires plans to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and to create inclusive and mixed communities. Local plans should provide for a mix of housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities or particular support needs and people wishing to build their own homes). There needs to be a range of sizes, types and tenures of properties provided to meet this variety of local needs.
- **7.3.2** The council's <u>Housing Plan</u>⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ is about encouraging independence and helping people to be self-reliant and responsible residents. The council believes that choice, flexibility and availability of housing are critical to the social and economic wellbeing of the borough. Our

Delivering Homes



commitment, as set out in the Housing Plan, is to provide additional homes with a range of tenures for people with different income levels, refurbish existing homes and help people who are in crisis with their housing.

- **7.3.3** The North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides the basis for developers, housing providers and local planning authorities to identify the mix of housing that will be required. It takes account of existing available demographic and housing data and projects the future housing requirements. The 2015 update to the SHMA takes a relatively new approach to determining housing requirements arising from household growth and change. It moves away from static or scenario-based analyses and provides an interactive Housing Requirements Toolkit to enable household requirements to be remodelled or updated as a result of new information.
- **7.3.4** The Wellingborough Health and Wellbeing Forum has identified local needs and issues for particular client groups and supplements the Housing Plan and the SHMA in this respect. A Housing Forum has been set up to deliver these requirements, which have been identified as:
- Mental, physical health and drug/substance misuse there is a shortage of supported and semi-supported/floating support units for these groups.
- Vulnerable single adults and children there is a shortage of supported and move-on accommodation.
- Rough sleepers there is currently limited provision in place through the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), which is delivered by the Salvation Army in partnership with the council, but there is no direct access emergency accommodation facility, with appropriate support arrangements, in Wellingborough.
- Teenage parents and young families there is some provision in Wellingborough for this client group but more is required.
- Youth homelessness and under 35s welfare reform has restricted the benefit entitlement
 of single people who are under 35 to a room in a shared house. This means there is a
 growing need for suitable shared accommodation for this group of people.
- Temporary accommodation there is a shortage of suitable temporary accommodation for homeless households.
- People released from prison, young people leaving care and people fleeing domestic violence - supported/semi supported accommodation is required.

Tenure

7.3.5 The 2015 SHMA update forecasts that 38.3% of new households in the borough will require affordable housing and a further 7.2% will require intermediate forms of tenure such as shared ownership. The remaining 54.5% are forecast to be able to afford market housing (rent and owner occupation). The NPPF is clear that policy burdens, including affordable housing, should not put the implementation of the plan at serious risk by threatening the viability of development. The viability assessment undertaken during preparation of the JCS notes that viability of developments differs significantly according to their location and scale. Developments in the rural area can support higher levels of affordable housing than in the town due to higher



development values. The JCS seeks the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing in developments having regard to the viability of the development scheme and the objective of creating inclusive and mixed communities. Policy 30 of the JCS sets affordable housing targets of 30% of total dwellings on sites of 15 dwellings or more in the town and 40% on sites of 5 or more dwellings in the rural area.

- 7.3.6 In addition to securing affordable housing through a percentage of market housing, the JCS enables affordable housing to be delivered through an 'exceptions site' approach as set out in Policy 13. This enables housing which meets local needs to be built adjoining settlement boundaries. These schemes should be purely affordable housing, unless an element of market housing is essential to deliver the development. In these cases, the scale of market housing should be the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable. Rural exception sites should be used for affordable housing in perpetuity. These sites also seek to address the needs of the local community by prioritising households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. This is usually controlled through a planning obligation. In addition, the council has an allocation policy which allows the letting of the properties to be controlled by the council and registered providers in accordance with local lettings policies. To be entitled to such a property people must be registered on the Keyways system. (iv)
- 7.3.7 The council is obliged to keep under review the provision of housing accommodation within the borough. As part of this requirement the council has approved a rolling programme of rural housing needs surveys to be undertaken. To date surveys have been undertaken for Bozeat, Easton Maudit, Ecton, Earls Barton, Wollaston, Irchester (including Knuston and Little Irchester), Finedon, Sywell, Great Harrowden, Little Harrowden, Hardwick, Orlingbury, Isham, Grendon and Mears Ashby. Surveys for Great Doddington and Wilby are currently underway. Once completed the council works closely with the parish councils and housing providers to find suitable sites to deliver the identified need. These tend to be delivered through use of the 'exceptions site' approach. These surveys are also being used as part of the evidence base for developing neighbourhood plans.
- **7.3.8** The council will continue to negotiate for affordable housing on the basis of Policy 30 of the JCS. There is considered to be no need for any further local policies.

Size

7.3.9 The 2015 SHMA update identifies the size of dwellings (minimum number of bedrooms) required to accommodate the projected composition of new households.

Table 7.8 Housing requirement by property size (number of bedrooms) and tenure as percentage of new housing 2011-31 for the borough

Tenure	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Affordable (social and affordable rent)	22.3	3.7	11.7	0.6

https://www.keyways.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/30.aspx



Tenure	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed
Intermediate (shared ownership)	4.2	0.7	2.2	0.1
Market (private rent and owner occupation)	31.7	5.3	16.6	0.9
Total	58.2	9.7	30.5	1.6

- **7.3.10** The table highlights the 'need' for predominately one bedroom properties and then three bedroom properties. The SHMA toolkit however does not take account of the desire or preference for extra bedrooms, it only identifies need based on the household size. Extra bedrooms provide flexibility for growing families, enable older people to have a carer to stay, or can be used as space to work from home. It may not necessarily be possible to meet these aspirations in the affordable housing sector in view of recent restrictions imposed by the welfare benefits system, however in the market sector there is likely to be a preference by consumers for an extra bedroom. It is unlikely therefore that the number of one bedroom properties identified by the SHMA, particularly for owner occupation will be required. In recognition of this, Policy 30 of the JCS enables a flexible approach to considering the appropriate mix of dwelling sizes.
- **7.3.11** Another aspect of size is the floorspace provided within individual dwellings. Following a comprehensive review of housing standards, the government has introduced nationally described space standards. It is open to local authorities to include policies within their plan that require the use of these standards. Policy 30 of the JCS sets out that the national space standards must apply to all new dwellings within North Northamptonshire.
- **7.3.12** There is not considered to be any need for any more local policies relating to the size of dwellings. The council will use Policy 30 to continue to negotiate for an appropriate mix of property sizes based on evidence of local need.

Accessibility

- **7.3.13** Another outcome of the Housing Standards Review is the Government's decision to amend the Building Regulations with a mandatory minimum requirement for access to and use of buildings and two optional requirements available to local authorities to use in setting their housing policies. Optional requirements will only apply where they are a requirement of a local plan, and are set as a condition of planning permission. The three tier standard for accessibility is:
- Category 1 visitable dwellings mandatory minimum
- Category 2 accessible and adaptable homes optional
- Category 3 wheelchair user dwellings optional
- **7.3.14** Policy 30 of the JCS is proposing that all dwellings should meet Category 2 of the national accessibility standards. The costs of achieving this standard are limited and have been included in the build costs used in the viability assessment of the JCS. Achieving Category 3 accessibility is more costly. The policy enables local planning authorities to negotiate for a

Delivering Homes



proportion of wheelchair housing based on evidence of local needs. The part 2 local plan could identify, on the basis of local evidence, a specific proportion of new development that should comply with this category.

7.3.15 A recent example of a unique scheme which enables young adults with disabilities to live independently is Da Vinci Court, Croyland Road in the centre of Wellingborough. A number of agencies, including the borough council and the county council-owned Olympus Care services, identified that there were young adults with disabilities living in residential care or inappropriate housing. Self-contained accommodation was created that also offered care and support, so these young people could live independent lives. Every resident of the 25 flats has either a physical disability or a learning difficulty, which makes them vulnerable. This complex allows them to live their lives the way they choose, but with the support and safety net they require to meet their needs.

7.3.16 The 2007 SHMA recommended that 5% of housing on sites over 15 dwellings should be designed as wheelchair housing. The council administers Disabled Facilities Grants to enable properties to be suitably adapted to residents' needs. Over the past five years these have averaged 68 per year. As of September 2015, 3.9% of people on the housing register require wheelchair access. This is a live system and will therefore vary over time depending on who is registered. It is difficult to predict whether this may change in the future. The council will therefore negotiate for a proportion of Category 3 housing based on local needs in accordance with Policy 30 of the JCS. It is not considered necessary or appropriate to identify a specific target in the part 2 plan. The needs are likely to vary over time and viability will vary with individual sites, so a flexible approach is therefore considered more appropriate.

Housing Needs of Older People

7.3.17 The 2015 SHMA update highlights the growth in older households (65+ age group) as the most pressing. The SHMA Toolkit projects the number of pensioner households requiring the following forms of housing:

- Designated housing such as private sector retirement apartments which includes: fully adapted accommodation, integrated alarm with staff response when required, facilitation of mutual support and opportunities for social activities.
- **Sheltered or Supported** as for designated housing but providing personal support to residents as required.
- **Extra Care** housing which crosses the boundary between high-level support needs and high-level care needs.

7.3.18 The projected needs for the borough are as follows:



Table 7.9 Projected specialised housing requirements of older households 2011-2031

	65+ totals	Under-occupying	Designated	Sheltered	Extra Care
Additional 65+ Households 2011-2031	4644	2654	292	139	255

7.3.19 There are currently 537 sheltered/designated social rent properties in the borough and 80 social rented extra care properties. The table below sets out the amount of specialised housing that has been delivered in the borough for older persons between 2011 and 2015 or is committed through planning applications.

Table 7.10 Provision of Specialised Housing 2011-2015

	Designated	Sheltered	Extra Care
Completed Provision as at 31 March 2015			
Knights Court, Wellingborough (Refurbishment resulting in reduction of units from 63 to 51)	-12		
Palmer Court, Wellingborough	11		
Kenroyal, Oxford Street, Wellingborough (extension to nursing home)			32
Meadowlands, Little Harrowden (demolition of 33 units and replace with 16)	-17		
Dukes Court, Northampton Road, Wellingborough			60
Commitments with planning permission as at 31 March 2015			
Tasker House, Westfield Road, Wellingborough (extension to existing home)			3
British Rail Sports and Social Club, Broad Green, Wellingborough		30	
Total	-18	30	95

7.3.20 The table shows that since 2011 there has been a net loss of designated housing. This has been as a result of needing to update and modernise the existing stock into more suitable properties. There has however been an increase in extra care provision and there are more committed schemes.

Delivering Homes



- The provision of suitable and attractive homes for older households is important in managing the costs of social care (by enabling people to remain in their own homes) and in freeing up 'under occupied' housing (by enabling older people to downsize to more suitable housing). This downsizing would free up more family homes within the housing market. Older people are however only likely to leave their existing home if they can move to a more attractive alternative which is safer and more suited to their needs. 79% of people aged 65-74^(v) in Wellingborough own their own home. The Wanless Review^(vi) analysed older people's preference for housing and care and found that most would prefer to stay in their own home. Such preferences are clearly not absolute, but may be influenced by the choices that are on offer or the perceptions people have as to what is available or is suitable. Local evidence supports this view; sheltered properties have been slow to let, although the reasons for this are not clear. Bungalows are the most popular form of housing with bedsits the least. The provision of high quality development is therefore very important. There are however continuing changes in how social care is being provided and the use of personal care budgets may mean that people choose to stay in their existing home rather than move to specialised accommodation. It will therefore be extremely important to monitor the situation. Provision of smaller properties across housing tenures may enable people to downsize and result in less need for specialised accommodation. The provision of more dwellings designed to Category 2 and 3 accessibility standards may also enable people to stay in their own homes or purchase smaller homes which are more easily adaptable to their needs.
- 7.3.22 Policy 30 of the JCS encourages the provision of specialised housing to meet the needs of older people. It also says that SUEs and strategic developments should make specific provision towards meeting these needs. The SUEs of Wellingborough East and Wellingborough North have already been granted consent. There is currently no specific requirement to meet the needs of older persons within the consents for these sites. Although they could potentially make a contribution when considering detailed schemes, they can not be relied upon to meet the need. The only other site which is identified in the JCS as a strategic site is Park Farm Way/Shelley Road. A planning application has recently been received for this site and in accordance with Policy 30 the site will be expected to make specific provision to meet the needs of older households.
- **7.3.23** Given the scale of the need identified, other sites will need to make a contribution towards providing housing for older households. The council will therefore seek to negotiate a proportion of housing suitable for older households on schemes for 50 dwellings or more (or 1.4ha of land). This could be in the form of designated, sheltered or extra care properties, or the provision of bungalows. Schemes overall should offer a variety of tenures including home ownership, leasehold, shared ownership, private rented and social rented. In determining an appropriate contribution the council will have regard to the viability of the scheme, evidence of local need and the scale and location of the site.

²⁰¹¹ Census

vi Wanless D (2006). Securing Good Care for Older People: Taking a long-term view. King's Fund



Policy H 3

Housing Needs of Older People

On sites of 50 or more dwellings, or 1.4 ha or more site area, the local planning authority will seek the provision of a proportion of the housing to meet the needs of older households. The precise proportion and tenure mix will take into account:

- Evidence of local need;
- The scale and location of the site; and
- The viability of the development

Self-Build Housing

- **7.3.24** Self-build is an important element of the government's housing strategy. The NPPF requires plans to address the need for all types of housing including people wishing to build their own homes. Self-build can involve individuals commissioning the construction of a new dwelling from a builder, contractor, a kit company or physically building a property themselves. It also includes community-led projects that build homes for the community, either individually or in cooperation with a builder or housing provider such as a social landlord.
- **7.3.25** The government has announced a number of measures which aim to dismantle barriers that hold back self-build projects including limited land availability and reluctance by lenders to provide finance and red tape. The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 now requires the council to maintain a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots and to have regard to it when carrying out its functions relating to planning, housing, the disposal of any land of the authority and regeneration. The register is now available on the council's <u>website</u>. (vii) At date of publication three people have registered an interest.
- **7.3.26** Policy 30 of the JCS supports opportunities for individual and community self-build projects and requires that SUEs and other strategic sites make serviced plots available to facilitate this sector of the market.
- 7.3.27 The planning obligation for the Wellingborough East SUE requires the provision of two plots of land each comprising 0.5 ha to be subdivided into building plots for individual self-build. Wellingborough North currently makes no provision for self-build. The only other site which is identified in the JCS as a strategic site is Park Farm Way/Shelley Road. A planning application has recently been received for this site and in accordance with Policy 30 of the JCS the site will be expected to make specific land available for serviced plots. In view of the apparent limited demand for self-build through the register and the fact that some supply is being made available, it is not considered necessary to make any further specific provision in the plan.

Delivering Homes



Starter Homes

The government has made a clear commitment to increasing the supply of starter homes to meet the needs of young first time buyers. A recent ministerial statement resulted in changes being made to planning practice guidance to promote starter homes on under-used or unviable industrial or commercial land. This exception site policy anticipates local planning authorities putting planning obligations in place to restrict the sale of starter home properties at a minimum of 20% below open market value of the property to people who have not previously been a home owner and who are below the age of 40 years. The Housing and Planning Bill. which is currently progressing through parliament, is seeking to put the government's commitment for more starter homes into legislation. The Bill is currently aiming to place a specific duty on local planning authorities to promote the supply of starter homes when carrying out its planning functions including the preparation of local plans. The details of how this is expected to operate will be specified in separate regulations and may, for example, require the provision of starter homes on certain sites when granting planning permission. Local planning authorities will be required to publish reports containing information on provision of starter homes and the Secretary of State will have powers to make local planning authorities comply with the duty of promoting starter homes. The government is also currently consulting on potential changes to the NPPF. One of the potential changes is to revise the definition of affordable housing to include starter homes. Until more information is available, it is not clear whether this plan will need a specific policy to promote the provision of starter homes - if there is this will be addressed in the next draft of the plan.

7.4 Housing Trajectory

- **7.4.1** The NPPF says that local planning authorities should illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and set out a housing implementation strategy for the full range of housing describing how they will maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target.
- 7.4.2 Housing trajectories for each local authority in North Northamptonshire have been published as part of the Joint Authorities Monitoring Report 2014/15. This information was submitted as evidence to support the JCS examination and is available on the JPU website. (viii) This shows that the borough can demonstrate an 8.56 years supply of housing land with a 20% buffer for the period 2016-21. These figures were based on monitoring data as at 31 March 2015. This trajectory will be updated to take account of comments made in respect of housing sites in this emerging plan, together with the Inspector's Report on the JCS and the updated monitoring figures for 31 March 2016 and a revised trajectory will be included in the pre-submission plan.



7.5 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- **7.5.1** The plan should address the need for different types of residential accommodation to meet the specific needs of all sections of the community. Accordingly, it is a responsibility of the council to ensure that sufficient policy provisions exist to meet the identified requirement for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the borough over the plan period.
- **7.5.2** It should be noted that the space requirements for pitches for gypsies and travellers and for travelling show people differ generally speaking travelling show people require far larger plots to accommodate storage of fairground and show equipment. To this end the requirements of both groups have been disaggregated to help accurately identify need and monitor supply.
- **7.5.3** A comprehensive suite of national policy guiding plan making was introduced in March 2012. For the purposes of policy around gypsy and traveller accommodation it comprises:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
- Planning policy for traveller sites.
- **7.5.4** The latter document (updated in 2015) complements the broader set of policies guiding sustainable development set out in the NPPF and provides explicit policy guidance around how to identify and meet the needs of gypsies and travellers.
- **7.5.5** The government's aims in respect of traveller sites are:
- that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning;
- to ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies;
- to meet need through the identification of land for sites;
- to encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale:
- that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development;
- to promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites;
- that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective;
- for local planning authorities to ensure that their local plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies;
- to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply;
- to reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions;



- to enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure; and
- for local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.
- **7.5.6** The advice includes a requirement to identify a five year supply of sites and update this annually through monitoring of delivery. Beyond this date, a criteria based approach can be used to continually deliver as and when future need is identified.
- 7.5.7 Policy 31 of the JCS takes forward the requirements identified in the North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update 2011 (GTAA). The policy requires local planning authorities to protect existing lawful sites and ensure sufficient sites for gypsy and traveller, and travelling show people accommodation are identified in line with a robust evidence base. It also sets out criteria for identifying new site allocations and planning applications.
- **7.5.8** Over the period 2012 to 2022, the GTAA identified that a total of 11 new pitches were required in the borough comprising a mixture of accommodation for travellers and travelling show people.

Table 7.11 North Northamptonshire GTAA Update 2011 requirements for the Borough of Wellingborough

	2012-2017	2017-2022	Total
Residential pitches	4	5	9
Transit pitches	0	0	0
Travelling Showpeople plots	2	0	2
Total			11

7.5.9 A number of new consents have been granted since the GTAA in 2011, these are listed below.

Table 7.12

Туре	Address	Pitches/Plots	Planning Ref	Status
Travelling Showpeople	Bond Site (extension), 341 Grendon Road, Earls Barton	Up to 4	WP/2013/0576	Private
Gypsy and Traveller residential pitches	Fullers (extension), Land adjacent to 327 Grendon Road, Earls Barton	10 in total	WP/14/00190	Private

Delivering Homes



Туре	Address	Pitches/Plots	Planning Ref	Status
Total		14		

7.5.10 This shows that the need identified in the GTAA up to 2022 has been met in full. There is therefore no need for the plan to allocate any further sites to meet needs in the period to 2022. Should any planning applications come forward for additional sites these will be determined in accordance with Policy 31 of the JCS which provides criteria to guide new site allocations and planning applications.



8. Delivering Retail

- **8.0.1** The NPPF makes clear that local authorities are required to objectively identify sites for retail land. Local authorities are required to allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail development needed (along with sites for leisure, office, tourism and residential development). The NPPF states the need to take a 'town centre first' approach when allocating these sites.
- **8.0.2** Retail is split into comparison and convenience shopping. Convenience shops provide for the everyday essential items including food and drink, newspapers and confectionery. Comparison shops provide items not obtained on a frequent basis such as clothing, footwear or household items.

8.1 Convenience Shopping

8.1.1 Policy 12 of the JCS identifies a need for 4,100 sqm of convenience floorspace by 2031 for the southern area of Wellingborough and Rushden. This need has been informed by evidence produced by Peter Brett and Associates (PBA) in the North Northamptonshire Retail Capacity Update 2014. The WYG Town Centre and Retail Study has assessed the retail capacity of the area and provided an updated position. This study concludes that there is no demonstrable requirement to plan for new convenience floorspace in the borough in the short to long term, beyond those proposals already consented; however this position should be regularly monitored. Accordingly the plan does not need to allocate any additional sites for convenience shopping.

8.2 Comparison Shopping

- **8.2.1** Policy 12 of the JCS does not identify a need for any additional comparison goods floorspace for Wellingborough. This is because the consented development of Rushden Lakes retail and leisure park is anticipated to provide for the comparison floorspace required in the southern area of Wellingborough and Rushden.
- **8.2.2** The identified need has been informed by the North Northamptonshire Retail Capacity Update 2014. (ii) This update and the WYG Town Centre and Retail Study (iii) both show that spending on comparison goods could support some additional comparison floorspace in Wellingborough after 2026, but that this is dependent on the performance of the Rushden Lakes scheme.
- **8.2.3** The PBA and WYG retail studies both identify a range of potential comparison floorspace requirements. The WYG study identifies that the quantitative need for additional comparison floorspace at 2031 could be between 12,600 sqm and 21,000 sqm for the southern area. As this is dependent on the performance of Rushden Lakes, the need for additional floorspace will be monitored and reviewed when the Rushden Lakes development has commenced trading and trading patterns have 'bedded down'.

i http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/publications/docdetail.asp?docid=1448

ii http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/publications/docdetail.asp?docid=1448

iii http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6992/wellingborough_town_centre_and_retail_study_2016



8.2.4 In accordance with the 'town centre first' principles in the NPPF, Wellingborough town centre should be the preferred location (subject to any sequential sites being available and suitable) for any further comparison goods floorspace in order to enhance its vitality and viability and ensure that it remains the dominant location for comparison goods. In the meantime, the emphasis is on consolidating and developing a retail, leisure/culture and housing offer that allows Wellingborough town centre to operate successfully alongside Rushden Lakes. The WYG Town Centre and Retail Study recommends that the council should also seek to plan for the reuse, refurbishment or development of existing vacant units in the town centre to accommodate the comparison goods requirement in the first instance if commercially viable.

8.3 Retail Hierarchy

- **8.3.1** The adopted local plan, including the Wellingborough Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP), currently does not include a structured retail hierarchy or any policies that support significant retail growth other than in the town centre itself. Local plan policy currently seeks to ensure that the town centre is the primary focus for all new retail uses, save for small scale shops and services that serve a purely local function or new shopping facilities brought forward to serve the town's expansion areas. With the introduction of the NPPF, there is now a need to take a fresh look at how the delivery of retail is managed in the borough.
- **8.3.2** Through the NPPF it is clear that the government continues to place a high level of importance on the 'town centre first' approach to the delivery of retail, leisure, office, tourism and business development (collectively known as 'town centre uses').
- **8.3.3** Town centres are defined in the NPPF as follows:

'Areas defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.'

Paragraph 23 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to help support their viability and vitality. As such, the NPPF requires local plans to be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period.

8.3.4 In order to plan positively for vibrant and vital town centres, the council has identified a local retail hierarchy for the borough that sets out the role and function of centres. The presumption would be that any proposals for a main town centre use^(iv) would only be permitted

iv Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, casinos,health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls);offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert hall, hotels and conference facilities). Source: NPPF Annex 2



if firstly every effort had been made to locate it in a defined centre as a preference (following the application of the 'sequential test') and secondly, it could be demonstrated that its introduction would not have any negative impact on the function of the retail hierarchy. (v)

- **8.3.5** The JCS includes a settlement hierarchy that characterises the function of the larger higher order centres in North Northamptonshire. Within the borough, Policy 11 of the JCS only identifies Wellingborough town in the hierarchy of centres as a 'Growth Town.' Growth Towns are defined as centres that should provide the focus for major co-ordinated regeneration and growth in employment, housing, retail and higher order facilities serving one or more districts. In turn Policy 12, dealing specifically with retail and town centre uses, defines its function as one that should 'operate successfully alongside the permitted out-of-centre retail development at Rushden Lakes.'
- **8.3.6** JCS Policy 12 includes an additional secondary tier comprising the market towns of North Northamptonshire (there are no towns in this tier in the borough) and an expectation that they will provide a primarily convenience retail function serving their hinterland. The JCS does not seek to identify smaller rural centres or urban district or local centres. It does, however, allow for neighbourhood and part 2 local plans to 'identify additional development opportunities where these do not undermine the focus of retail development at the town centres of the Growth Towns'.
- **8.3.7** Outside of Wellingborough town centre, there are numerous retail centres and areas that may benefit from inclusion in a structured retail hierarchy. These vary in size, ranging from small groups of shops and services that provide for the outlying residential areas of the town to village centres that serve their surrounding rural catchment through to larger retail parks and convenience superstores that attract visitors from beyond the borough. In each instance their function may be considered to complement the town centre and add to the vitality and viability of the retail offer of the borough through the provision of alternative services or retail formats.
- **8.3.8** The <u>WYG Town Centre and Retail Study</u> (vi) assessed the groups of shops across the town and provided an audit of each location. The report recommends that Wellingborough continues to be classified as a town centre and that the following retail areas are classified as local centres: Berrymoor Court, Mill Road, Olympic Way, Grafton Close and Farm Road. These local centres serve small catchments and are all identified on the Policies Map.
- **8.3.9** Nene Court, Whitworth Way retail units, Victoria Park, Castlefields retail park and the additional retail units on London Road all function as retail parks and many include large scale retail warehouses. These retail areas are not classified as centres. Any further expansion at these locations will be subject to retail impact assessment and sequential testing in accordance with the NPPF.

The NPPF states that the sequential test should not be applied to small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development and the JCS states that it should not be applied to new local centres in the SUEs.

vi http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6992/wellingborough town centre and retail study 2016



Policy R 1

Retail Hierarchy

Retail development should take place at a scale appropriate to the size and function of the centre within which it is to be located. To guide this approach the following retail hierarchy is defined:

Town Centre

Wellingborough

Local Centres

- Berrymoor Court
- Mill Road
- Olympic Way
- Grafton Close
- Farm Road

This hierarchy should be used for the application of the sequential approach set out in the NPPF.

8.3.10 There are other small parades of shops across the town and the rural area that are of purely neighbourhood significance and therefore do not meet the definition of a centre. They do however still provide an important local function. The NPPF says that authorities should plan positively for the provision of community facilities such as local shops and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. It is therefore appropriate to include an additional policy to protect and enhance these local facilities.

Policy R 2

Neighbourhood Shops

Small scale retail development to serve the day-to-day needs of local neighbourhoods will normally be permitted.

Proposals for change of use from retail, within a neighbourhood shopping parade or a village with limited shopping provision, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that they are:

A. No longer viable;



- B. No longer needed by the community they serve; or
- C. They are to be relocated to provide an alternative equivalent or improved facility.

8.4 Local Impact Threshold

- **8.4.1** The NPPF advises that when assessing applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date local plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold. Where there is no locally set threshold the default threshold is 2,500sqm. This should include assessment of:
- the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.
- **8.4.2** Where an application is likely to have a significant adverse impact it should be refused.
- **8.4.3** The JCS does not set any locally defined threshold but allows this to be considered in the part 2 local plans if necessary. The WYG Town Centre and Retail Study assessed the need for a local impact threshold and recommended that a blanket approach would be inappropriate across all centres and that instead thresholds which related to the types of centres would be more appropriate. For example a small convenience store would clearly have more impact on a local centre than the town centre.
- **8.4.4** Wellingborough town centre contains a range of anchor stores which help to pull shoppers to the centre and provide 'spin-off' benefits to other retailers. The presence of anchor stores assists in maintaining the vitality and viability of the centre. Some of the anchor stores have a medium retail format such as QD Store (1,370 sqm) and Aldi (1,230 sqm) which is significantly under the 2,500 sqm national threshold. Accordingly, development proposals providing greater than 1000 sqm gross floorspace for retail, leisure and office uses in an edge or out of centre location could draw trade away from the centre and may have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals of this scale should therefore be the subject of an impact assessment.
- **8.4.5** For the recommended five local centres (Berrymoor Court, Mill Road, Olympic Way, Grafton Close and Farm Road), the average centre size is 759sqm (gross) and the average unit size is 122 sqm. This clearly shows that the unit sizes of local centres are much smaller compared to those in the town centre and therefore they would be more susceptible to smaller

Delivering Retail



edge or out of centre development. Based on survey information, most of these centres are anchored by convenience stores ranging from 200 sqm to 492 sqm (gross). It is therefore considered appropriate to reduce the threshold for local centres to 200 sqm gross floorspace.

Policy R 3

Local Impact Threshold

Applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of a centre as defined on the Policies Map, which are not in accordance with the local plan, will require an impact assessment if the development is over the following floorspace thresholds:

- A. For Wellingborough town centre 1000 sqm gross floorspace
- B. For the local centres 200 sqm gross floorspace



- **9.0.1** Paragraph 23 of the NPPF states that, 'planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres.' Therefore the future of Wellingborough town centre needs to be addressed in the local plan.
- **9.0.2** The Wellingborough Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP) was adopted in 2009. It contains a vision, objectives, and policies which aimed to shape the future growth and development of the town centre. This document is now out of date as it was adopted before the NPPF came into force. National shopping trends, the effects of the recession and changing local circumstances also mean that the document is in need of review.
- **9.0.3** Town centres have traditionally been thought of as places solely for shopping. However, the growth of online shopping, (i) competition from out-of-town retail outlets, together with the economic effects of the recession mean that the traditional high street is under severe stress.
- **9.0.4** Shopping has now become a leisure activity. Rather than visiting the town centre just to buy food and goods, consumers are now looking for an 'experience'. There is pressure to provide much more than retail in order to stay competitive. (ii) Vibrant town centres are now seen as varied multi-functional places, made up of mixed uses including;
- retail
- leisure
- entertainment and cultural facilities
- public and private services
- employment and business
- residential areas

9.0.5 The JCS highlights the key challenges and opportunities for town centres and stresses the need for these to be social places with a vibrant evening economy, offering something that neither shopping centres nor the internet can match. This view is closely aligned with the outcomes of the Portas Review (2011)⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ which concluded that town centres must diversify with a range of uses beyond the traditional retail role. Therefore, Wellingborough town centre needs to adapt to meet the changing needs of the local population and to retain vitality and viability.

According to a report by the Centre for Retail Research entitled 'Retail Futures 2018' (May 2013) online retail sales accounted for 12.7% of sales in the UK in 2012, a figure predicted to rise to 21.5% by 2018.

ii <u>Town Centre Futures 2020</u>, Experian Marketing Services (2012)

iii https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6292/2081646.pdf



9.1 Role of the Town Centre

- **9.1.1** One of the main challenges facing Wellingborough town centre is the competition it faces from higher order centres (and their retail parks) which are close by, such as Northampton and Milton Keynes. The future of the centre is also going to be further influenced by Rushden Lakes shopping and leisure park, which is estimated to open by spring 2017. Policy 12 of the JCS requires that Wellingborough should consolidate and diversify its retail function so that it can operate successfully alongside Rushden Lakes. The council commissioned a study from WYG^(iv) to help identify how best to do this.
- **9.1.2** In light of the significant retail and leisure destination of Rushden Lakes the opportunities to attract investment from national multiples to the town centre are likely to remain limited in the short to medium term. Most of the major high street retailers are already represented in Northampton and Milton Keynes and are likely to seek further representation at Rushden Lakes rather than in Wellingborough. Rushden Lakes will, however, provide opportunities for tourism based businesses, including those in town centres, to benefit from increased visitors to North Northamptonshire
- 9.1.3 The future strategy should therefore seek to distinguish the future role and function of Wellingborough as a retail centre that is somewhat different to that of both the higher order centres and Rushden Lakes (which is likely to focus on multiple chain operators linked to clothing and fashion). There is already a high proportion of independent operators (especially outside of the Swansgate shopping centre) and this is something which could be built upon in order to create a more specialist retail offer that sets it apart from other destinations. In order to attract independent retailers and customers to the town centre, further improvements to the public realm and shop fronts will be required. A high quality environment which creates a distinct sense of place should create a vibrant location to which local businesses want to invest and trade and where people want to visit and spend time as part of their leisure time.
- **9.1.4** The digital shopping revolution has also significantly impacted high streets by offering consumers convenient alternatives to traditional shops. Initiatives will, therefore, need to be considered which help the town centre to adapt and engage with digital shopping. This could include assessing broadband and mobile coverage to allow users to use on-line shopping channels and support all forms of trading platforms from website to smart phone and click and collect.
- **9.1.5** Fiscal incentives should also be considered to encourage young or entrepreneurial businesses to set up and trade. Fiscal incentives could include town centre improvement funds, shop front grants, high street innovation funds or business rate discounts.
- **9.1.6** A key driver of creating a distinctive specialist offer will be around the re-invention of the existing market. This already acts as an important attractor to Wellingborough, as can be seen by the increased pedestrian activity in the centre on market days. Increased residential development can also have a positive impact on the town centre. There are currently very few



people living in the centre. More people living in the area is likely to increase activity both during the day and evening. People living in the centre are more likely to buy goods and services from the nearest facilities.

9.1.7 The vitality and viability of Wellingborough has been positively maintained in recent years. The vacancy rate has improved, although the comparison goods share of the centre declined due to increased competition from other centres. WYG identified the availability of free parking as a significant benefit that contributes to the economic performance of the town centre. The parking provides easy access to the centre and reduces the impact of free parking at out-of-centre facilities. Wellingborough town centre provides an important role in serving the local community and provides a distinct retail offer focused on value. These strengths should be promoted.

9.1.8 The objectives for the future role of the town centre are:

- To ensure Wellingborough town centre remains the preferred location for any further comparison goods floorspace
- To re-invent the market in the area of the market square so that its status as the heart of the town is reinforced
- To seek the reuse, refurbishment or redevelopment of existing vacant units in the town centre
- To develop initiatives that encourage more independent operators to locate in the town centre
- To develop initiatives to help businesses and consumers adapt to and engage with digital shopping
- To ensure that the town centre provides services and facilities to support the local community
- To increase the amount of housing in the town centre
- To seek improvements in the public realm and shop fronts
- To maintain free car parking
- To conserve and enhance the cultural heritage and ensure it contributes to creating a distinctive place.
- To enhance the cultural, entertainment and leisure offer.
- To ensure that the town centre is a convenient, safe and accessible place that is easy to get around
- To have a dedicated future strategy for the town centre which focuses on the image and investment opportunities of the town centre with partner agencies

9.2 Primary Shopping Area

9.2.1 Paragraph 23 of the NPPF states that planning authorities should define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations. The NPPF includes the following definitions:



- Primary Shopping Area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally
 comprising the primary frontages and those secondary frontages which are contiguous
 and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).
- **Primary frontage:** Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods.
- **Secondary frontage**: Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.
- **9.2.2** The TCAAP identified the Primary Shopping Area (PSA), primary frontages and secondary frontages in policies WTC3 and WTC4 and on the proposals map, however they do not meet the definition from the NPPF and have therefore been reviewed.
- **9.2.3** As part of the <u>WYG Town Centre and Retail Study</u>, (v) the town centre uses were reviewed and this work has informed the shopping frontages, PSA and town centre boundary proposed on the Policies Map.
- **9.2.4** Identification of the PSA and town centre boundary are necessary to provide the basis for applying the sequential test for applications for town centre uses. The NPPF defines the edge of centre for retail purposes as a location that is well connected and up to 300m from the PSA. For all other main town centre uses^(vi) (leisure, entertainment, offices, arts, culture and tourism), this is a location within 300m of the town centre boundary.
- 9.2.5 Policy 12 of the JCS says that the vitality and viability of town centres will be supported by securing a vibrant mix of retail, employment, leisure and cultural facilities and supporting the provision of additional residential uses on appropriate sites including the use of vacant space above shops. Part 2 local plans will identify the extent of town centres, sites to accommodate town centre uses and PSAs. Within PSAs, proposals for a change of use or redevelopment will be permitted if the proposal adds to the attractiveness of the centre and does not lead to the predominance of A1 retail use being critically undermined.

Policy TC 1

Town Centre Boundary

The extent of the town centre is defined on the Policies Map. This will be used for the interpretation of the sequential test for main town centre uses^(vii) other than retail.

v http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6992/wellingborough_town_centre_and_retail_study_2016

vi defined in the NPPF and the glossary of this plan

vii defined in the NPPF and the glossary of this plan



Policy TC 2

Primary Shopping Area

Within the Primary Shopping Area as defined on the Policies Map, proposals for development will be permitted where:

- They are for main town centre uses; (viii) or
- They promote the vitality and viability of the centre including proposals for residential development; or
- They involve the conversion or re-use of upper floors;

Provided that:

- A. In the Primary Shopping Frontages A1 uses (shops) comprise at least 70% of the shopping frontage; and
- B. In the Secondary Shopping Frontages main town centre uses remain dominant.

New development should be of high quality which respects the local character and cultural heritage and should ensure the provision of active ground floor frontages

9.3 The Market

- **9.3.1** The NPPF paragraph 23 states that local planning authorities should 'retain and enhance existing markets...ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive.'
- **9.3.2** Challenges to markets include reduced footfall, the growth of online retailing, the effects of the recent recession, the rise in deep discount stores and supermarkets increasingly moving into a non-food offer. A recent <u>Health Check</u> of Wellingborough market was undertaken by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) Consultancy Services (NCS, 2014). (ix) This states that these challenges are being faced by Wellingborough market and it suggests that traders are reliant upon an existing and probably diminishing customer base.
- **9.3.3** Markets make a positive contribution to local economies. They add to community culture, help the regeneration of an area and offer an experience, thus increasing prosperity. The Portas Review (2011)^(x) suggested that markets can play a crucial role in the future welfare of traditional shopping areas and high streets. It is important therefore to ensure the long term vitality and vibrancy of Wellingborough market.
- **9.3.4** The Wellingborough market health check highlighted that Wellingborough market faces the following issues:

viii defined in the NPPF and the glossary of this plan

ix http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6351/nabma market health check report

x https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment data/file/6292/2081646.pdf



- traders still tend to make use of the perimeter stalls, creating a 'doughnut' effect, with vacant stalls in the centre;
- though the market is centrally located, it has a relatively low profile and is not easily visible from the main shopping area;
- the market offer remains limited the food offer in particular.
- the gateways to the market, though improved, are still not inviting in terms of first visuals and anchor stalls.
- 9.3.5 The WYG study (xi) reviewed the location and performance of the market and set out recommendations based on the health check, site visits, a telephone survey and footfall counts. The study concludes that the market could be a key driver in creating a distinctive specialist offer for the town centre. The market is considered to be well located as there is a considerable amount of people walking through the market from the bus terminus and adjacent to the market leading to the Swansgate shopping centre. It is also well connected to public transport and the remainder of the town centre. The study does however, recognise a need to improve the layout, the offer, operating hours and management of the market.
- **9.3.6** A consolidation and reconfiguration of the size of the market would free up some space to provide an open area for special functions. The market is also currently focused towards discount and value products and needs to diversify. A strategy that seeks to support local supply chains in the surrounding rural economy would help to provide local distinctiveness by providing locally sourced goods and products that may not be accessible elsewhere. Such a localised approach may help to create ownership with the local population that will galvanise the sense of community spirit in the town centre and also provide an offer that people from further afield may be attracted to. Increasing the local food and beverage offer will also help to increase the time that people spend in the market and this could benefit local businesses.
- **9.3.7** Markets are also recognised as providing an important incubator platform for independent retail and service providers who may be able to start a business at the market in advance of taking up a permanent unit. Markets allow start-up businesses to test product ranges. This approach accords with the NPPF and the Portas Review in that it seeks to retain, enhance and build upon the existing market infrastructure through creating an improved market destination that can foster a creative competitive and attractive environment which will bring significant social, economic and environmental benefits to the borough.
- **9.3.8** Many of these details are not land use planning matters and are, therefore, best delivered outside of the local plan process in documents such as management plans. The council will work with external partners and stakeholders to help deliver these initiatives.
- **9.3.9** The council's planning policy in respect of the market and market square was contained in Policies WTC 5 and PS1 of the TCAAP. These sought to retain the market as an integral component of the Market Square and transform the area as part of a major new retail-led mixed use scheme. However, whilst some short term changes have been made to the Market Square area, the substantial improvements envisaged as part of redevelopment proposal have not been



delivered. The increase in retail and the relocation of the Tresham Institute that sought to pull people towards Market Square has not taken place and it is likely that the current arrangement of buildings around Market Square will stay largely the same. There is however the opportunity to consider options for introducing new structures to the market area with power points to allow improved lighting, kitchens, refrigeration and access to water and other utilities including digital telecommunications. This would help traders access all formats of retailing as well as potentially encouraging food and beverage operators which would help diversify the market stall portfolio.

Policy TC 3

The Market

The market will be retained within the area of the Market Square as an integral part of the town centre. Regeneration of the area will include considering:

- A. Options for reconfiguring the layout of stalls to optimise pedestrian footfall;
- B. New structures that enhance the opportunities for increasing the diversity of the market offer:
- C. Public realm improvements; and
- D. Improved management, licensing and marketing arrangements.

9.4 Public Realm and Shop Fronts

- **9.4.1** A key part of the future strategy for Wellingborough town centre is to seek to distinguish it as somewhere different to both nearby higher order centres and Rushden Lakes. In order to do this we need to make the most of the historic environment and improve the streets, shop fronts and public areas. An enhanced environment will help to create a destination that retailers and consumers want to visit and linger in. It also provides an opportunity to attract visitors to Rushden Lakes into Wellingborough town centre.
- 9.4.2 Policy 2 of the JCS sets out how the historic environment will be protected, preserved and where appropriate enhanced. This is supplemented by additional guidance in the <u>Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal</u> which was adopted in 2009. This sets out the special characteristics of the area and provides management proposals for its future preservation and enhancement. Fiscal measures are also currently available to support maintenance and enhancement of the historic environment through the <u>Townscape Heritage Initiative</u>. (xiii) This covers the core retail centre of the town, encompassing Sheep Street, Silver Street, High Street, Broad Green, Market Street, Cambridge Street, and elements of Park Street and provides schemes for <u>Small Buildings Grants</u>(xiv) and <u>Shop Front Grants</u>.

xii http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/download/1588/town_centre_conservation_area_appraisal

xiii .http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/thi

xiv http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/info/200079/regeneration/949/townscape heritage initiative/3

xv http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/info/200079/regeneration/949/townscape heritage initiative



9.4.3 The design of shop fronts has an important influence on the quality of the street scene and sense of place. In 2009 the council adopted a <u>Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guide</u> Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document was to support Policy WTC6 of the TCAAP. The principles within that policy and guidance remain relevant today, but the SPD will be updated to reflect the NPPF, JCS and this plan when adopted.

Policy TC 4

Shop Fronts

New shop fronts and advertisements should be designed to the highest standards in terms of:

- A. Their relationship to both the local context and the building of which they form part;
- B. The quality and durability of materials uses; and
- The level and means of illumination.
- **9.4.4** Improvement of the public realm complements the preservation and enhancement of the buildings in the town centre. In 2009, the council adopted a <u>Public Realm Strategy SPD</u> (xvii) which supplemented policy WTC 15 of the TCAAP and identified opportunities for new and improved public spaces, creative lighting and public art. This was supported by a <u>Materials Palette</u> (xviii) which sought to ensure high quality materials were consistently used across the town centre. Both of these documents remain valid but will be reviewed following adoption of the plan to ensure they remain consistent with current proposals for the town centre.

Policy TC 5

Public Realm

Provision should be made for a high quality, well connected public realm to improve the appearance, attractiveness and accessibility of the town centre.

Proposals must be designed to meet the highest standards of access and inclusion so that all potential users can use them safely and easily, regardless of disability, age or gender.

New development proposals in the town centre will be required to contribute towards environmental or public realm improvements.

xvi https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/site/scripts/download info.php?downloadID=1582

xvii http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/download/1577/public realm strategy spd

xviii https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=1547



9.5 Town Centre Sites

9.5.1 The following sites within the town centre are proposed as key allocations to help deliver the objectives outlined in sections 8 and 9 of this plan.

9.5.1 Former Post Office Sorting Depot/BT Exchange, Midland Road

- **9.5.1.1** The site measures approximately 0.45ha and includes the old Post Office sorting depot and BT exchange. The adopted TCAAP identified this site for comprehensive mixed used redevelopment including new shops with residential above under policy PS2. The site is currently partly vacant. In 2010 planning permission was granted on part of the site to demolish various disused buildings within the yards area of the former post office site. No work was carried out and this consent has since expired.
- **9.5.1.2** The site remains a key redevelopment opportunity for retail units on the ground floor with residential above to support the vitality and viability of the town centre. The WYG study estimated that the site could provide between 20 and 23 dwellings on the upper floors. A considerable amount of people walk past the site to access Aldi and Matalan and its redevelopment provides an opportunity to introduce active frontages into this part of Midland Road.
- **9.5.1.3** The former Post Office sorting depot is not a listed building, but retention of the building's facade would retain a local heritage asset and enhance the local distinctiveness of the area.
- **9.5.1.4** It is recognised that the site is not an easy one to deliver. The council will therefore seek to work pro-actively with the owners to bring forward a suitable scheme. This could include consideration of a Local Development Order for the site.

Policy TC 6

Former Post Office Sorting Depot/BT Exchange, Midland Road

The site as shown on the Policies Map should be comprehensively redeveloped for mixed uses to include:

- A. New retail units on the ground floor with residential above; and
- B. Retention of the former Post Office sorting depot facade.

9.5.2 High Street/Jackson Lane

9.5.2.1 This is a brownfield site of approximately 2.5ha in size, which is currently primarily a council owned surface car park alongside some underused and vacant buildings. The area is identified in the TCAAP under policy PS3 for mixed used development including approximately



220 dwellings, a new landmark campus for Tresham Institute, a hotel, a small amount of shops and services and a car park. A planning brief for the site was adopted in 2006. Much of this is, however, now out-of-date as the Tresham Institute is no longer intending to relocate here.

- **9.5.2.2** The council has been in discussion with development partners about how best to bring the site forward. It is largely separate from the primary shopping area and is not considered suitable to accommodate a large amount of retail. Residential development would, however, help to increase the amount of people living in the town centre and help to increase the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- **9.5.2.3** Development proposals should create a new urban quarter for the town centre that is distinctive, vibrant, desirable and safe. The historic environment in the area should be respected and proposals should ensure that an active frontage is provided along the High Street to add interest, life an vitality to the area. A flexible approach will be taken as to the uses which would be acceptable here.

Policy TC 7

High Street/Jacksons Lane

The site as identified on the Policies Map should be comprehensively redeveloped for a predominantly residential scheme. Proposals should include:

- A. An active frontage along the High Street;
- B. Car parking for general public use; and
- C. A relatively small proportion of other town centre uses. (xix)

9.5.3 Alma Street/Cambridge Street

- **9.5.3.1** The site currently consists of a car wash at the corner of Alma Street/Park Road, a furniture shop and a greengrocer with an inner area of an underutilised car park and a few outbuildings. The adopted TCAAP identified the area for comprehensive redevelopment under policy PS6. Several parts of the site have received planning permission for redevelopment primarily for residential.
- **9.5.3.2** The corner of Alma Street/ Park Road has potential to provide some restaurants or leisure uses. A high quality design building with an active frontage would improve the environmental quality of this part of the town centre. Residential development on the upper floors and in the backland area would increase the amount of people living in the town centre. The WYG study estimates that the site could reasonably accommodate between 33 and 50 residential units assuming a density of between 40 or 50 dwellings per hectare which reflect apartment type units.



Policy TC 8

Alma Street/Cambridge Street

Proposals for the site as identified on the Policies Map should include:

- A. A high quality building with an active frontage on the corner of Alma Street/Park Road; and
- B. Predominately residential units on the remaining backland area.



10. Site Specific Policies

10.1 Sustainable Urban Extensions

- 10.1.1 The Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) are the key building blocks for growth in North Northamptonshire during and beyond the plan period to 2031. These large mixed-use developments are an opportunity to create well planned and managed new neighbourhoods that integrate physically and socially with the existing towns. Concentrating resources on a limited number of sites is designed to ensure that major growth is implemented effectively, bringing forward infrastructure quickly and minimising disruption to existing communities. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) identifies two SUEs for Wellingborough: Wellingborough East and Wellingborough North. They are both shown on the key diagram of the JCS. These SUEs were also identified in the adopted Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) following a review of all potential growth sectors around the towns in an Urban Extensions Study (Oct 2005). Further growth beyond 2031 will be considered through a future review of the JCS. Subject to detailed assessment, the expansion of the SUEs is likely to make best use of infrastructure investment and support the viability of these developments.
- **10.1.2** The council has been working with the landowners and developers to ensure the timely implementation of these sites. Both SUEs have been granted outline planning permission and a number of the details have also been agreed. In addition, a North Northamptonshire Joint Delivery Unit (JDU) has been established to ensure the efficient and effective deployment of public funds and private sector investment to support the delivery of all of the SUEs in the JCS.
- **10.1.3** The adopted 2008 CSS includes Policy 16 which sets out the development principles which the master plans for all the SUEs should make provision for. The JCS will replace the CSS in its entirety, it does not include any specific policies relating to development of the two Wellingborough SUEs, but contains a number of policies which would be relevant including general place making principles. Wellingborough East and Wellingborough North are identified as committed SUEs on the key diagram, but are not subject to an allocation and are not identified on the JCS policies map.
- 10.1.4 It is important that these two SUEs contribute to the overall vision and aspirations for Wellingborough as a whole. They will make a significant contribution to the housing and employment opportunities for the borough and will assist in helping to maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre. The overall objectives for the SUEs are that they must be sustainable and provide communities which are active, inclusive, safe, well run, environmentally sensitive, well designed and built, well connected, thriving, well served and fair for everyone. In particular in the local context this means that:
- They should be planned so as to ensure the continued physical separation of Wellingborough and the surrounding villages;
- Opportunities should be taken to enhance existing important assets and promote the provision of new green infrastructure;
- They should be designed as new neighbourhoods that integrate physically and socially with the remainder of the town;



- There should be a high emphasis on good quality sustainable design;
- An appropriate mix of services and facilities should be provided; and
- They should bring added value to the whole borough.

10.1.1 Wellingborough East

- **10.1.1.1** The area of land to the east of the railway contains some sporadic industrial development, brownfield and other disturbed land, but the majority of the site is in agricultural use. The land is bisected by the River Ise floodplain and bordered to the south by the River Nene floodplain. The current landscape character assessment identifies the River Nene Broad Valley Floodplain and the River Ise Valley Floodplain as distinct character areas, the remainder of the site is identified as Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes⁽ⁱ⁾. Most of the lakes along the Nene Valley have been identified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and form part of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. Both rivers are identified as strategic green infrastructure corridors. Dominant topographical landscape features of the site are the valleys and the ridgeline which broadly follows Irthlingborough Road/Sidegate Lane. The Sidegate Lane landfill site is another significant landscape feature which provides a wooded backdrop to the site providing some visual separation from Finedon.
- 10.1.1.2 Land between Finedon Road and the railway has been identified for significant development in previous development plan documents. The area known as Wellingborough East or, latterly, Stanton Cross was allocated in the Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan adopted April 1999 for a mixed used development including 1915 dwellings. The Northamptonshire County Structure Plan for the period 1996 2016 was adopted in 2001 which identified the need for a Strategic Development Area (SDA) to the east of Wellingborough. The Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan Alteration (adopted 2004) identified an enlarged mixed use development area (including 2875 dwellings) to meet these requirements under Policies U14 U20. These policies set the overall parameters for development in the area and also set site specific requirements for individual parts of the site. These local plan policies also set the context for Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) adopted in 2003 and 2004 for Wellingborough East. These policies will be replaced by policies in this plan once adopted. Given that these documents were prepared prior to the NPPF, preparation of this plan provides an opportune time to review whether these policies and SPGs are still relevant.
- **10.1.1.3** An outline planning application for the initial phases of the development including 3100 dwellings, employment areas and associated infrastructure was approved by the council in January 2008. Reserved Matters applications for the first 3 phases of the residential development were approved in October and November 2015. An outline application for an additional 550 dwellings and other changes to the scheme together with an application to vary some of the original conditions were approved subject to conditions and the completion of a S106 planning agreement in December 2015.
- **10.1.1.4** The council has worked closely with Bovis Homes Limited, the Stanton Cross Landowners Group and other stakeholders to ensure delivery of the scheme. The Stanton Cross Infrastructure Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was agreed by the Secretary of State in

http://www.rnrpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk/



November 2012 to ensure the land was available to deliver the Midland Road access (known as Route 4). The Station Island North Stanton Cross CPO is currently being progressed by the council to secure part of the internal infrastructure of the scheme (known as Route 9) and future delivery phases.

- **10.1.1.5** A masterplan for the scheme was approved in 2008 which sets out how the site will be developed in a comprehensive manner, that ensures the creation of a sustainable expansion of Wellingborough. The masterplan was derived from the principles set out in the various SPGs which were subject to widespread consultation. The key principles of that masterplan remain valid. It is however likely that revisions to the masterplan will be sought over the plan period. Indeed the most recent outline application sought amendment to various elements. In order to provide some flexibility for delivery of the scheme over the plan period, but to ensure the core principles are adhered to it is proposed to include the key development principles in a local plan policy. This will assist in dealing with any future amendments to the masterplan and reserved matters applications. It will also assist in dealing with applications for small pockets of land that were not covered by the initial outline application.
- **10.1.1.6** Wellingborough East will provide facilities which will be of benefit to the town as a whole such as improvements to the railway station. In particular it is intended that a new secondary school will be located within Wellingborough East, which will be required to meet the needs of growth across the whole borough. The current master plan identifies a suitable site for the secondary school, financial contributions will be required from this and other sites to ensure delivery of the school buildings.
- **10.1.1.7** The policy will relate to the area shown on the Policies Map. This is derived from the area allocated in the adopted local plan, the area covered by the outline planning consent and the area that has been subject to masterplanning. The location could potentially take additional development beyond the plan period. Sidegate Lane forms a logical boundary to the site. Initial broadbrush studies show that this enlarged area could deliver up to 6000 dwellings in total together with associated infrastructure. Given the strategic nature of this site, future expansion of the area would be a matter for the next JCS review.

Policy Site 1

Wellingborough East

Proposals within Wellingborough East, as identified on the Policies Map, should accord with the following development principles:

A. A comprehensively planned and developed site with individual developments making proportionate contributions to the infrastructural requirements of the scheme as a whole. The area should be masterplanned to ensure potential future options of expanding further to the east beyond the plan period can be accommodated if necessary.

Site Specific Policies



- B. A mixture of housing types, sizes and tenures including specialist housing to meet the needs of older persons, accessible housing, starter homes and self-build.
- C. A significant contribution to the provision of new jobs in the borough. The area north of Finedon Road should be developed for employment uses. High quality employment uses including offices should be provided in the Station Island Area between the railway and the River Ise and rail related uses should be provided alongside Neilson's Sidings.
- D. Principal access should be via a new bridge from Midland Road over the railway (Route 4); from the A45 at Turnells Mill Lane via The Embankment (Route 2); from Northen Way (Route 6) and from the A45 at Ditchford Road (Route 7).
- E. Safe and convenient access provided for all modes of transport between all parts of the site, the existing town and the wider transport network. There should be reduced reliance on the car and an enhanced cycle network to the wider countryside and facilities such as Rushden Lakes.
- F. A significant multi-functional green space network, retaining where possible existing landscape features. Green Infrastructure corridors should be provided throughout the development which link to the existing strategic and local green infrastructure corridors. The River Ise should be the focus of a linear park which provides a multi-functional recreation and wildlife space.
- G. A multi-modal interchange should be provided at the railway station which provides an expanded railway station, new bus routes and cycling facilities that offer the potential for seamless connections between different modes of transport. All proposals in this location should preserve and enhance the character and setting of the listed railway station.
- H. Provision of a site for new secondary school, with the option for co-located community/sports facilities, together with proportionate monetary contributions towards secondary education.
- I. Primary schools to serve the development co-located with pre-school and nursery provision in neighbourhood centres.
- J. A principal neighbourhood centre to be the focus of the new community at the point where the new east-west link and north-south avenues cross. It should provide a high quality public space with a mix of community, commercial and residential uses.
- K. A net gain in biodiversity, through improved long term management of existing habitats and new habitat creation. This will be most appropriately achieved through wet grassland and river restoration associated with the Rivers Nene and Ise. Propsals should ensure that there is no adverse impact either alone or in combination on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area. Mitigation may involve providing alternative accessible greenspace within the development and access and visitor management measures within the SPA.



10.1.2 Wellingborough North

- **10.1.2.1** Wellingborough North lies to the north of Niort Way and comprises agricultural land. The majority of the site is also known as Upper Redhill or Glenvale Park. The Harrowden Brook runs through the site and there are some significant areas of tree cover namely: Vivians Covert, Blackberry Fox Covert, Redhill Spinney and the many mature trees around Great Harrowden Hall. Historic assets in the vicinity include the listed Wellingborough Grange, the site of a medieval village south of Great Harrowden, the grade II listed All Saints Church and the Grade I listed Harrowden Hall and grounds at Great Harrowden.
- **10.1.2.2** The current landscape character assessment shows the majority of the site being within the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes character area with the area west of Blackberry Fox Covert being the Clay Plateau. (ii) This plateau is the prominent landform and is visible from a wide area. Between Great Harrowden and Wellingborough is a ridgeline and the land falls south towards the brook. Redhill Grange is a housing estate on the northern edge of Wellingborough, the approved scheme wraps around this area.
- **10.1.2.3** It is currently proposed that the Isham Bypass will be extended west of Great Harrowden to link to the A509 north of Park Farm Industrial Estate through the site.
- **10.1.2.4** An outline application for the majority of the site was granted by the Secretary of State in February 2010. The remainder of the site is in separate landownership, but has been the subject of pre-application discussions. The council adopted interim guidance for Wellingborough North in 2009 to assist in determining the planning application, but there are no specific development plan policies or supplementary planning documents relating to the site.
- 10.1.2.5 The approved scheme is linked to an agreed masterplan that seeks a comprehensive development for the area. The key principles of that masterplan remain valid. It is however likely that revisions to the masterplan will be sought over the plan period. Indeed the council is currently in discussion with the promoter over some variations. In order to provide some flexibility for delivery of the scheme over the plan period, but to ensure the core principles are adhered to it is proposed to include the key development principles in a local plan policy. This will assist in dealing with any future amendments to the masterplan and reserved matters applications. It will also assist in dealing with applications for the area of land not covered by the initial outline application.
- **10.1.2.6** The policy will relate to the area shown on the Policies Map. This is derived from the planning application boundary, but also includes the land in separate ownership. The outline consent covering the majority of the site is for 3,000 dwellings, retail, and commercial facilities, open spaces and associated infrastructure. Phase 1 is for 1500 dwellings and a link road needs to be in place before Phases 2 and 3. There are currently uncertainties over the delivery of this link road and so the plan is only assuming delivery of Phase 1 in this plan period. If however the uncertainties are resolved the full scheme could potentially come forward. The land in separate ownership is anticipated to provide in the region of 225 dwellings additional dwellings.

ii



Policy Site 2

Wellingborough North

Proposals within Wellingborough North, as identified on the Policies Map, should accord with the following development principles:

- A. A comprehensively planned and developed site with individual developments making proportionate contributions to the infrastructural requirements of the scheme as a whole.
- B. A significant landscape buffer is provided between the development and Great Harrowden to ensure the separate character and setting of the village is maintained. Built development should not extend beyond the ridgeline.
- C. The residential amenity of residents in Redhill Grange is protected.
- D. A mixture of housing types, sizes and tenures including specialist housing to meet the needs of older persons, accessible housing, starter homes and self-build.
- E. A significant contribution to the provision of new jobs in the borough including an extension to the Park Farm Industrial Estate.
- F. Safe and convenient access provided for all modes of transport between all parts of the site, the existing town and the wider transport network. There should be reduced reliance on the car and an enhanced cycle network to the wider countryside.
- G. A significant multi-functional green space network, retaining where possible existing landscape features. Green Infrastructure corridors should be provided throughout the development which link to the existing strategic and local green infrastructure corridors. The principal corridors should be along the Harrowden Brook and the ridgeline.
- H. Primary schools to serve the development co-located with pre-school and nursery provision in neighbourhood centres.
- I. A net gain in biodiversity, through improved long term management of existing habitats and new habitat creation. This will be most appropriately achieved through neutral grassland, wetland/meadow habitats associated with SUDs and increased woodland planting

10.2 George Cox Shoes, 46 Westfield Road

10.2.1 The site measures approximately 0.5ha and is located east of the town centre in a predominately residential area. Half of the site is occupied by a former factory and the remainder is an area of hard standing. The main factory building fronts Roberts Street and was built in the early 1920s as a clothing and corset factory. It was subsequently used by Rosebud Dolls, Astraseal and latterly George Cox. There have been a number of later additions and alterations to the rear of main building. In particular, there is a distinctive stepped form of single storey glazed rooflights at the rear. The site is currently partially occupied by a number of small businesses, but is significantly underutilised. The factory is part of the historic fabric of the town and adds to the character of the local area. It is one of few of this type of factory buildings left



in the area. It is therefore considered to be a local historic asset. All reasonable attempts should therefore be made to retain the main factory building, together with the boundary walls and railings. The feasibility of retaining the distinctive stepped form to the rear should also be investigated. A comprehensive scheme for the whole site could ensure that new development on the hard standing acts as enabling development to convert the factory building to residential use.

10.2.2 A structural survey is likely to be required to ensure that the building is capable of residential conversion. There is potential for land contamination due to the historic use of the site so a risk assessment will also be required.

Policy Site 3

George Cox Shoes, 46 Westfield Road

A comprehensive residential scheme should be prepared for the site which includes retention of the main factory building together with the boundary wall and railings.

10.3 Windsor Road

- 10.3.1 The site measures 6.5ha and lies between Windsor Road and the A45. It is allocated for housing in the Local Plan Alteration and saved Policy U10 currently applies. Policy H1 proposes that the site should continue to be allocated for housing. The site is owned by the borough council and a private landowner. This land is currently underutilised. The site was formerly used as allotments and open space including a football pitch. The allotments are now unused and overgrown and the land has been subject to an element of fly tipping and anti social behaviour. In 2009/2010 the council worked with the local community through Planning Aid to identify development principles for the site. Many of these remain relevant.
- 10.3.2 The site has mature trees and hedgerows which should be retained where practical. Past studies have also identified a semi-natural area to the eastern edge of the site containing Bee Orchids. The green infrastructure corridor through the Wilby Way estate should be continued through this site. The water course provides an opportunity to provide a net gain in biodiversity. A water main cuts across the south west corner of the site and Anglian Water have advised that an easement strip of 12 metres should be protected and kept free from built development and deep rooted planting. Proximity to the A45 means that a noise assessment will be necessary to identify any mitigation measures that may be required.
- **10.3.3** Access to the site is extremely challenging and various vehicular options should be explored. Pedestrian and cycle access should ensure there are appropriate links to both the Wilby Way estate and the Windsor Road area and in particular that there are suitable routes to Warwick Primary School. There is a deficiency of children's play areas to the west of the site, so provision on this site should be at the western end.



10.3.4 Provision should be made for an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures and in particular provision should be made to meet the needs of older person households in accordance with policy H 3. Previous community consultation expressed a preference for bungalows. The number of dwellings provided on site should be determined through the planning application process. Access limitations, the shape of the site and the need to provide substantial landscape features will potentially limit housing capacity. The town housing background paper (iii) identified a theoretical capacity of 147 dwellings, this is likely to be the upper end of what is deliverable. Previous schemes considered by the local community were for a much lower number.

Policy Site 4

Windsor Road

Residential proposals for the Windsor Road site should provide for:

- A. Retention of existing features of landscape and wildlife interest where practical;
- B. Provision of a green infrastructure corridor through the site;
- C. A children's play area at the western end of the site;
- D. Provision of a proportion of the housing to meet the needs of older households the preference is for bungalows; and
- E. Vehicular access to the Wilby Way estate and Windsor Road area but without direct links between the two to avoid rat running.

10.4 Land between Finedon Road and Nest Lane

- 10.4.1 This site covers a large area (approximately 16ha) bordered by Nest Lane, the Finedon Road Industrial Estate, Finedon Road and the new development off Burywell Road. It contains a variety of uses including land that is occupied by two allotment associations Ladywell and Brook Farm. Whilst most of the allotments are well used, there are some areas currently leased to the associations which are not in allotment use. To the north is the former Nest Lane sports ground, which has not been used or maintained for pitches for a number of years. The properties fronting Nest Lane have long back gardens and, in recent years, several planning applications for development of these gardens has resulted in a number of cul-de-sac developments. The remainder of the site is disused but includes under-used semi-natural scrub and small wooded areas which could potentially be of wildlife value.
- **10.4.2** The plan provides an opportunity to consider this site comprehensively and identify areas which should be protected and those which could be developed. A comprehensive approach would also ensure that land is not sterilised or left land-locked and that development as a whole makes appropriate contributions towards infrastructure provision. A master plan, based on a thorough understanding of the current usage of the site and the needs of the existing

iii



and new communities, should be prepared. The TEP open space study shows that there are sufficient sports grounds within a 15 min walk of the site, therefore it is not anticipated that the sports ground will remain, the allotments however should be retained and are identified as Local Open Space on the Policies Map. The site should be designed so as to provide a green Infrastructure corridor through the site. This could potentially provide a buffer to the industrial estate.

10.4.3 Access could be shared between Nest Lane and Finedon Road, but must avoid direct links that would encourage rat-running. Footpaths and cycleway links should ensure connectivity to the surrounding areas and particularly ensure safe routes to local schools. A mix of housing types sizes and tenures should be provided and in accordance with Policy H 3 a proportion of the dwellings should be specifically to meet the needs of older households.

Policy Site 5

Land Between Finedon Road and Nest Lane

A comprehensive master plan should be prepared for the site to deliver dwellings and open space. Proposals should provide for:

- A. Vehicular access from Finedon Road and Nest Lane but without direct links to avoid rat running;
- B. Retention of the area of active allotments identified as Local Open Space on the Policies Map; and
- C. A green Infrastructure corridor through the site.

10.5 Park Farm Way/Shelley Road

- 10.5.1 The site comprises 28.5 ha of agricultural land. Residential development on this site would form a logical extension of the existing Shelley Road/Queensway housing area. The land is allocated for development in the adopted Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan (Policy U7). Whilst the site is greenfield, it is well contained by Park Farm Way, which would form a logical boundary to the development, and is located adjacent to the Sainsbury's supermarket on Northampton Road. The land is elevated with long views across the town and surrounding countryside. A stream runs along the northern and eastern boundaries with trees forming a linear park with biodiversity value. An established hedge with trees crosses the site aligned with a public footpath.
- **10.5.2** In 2007 a consultation event, involving several key stakeholders and supported by Natural England, was held in order to establish possible development principles for the site. The outcome of this 'concept statement' can be viewed on the council's <u>website</u>. Many of the principles remain relevant.



- 10.5.3 The development should provide physical and functional links between the new and existing communities, and should enhance the quality of the existing open space. Principal access should be from Park Farm Way. Park Farm Way will need to be widened to accommodate the wider growth of the town and the development will need to accommodate this, where required. Footpath and cycleway links should ensure connectivity to the existing built up area and in particular provide a route to Ruskin primary schools. Proximity to the A509 (Park Farm Way) means that a noise assessment will be necessary to identify any mitigation measures that may be required.
- **10.5.4** The linear park should be widened and developed with recreational spaces and new habitats including ponds and be used for sustainable drainage. The existing hedge should be retained and reinforced with further planting. A significant landscape buffer should be provided alongside Park Farm Way. A mix of housing types sizes and tenures should be provided and in accordance with Policy H 3, a proportion of the dwellings should be specifically to meet the needs of older households.
- 10.5.5 A planning application has recently been submitted for this site for up to 600 dwellings.

Policy Site 6

Park Farm Way/Shelley Road

Residential proposals on the site should provide for:

- A. Principle vehicular access from Park Farm Way;
- B. Pedestrian and cycleway access to the existing built up area;
- C. The need to accommodate future widening of Park Farm Way;
- D. A linear park/green infrastructure corridor along the stream; and
- E. A significant landscape buffer alongside Park Farm Way.

10.6 East of Eastfield Road

- **10.6.1** The site measures 10.9ha in total and is located to the rear of residential properties fronting Finedon Road to the north and Eastfield Road to the west. The main railway line defines the site's eastern boundary. The site was part of a larger area allocated for development in the Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan under Policy U20. A development brief was prepared for the site and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2006. Many of the principles of the adopted policy and brief remain valid. The area to the south has consent for residential development and is currently under construction.
- **10.6.2** The area is a mixture of allotments, and industrial units. Much of the area is underused or vacant. Development provides an opportunity to improve a run down area. A comprehensive approach to masterplanning the area should ensure that areas are not left landlocked or underutilised. Any change of use of existing employment units on the site, in accordance with



Policy E 3, will be expected to be for housing purposes. The allotments that are used should be retained, disused allotments for which there is no demand, could be redeveloped for housing or form open space for the wider scheme. The existing adopted policy requires retention of at least 2.5ha of allotments. It is apparent that the number of allotments in active use has declined since that policy was prepared. It is therefore considered reasonable that a minimum of 1.5ha of allotments should be retained. The former quarry pit forms the central focus of the larger site. Dwellings should be designed were possible to overlook the central open space.

- **10.6.3** Development proposals should ensure connectivity to the committed development to the south and the existing built up area. Principal access should be from Finedon Road but there should also be connections to the new housing to the south. A footpath/cycleway route should be provided linking to the Finedon Road Industrial Estate to the north and the railway station to the south.
- **10.6.4** A mix of housing types sizes and tenures should be provided and in accordance with Policy H 3 a proportion of the dwellings should be specifically to meet the needs of older households.
- **10.6.5** Proximity to the railway means that a noise assessment will be necessary to identify any mitigation measures that may be required.

Policy Site 7

East of Eastfield Road

Residential proposals should provide for:

- A. Retention of a minimum of 1.5ha of allotments;
- B. A footpath/cycleroute link between Finedon Road Industrial Estate and the railway; and
- C. Any changes of use of existing employment uses in accordance with Policy H 3 are for housing.

10.7 Milner Road, Finedon

10.7.1 Located off Milner Road, Finedon, the site is approximately 3.7ha. The Finedon area has been subject to historic opencast ironstone workings and the frontage of the site was occupied by houses and lock-up garages. These have since been demolished. This part of the site now has some mature trees and undergrowth and one of the trees is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. The south eastern part of the site is currently in agricultural use. The scheme should seek to retain as many of the natural features as possible. The site is owned by two separate landowners, but, should be subject to a scheme which allows comprehensive development of the site.



10.7.2 Access should be from Milner Road. The site should provide for a mix of housing types and tenures which reflect the needs identified in the <u>Finedon Housing Needs Assessment</u>. (iv) The housing capacity of the site should be determined through the planning application process. Depending on the layout and housing mix, the site could deliver up to 90 dwellings.

Policy Site 8

Milner Road, Finedon

Residential proposals should provide for:

- A. A scheme which allows the comprehensive development of the entire site;
- B. Retention of the tree subject to the Tree Preservation Order and as many other natural features as practical;
- C. Access from Milner Road; and
- D. Housing mix to reflect the needs identified in the Finedon Housing Needs Assessment.

10.8 Sywell Aerodrome

- **10.8.1** Sywell Aerodrome is located in the west of the borough and is in close proximity to Sywell and Sywell Old Village, which lie to the south west of the site.
- **10.8.2** The site was developed from a flying club established in 1928. Today the site is an important rural location for aviation and other employment uses, covering around 24ha of land. Some of the buildings may be of historical value to the site.
- **10.8.3** Rural employment areas such as Sywell Aerodrome play an important part in the borough's economy. Maintaining and providing employment within the rural areas can increase the resilience of the rural economy and offer sustainable employment opportunities. Because Sywell Aerodrome is an established site this provides an optimum location for sustainable rural development.
- **10.8.4** The site is important to the borough and the wider area as it is the county's only significant airfield base. As such, it can provide air taxi and freight services for local businesses. It is not only a significant rural employer, but is also important in terms of tourism within the borough due to the aviation museum and air shows throughout the year.
- **10.8.5** Policy 25 of the JCS supports opportunities to develop and diversify the rural economy that are of an appropriate scale for their locality and respect the environment and surrounding character.



10.8.6 The Employment Land Review (ELR)^(v) assesses Sywell Aerodrome in terms of its location, accessibility, and quality of environment, market attractiveness; mix of uses; occupancy levels and other criteria. The ELR found that Sywell Aerodrome has development potential subject to addressing the constraints of road capacity, particularly for HGV's, and the potential impact on the local amenity of Sywell. The site is in good occupancy; however some of the older buildings do require modernisation. A recent report entitled Assessment of Aviation Capacity and Infrastructure for Northamptonshire (2015) by Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP) found that it was unlikely that an expansion of the aviation capacity at Sywell Aerodrome to handle larger business jets and cargo aircraft would be profitable, and that there was not a justifiable need for this in the area. Therefore it is unlikely that the site will be developed further in terms of large scale aviation, notwithstanding this the council would support viable development proposals involving aviation and employment uses at the site that would support the rural economy.

10.8.7 Sywell Aerodrome has previously been subject to site specific local policy that sought to support appropriate development of aviation and employment proposals and limit inappropriate development in the location, such as residential uses. There has recently been an appeal granted for housing adjacent to the aerodrome, and within the previous defined boundary of the site. The council would seek to resist residential development with the Aerodrome in the future so that the site may be retained as a sustainable rural location for employment and aviation use, which supports the rural economy. In order to continue to protect Sywell Aerodrome, the policy must be bought up-to-date to be in line with the NPPF and Policy 25 of the JCS.

10.8.8 Development proposals which modernise the industrial estate or enhance the physical environment and infrastructure within Sywell Aerodrome will be supported. To enhance the attraction and sustainability of Sywell Aerodrome for future investment and to support current and future occupiers some small scale ancillary uses will also be permitted.

Policy Site 9

Sywell Aerodrome

Development proposals at Sywell Aerodrome as outlined on the Policies Map, including new buildings; extensions; and changes of use, associated with aviation and other employment uses that modernise and enhance the physical environment and infrastructure at Sywell Aerodrome will be supported. This is providing there is no conflict with the overall function and developability of the area and surrounding land uses.

The council would particularly support developments that provide jobs in high-end aviation, engineering and design, training and corporate entertainment.

Ancillary services, such as cafes or crèches, will be supported where they are small scale, primarily meet the needs of the businesses at Sywell Aerodrome, and enhance the attraction and sustainability of the area for investment.

v http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7027/employment_land_review_background_paper_-_april_2016



11. Delivering Infrastructure

- **11.0.1** Paragraph 162 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to work with neighbouring authorities and providers to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for:
- transport; water supply; waste water and its treatment; energy (including heat);
 telecommunications; utilities; waste; health; social care; education; flood risk and coastal change management; and its ability to meet forecast demands; and
- Take account of the need for strategic infrastructure including nationally significant infrastructure within their areas.
- 11.0.2 The local plan will contain the key infrastructure requirements on which the delivery of the plan will depend. It will identify any uncertainties over key infrastructure and address the implications of these to the delivery of the plan, including making contingency arrangements and alternative strategies. To achieve this, the council will actively engage with the relevant infrastructure and service providers to understand their investment plans and work with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) in considering strategic issues and prospects for future investment in infrastructure.
- 11.0.3 The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) gives guidance on how to objectively assess the infrastructure requirements and develop an infrastructure delivery programme. It states that local plans should be clear, for at least the first five years, what infrastructure is required to meet vision and policy objectives, who is going to fund and provide it, and how it relates to the anticipated rate and phasing of development. For later periods, lesser detail may be provided due to uncertainty with infrastructure provision. The infrastructure delivery programme will be flexible to allow for regular updates on new developments and funding regimes.
- **11.0.4** Working with partner authorities, including Wellingborough, the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) has developed an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the JCS. The IDP sets out what infrastructure is currently available and the types of infrastructure that will be required to deliver the growth planned to 2031, including the funding and time scales of infrastructure development.
- 11.0.5 Much of the infrastructure required for delivery of growth in Wellingborough is identified in the IDP, except the site specific infrastructure that may be specific to particular developments at a local level. This infrastructure will be identified in due course as the vision, objectives and policies in the plan become clearer. However, much of the infrastructure requirements identified in the IDP are an update of work that was carried out in relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), available on the council website. (i)

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6160/wellingborough infrastructure document



12. Monitoring and Review

- **12.0.1** It will be necessary to monitor policies within the local plan to determine the extent to which they are, or not working. This is an important process to gauge whether part, or all, of the local plan will need to be reviewed in future.
- **12.0.2** The local plan is operating within a Local Development Scheme (LDS) alongside North Northamptonshire's three other local authorities (Corby, East Northamptonshire and Kettering).
- **12.0.3** Within the JCS a framework has been established to monitor the implementation and impact of local planning policy and change will be reported through the Authorities' Monitoring Report (AMRs). The overarching monitoring framework will broadly form the basis for monitoring the policies of the local plan. However, given the strategic nature of the JCS, it may be necessary to identify some more localised indicators specific to Wellingborough which will require monitoring going forward. The intention is that any such indicators will be monitored by the planning policy team and fed into subsequent AMRs to highlight plan implementation.
- **12.0.4** Further details on the local approach to monitoring will be available in due course as the JPU finalises production of the JCS and feedback is received on the various consultation stages of the PBW.
- **12.0.5** The critical areas of the plan to be monitored will include:
- Housing completions by type, location and the availability of land for housing in the future;
- The completion of serviced employment floorspace, creation of jobs and availability and availability of land for future employment use;
- The delivery of floorspace to support retail, community and healthcare land use;
- The protection, enhancement and creation of assets in the natural environment;
- The delivery of major infrastructure projects and provision of financial contribution towards such scheme;



Appendix A. Glossary

Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
	Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.
	Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
	Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.
	Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as "low cost market" housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes. (Source NPPF)
AMR Authorities' Monitoring Report	A report prepared that reviews: progress on preparing documents set out in the LDS; how policies are being implemented; the number of dwellings delivered; progress on any Neighbourhood Plans or Orders; any CIL reporting requirements and action taken under the duty to cooperate.
Biodiversity	The variety of life in all its forms



	Comparison Shopping	Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area. There is currently no CIL adopted in this area.
	Community Right to Build	The Localism Act allows for community organisations to bring forward a 'community right to build order' which is a type of neighbourhood development order. This allows certain community organisations to bring forward smaller-scale development on a specific site, without the need for planning permission. This gives communities the freedom to develop, for instance, small-scale housing and other facilities that they want.
	Convenience Shopping	Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday essential items including food and drink, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.
CSS	Core Spatial Strategy	The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy adopted in June 2008 which covers the period 2001 - 2021. It is currently being reviewed by the JPU and will be replaced by the JCS.
	Development Plan	This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and is defined by section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
	Geodiversity	The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms
	Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits
JCS	Joint Core Strategy	The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. This is in the process of being prepared and covers the period 2011 - 2031. It will replace the adopted CSS
JPU	Joint Planning Unit	The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit is a local partnership between Corby, Wellingborough, Kettering and East Northamptonshire councils with Northamptonshire County Council. Its key responsibility is to review the Core Strategy. The JPU reports to a Joint Planning Committee made up of three elected members from each of the councils.



LDS	Local Development Scheme	The document which sets out which development plan documents are to be prepared and includes a timetable for their production.
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership	A body designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in the area. The local LEP is the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP).
	Local Plan	The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In this borough it is intended that the Local Plan will comprise the Joint Core Strategy (Part 1) and the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (Part 2).
LPA	Local Planning Authority	The Borough Council of Wellingborough is the local planning authority for the borough and has all planning powers for all development in its area with the exception of: minerals and waste disposal which is the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council and the preparation of the Core Strategy which is the responsibility of the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee.
	Main Town Centre Uses	Main town centre uses include retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities). (Source NPPF)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions
NIA	Nature Improvement Area	Inter-connected networks of wildlife habitats intended to re-establish thriving wildlife populations and help species respond to the challenges of climate change. The Nene Valley NIA has been designated to deliver a step change in nature



		conservation, where local organisations have come together with a shared vision for the natural environment.	
	Neighbourhood Plans	A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Once made they form part of the development plan for the area.	
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance	A web-based resource setting out national planning practice guidance.	
	Policies Map	An Ordnance Survey map which illustrates graphically the policies in the development plan.	
PSA	Primary Shopping Area	Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontages). (Source NPPF)	
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	This is a statement setting out how the local planning authority intends to involve the community in the preparation of the Local Plan and all development control decisions.	
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Required under the terms of the European Directive 2001/42/EC for 'environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use'.	
SA	Sustainability Appraisal	An assessment of the impact that policies and proposals within a local plan could have on the environment, economy and society.	
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	Documents that add further detail to policies in the local plan. They are a material consideration in planning decisions, but are not subject to independent examination and are not part of the development plan.	
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to conserve their wildlife or geology.	
SPA	Special Protection Area	Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA has been designated due to the importance of over wintering birds in the area.	



SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	An assessment of the full housing needs for a housing market area. It should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	An assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.
	Town Centre	Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres. (Source NPPF)
TCAAP	Town Centre Area Action Plan	Adopted by the Borough Council of Wellingborough on 21st July 2009, the document set the direction for the future development of the town centre to 2021.



Appendix B. Consultation Undertaken

Introduction

B.0.1 This section summarises the consultation and engagement carried out on the plan. All consultation will be carried out in accordance with the adopted North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement.

Scoping Consultation

- **B.0.2** Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 requires that we notify various bodies and stakeholders that we are preparing a plan and invite them to comment about what that plan ought to contain. A <u>document</u> was prepared setting out the anticipated content of the plan and consultation took place from the 21 March 2014 to 2 May 2014.
- **B.0.3** The borough council received 129 representations from over 40 respondents. A report on the representations received from stakeholders including officer responses can be found on the council's website through the link below:

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/6386/regulation 18 representations report

Issues and Options Consultation

- **B.0.4** The Issues and Options consultation involved asking the public and other stakeholders about what the main issues and options are for taking the plan forward. This is a non-statutory stage but is considered helpful to allow the public and other stakeholders to engage in the early part of the plan and help to shape how it will evolve.
- **B.0.5** Consultation on the Issues and Options took place for a period of six weeks from 26 January 2015 to 9 March 2015.
- **B.0.6** An Issues and options paper together with the following background papers were available on the council's <u>website</u> and for inspection at libraries and council offices receptions.
- Wellingborough Town Housing Methodology and Site Selection Background Paper
- Wellingborough Rural Housing Methodology and Site Selection Background Paper
- Employment Allocations Methodology and Site Selection Background Paper
- Village Boundaries Background Paper
- **B.0.7** The public were made aware of the consultation using a variety of media including the council's website, posters in an empty retail unit, a press release, an article in the Link magazine and tweets from the council's Twitter account. Exhibitions were also held across the town centre with the aim of informing people that the consultation was taking place.

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/info/1004/planning_policy/1277/local_plan_engagement_stages/3

Consultation Undertaken



B.0.8 A total of 79 consultees responded to the issues and options document making a total of 663 comments. These have all been taken into account together with other evidence that has been prepared to produce an emerging approach to the plan. Responses to the comments received at the issues and options can be found on the council's website through the link below:

https://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/7030/issues_and_options_responses

B.0.9 Table B.1 below shows the List of Consultees who we wish to engage with at each consultation stage. This excludes individuals or interested parties who wish to be notified of the consultations.

Table B.1: List of Consultees

Engagement at Consultation Stage for Local Plans	Who this means
Specific consultation bodies	 Environment Agency Historic England Natural England Network Rail Highways England Local authorities, parish councils and policing body in or adjoining the planning authority area Local county council Communication operators/facility owners (eg mobile phones) Electricity, gas, sewerage and water companies Homes and Communities Agency The National Health Service The Coal Authority and Marine Management Organisation also have to be consulted
General consultation bodies	 Voluntary/community/local charitable bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the authority's area Bodies which represent the interests of the elderly in the authority's area Local schools in the authority's area Bodies representing racial, ethnic or national groups in the authority's area Bodies representing the interests of different religious groups in the authority"s area Bodies representing disabled persons in the authority's area

Consultation Undertaken

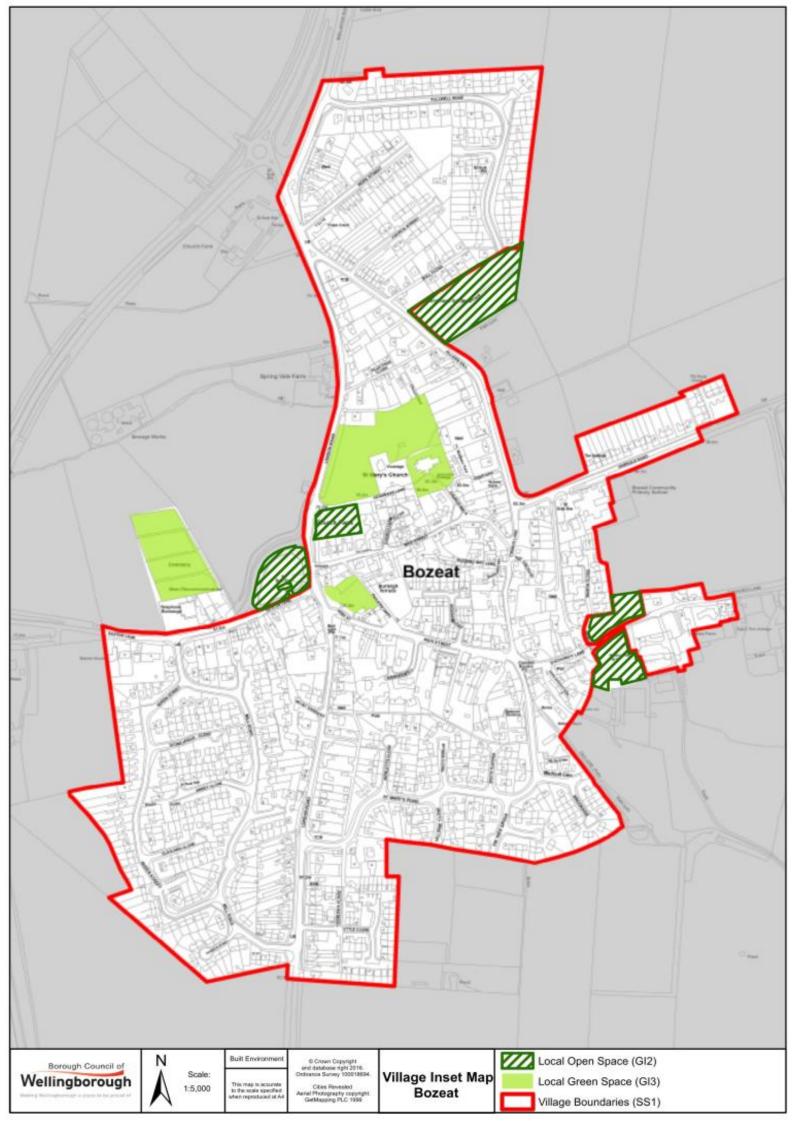


Engagement at Consultation Stage for Local Plans	Who this means
	 Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people in the authority's area Bodies representing business in the area- i.e. Local Enterprise Partnerships, Chambers of Commerce Landowners and developers with interests in the authority's area and bodies that represent, such as agents Residents groups in the local authority area Neighbourhood Planning Groups
Other Consultation bodies	Other persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area from which the council consider it appropriate to invite representations.



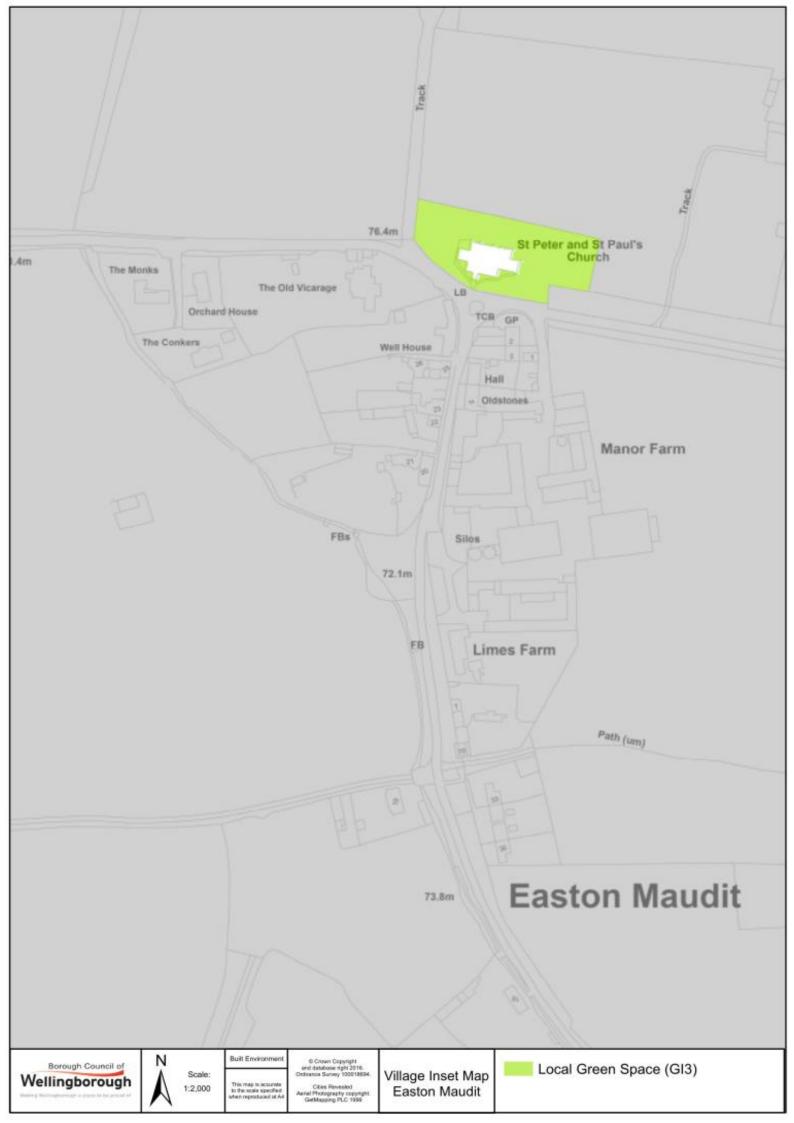
Appendix C. Draft Policies Maps

C.1 Bozeat



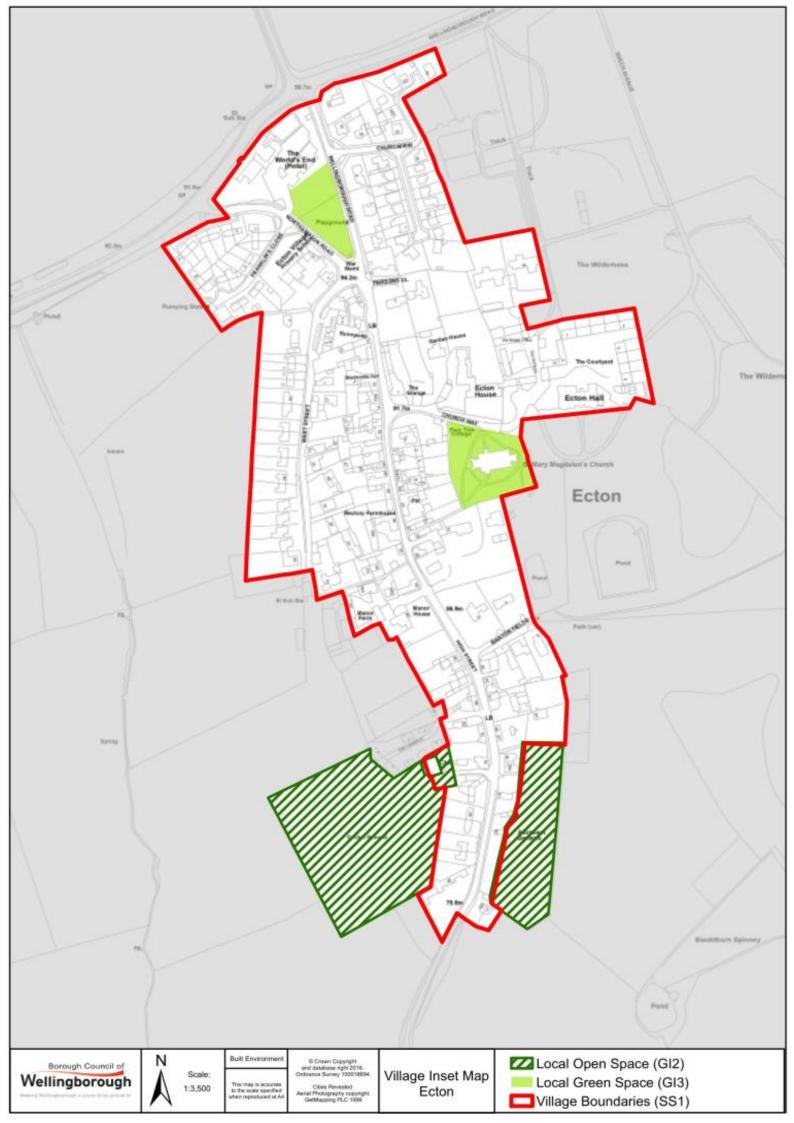


C.2 Easton Maudit



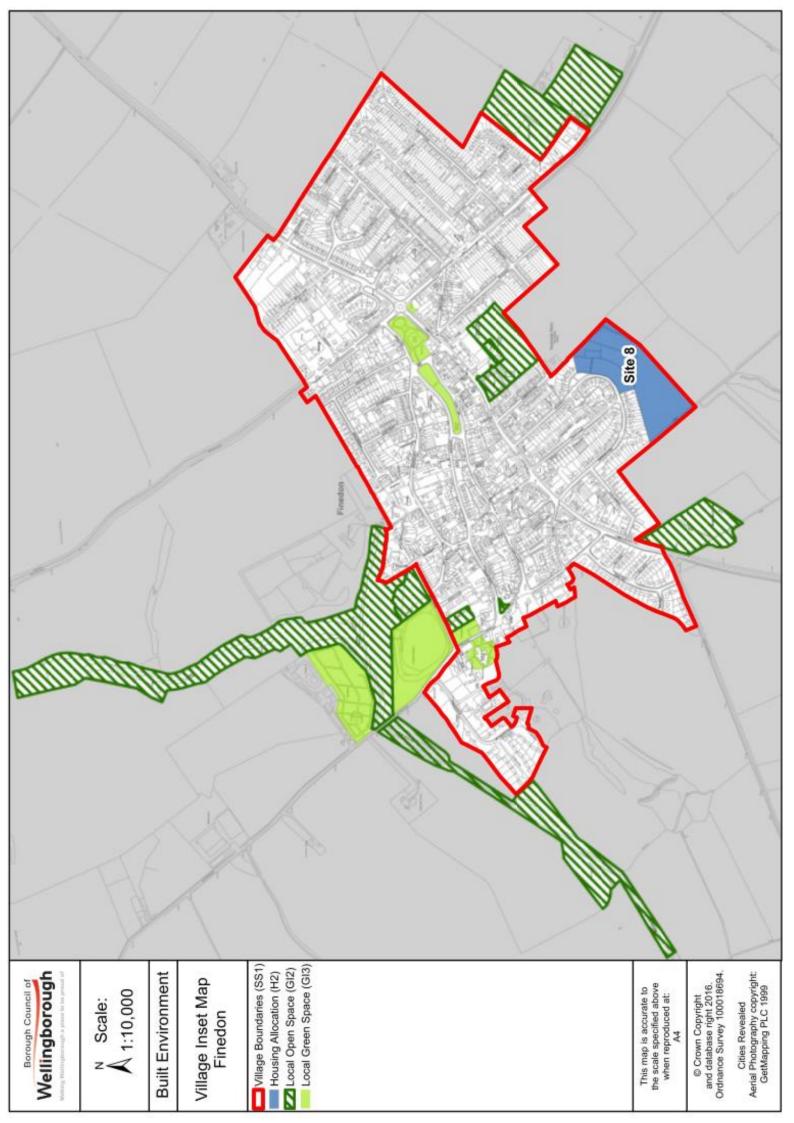


C.3 Ecton



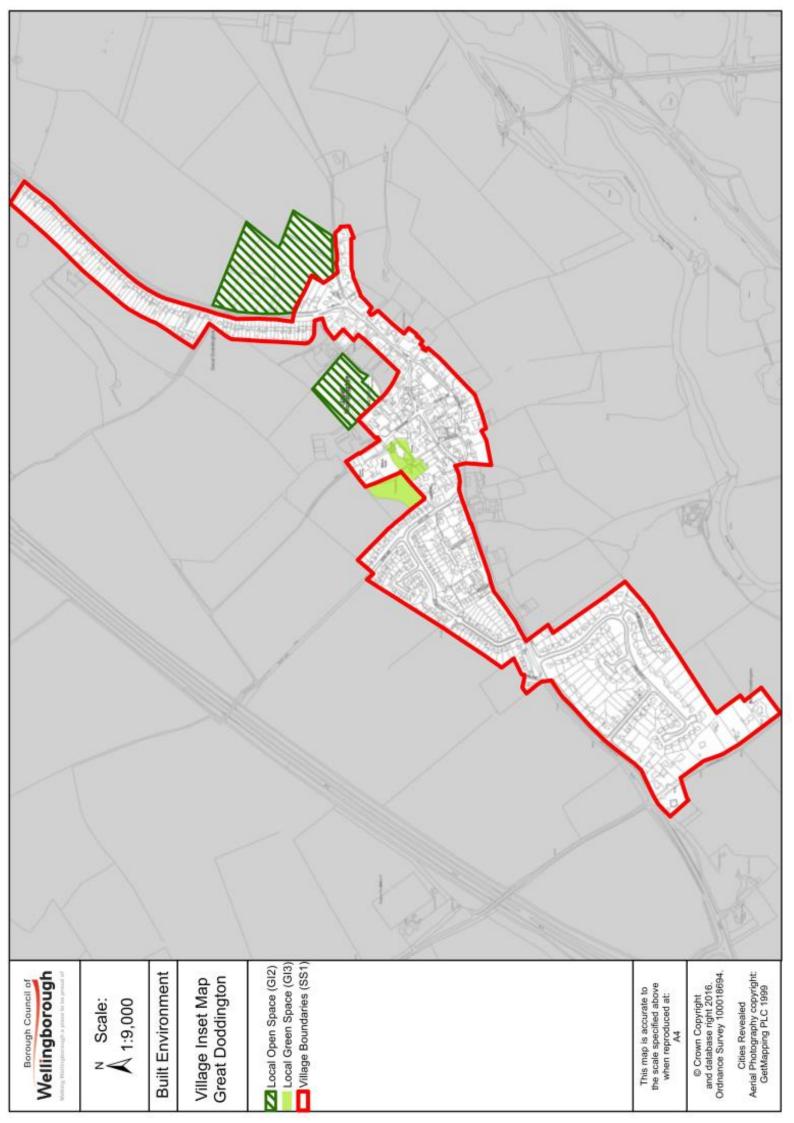


C.4 Finedon





C.5 Great Doddington



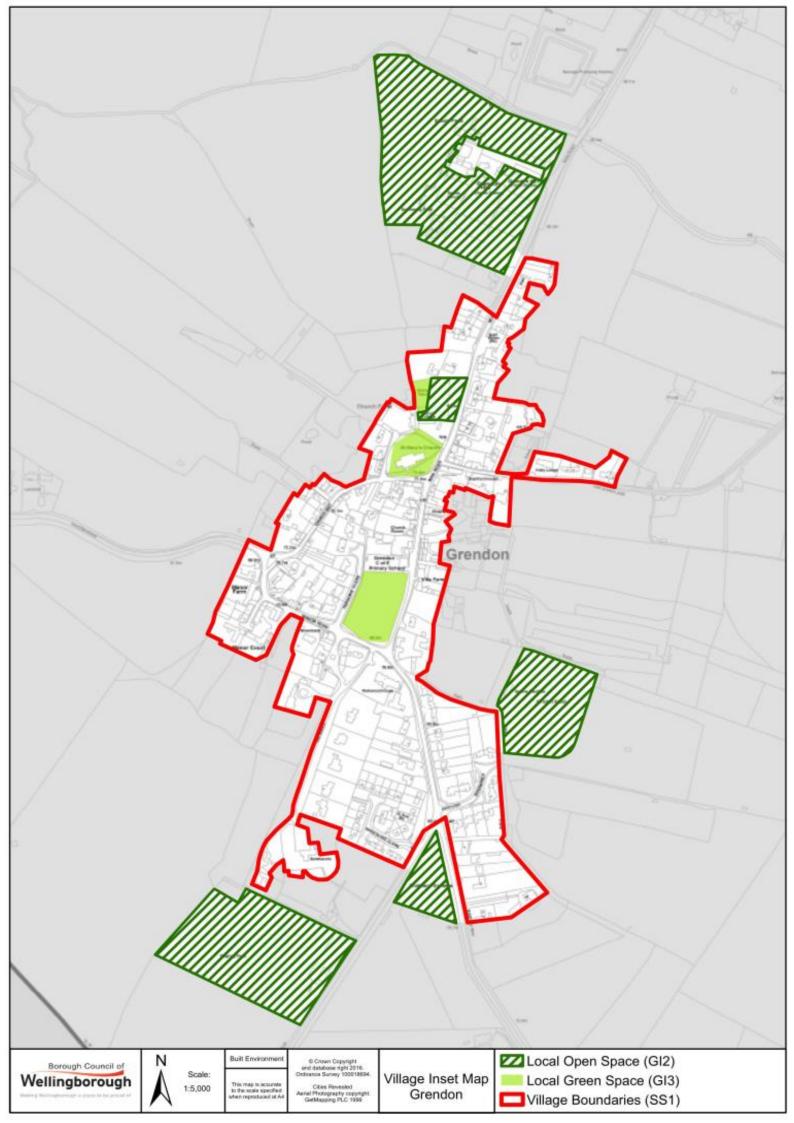


C.6 Great Harrowden





C.7 Grendon



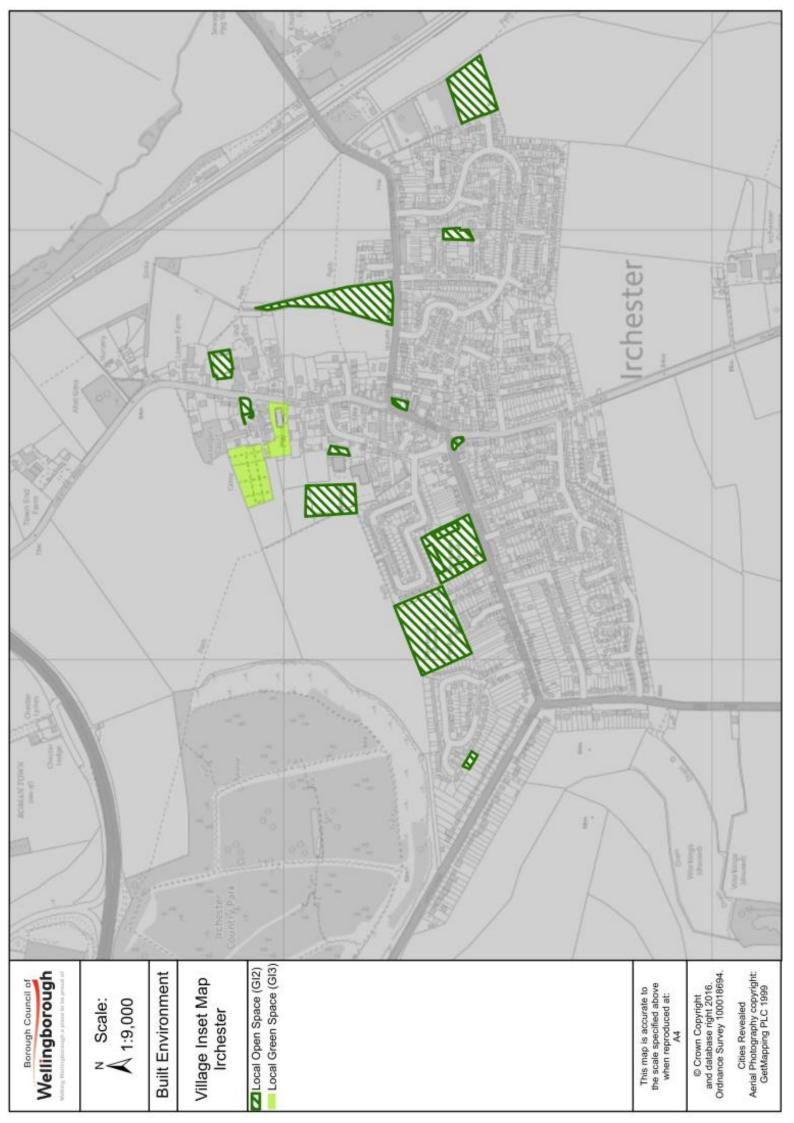


C.8 Hardwick



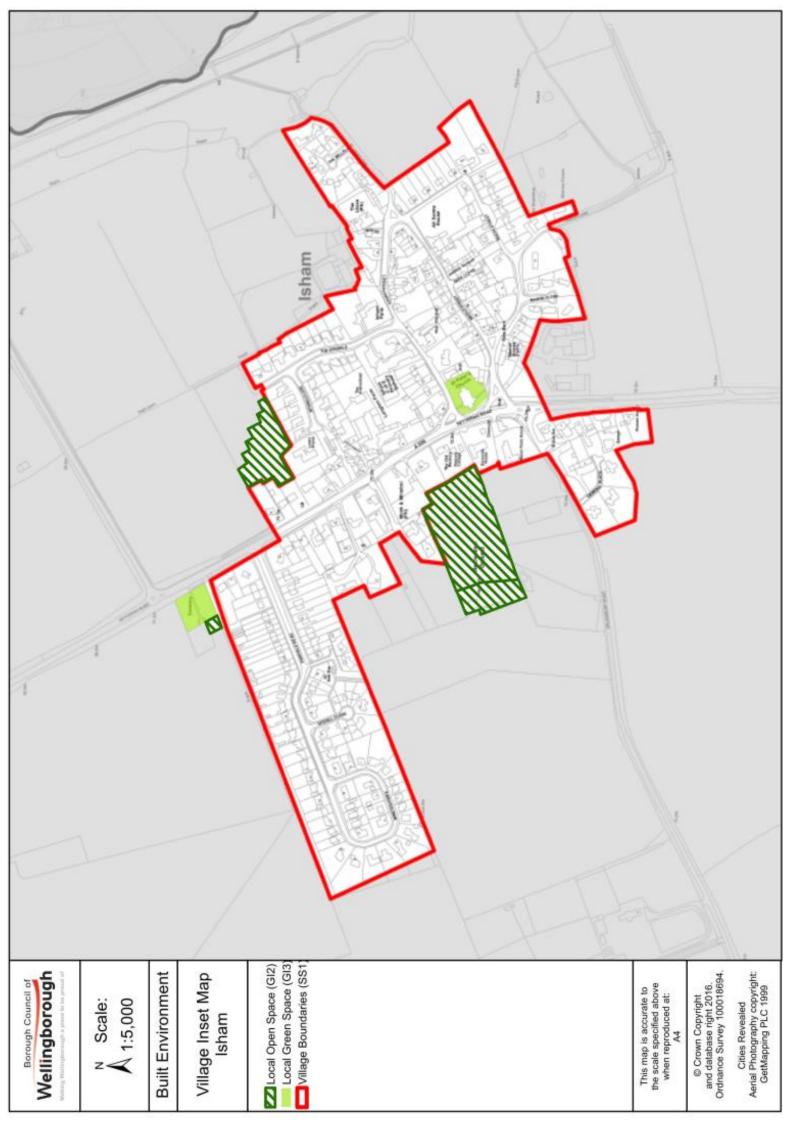


C.9 Irchester



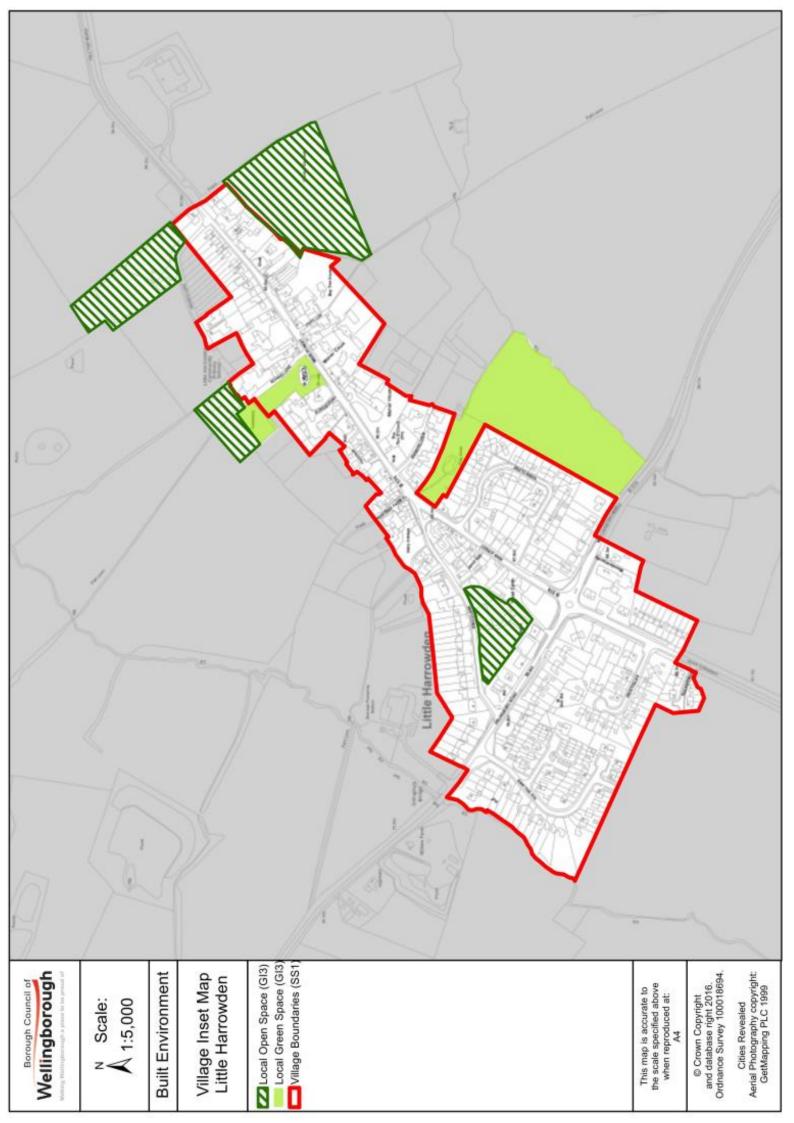


C.10 Isham





C.11 Litttle Harrowden



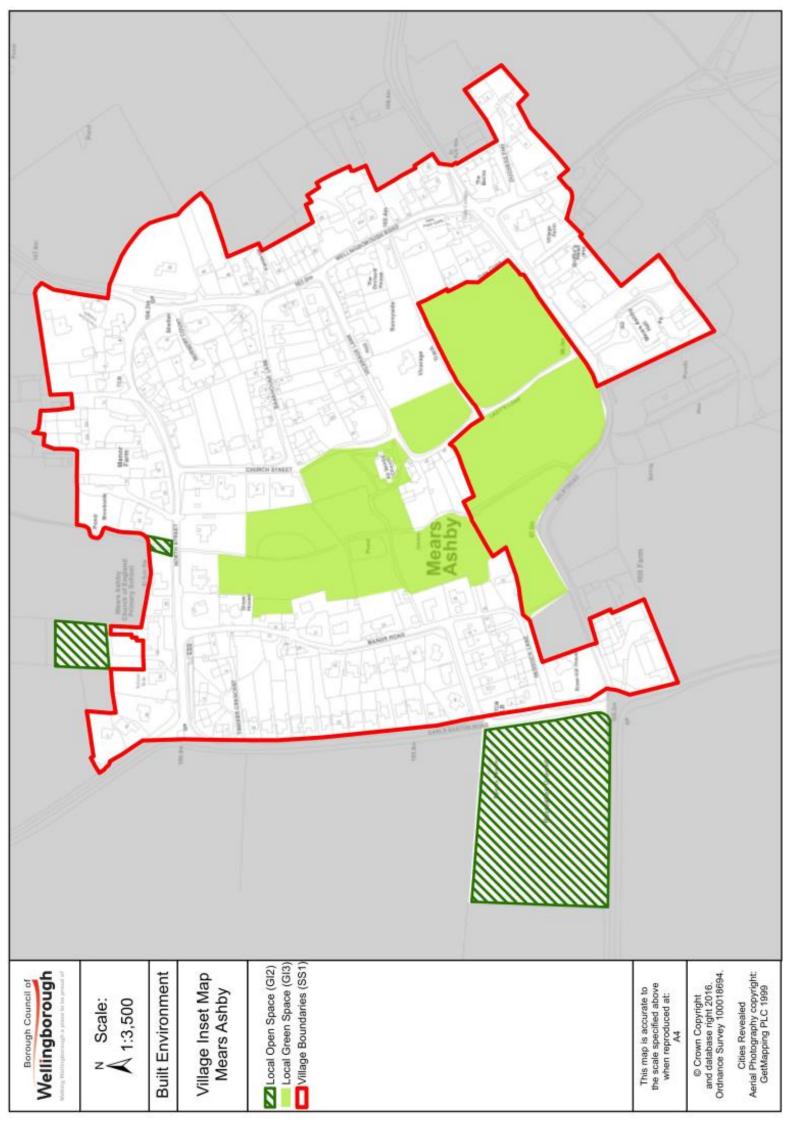


C.12 Little Irchester



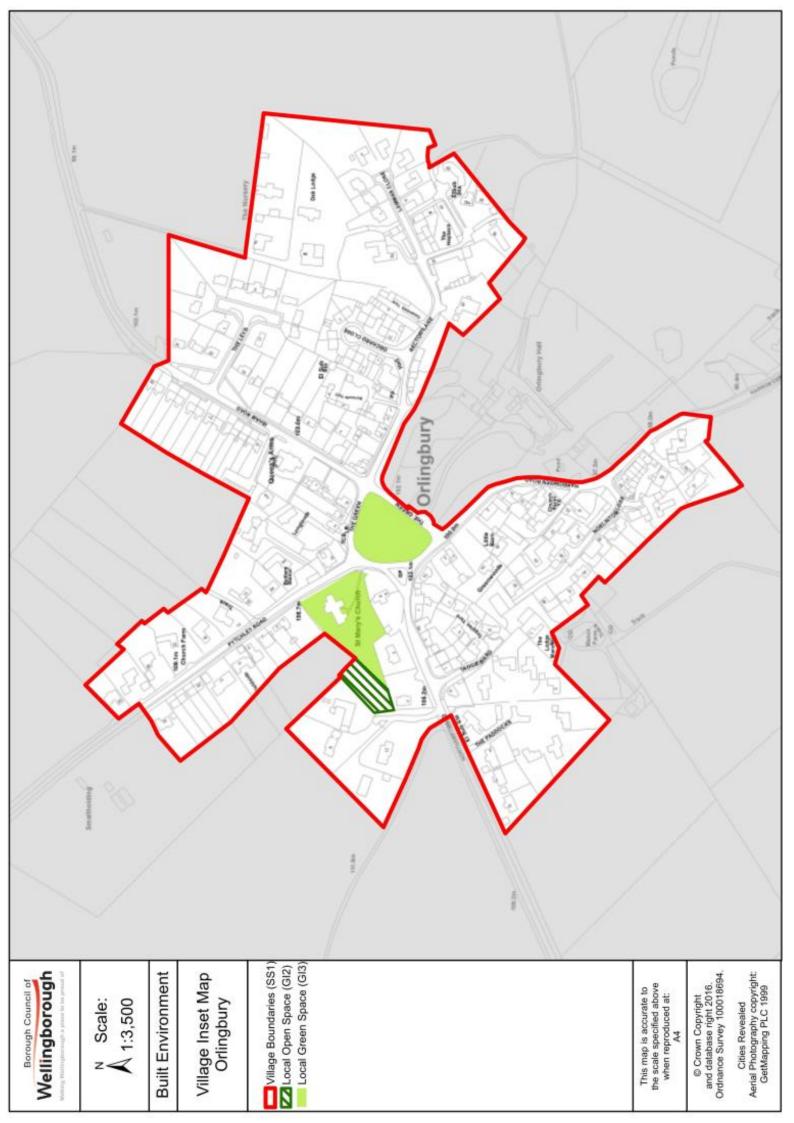


C.13 Mears Ashby



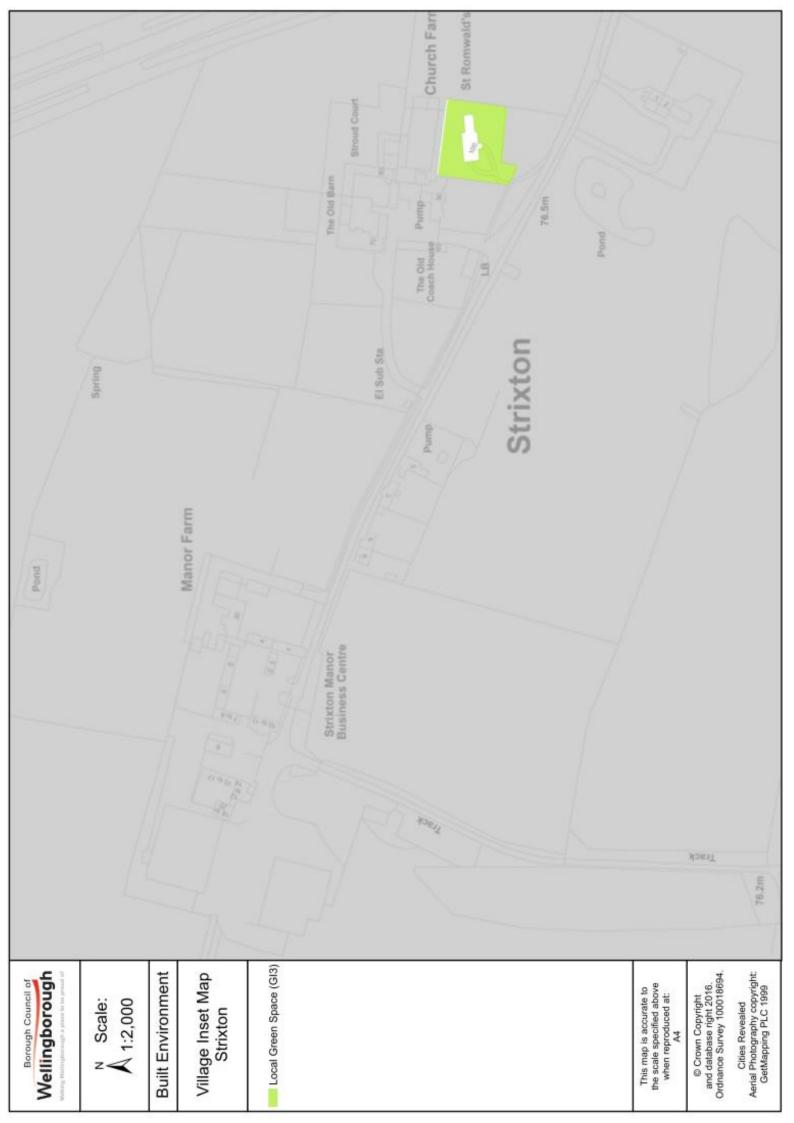


C.14 Orlingbury



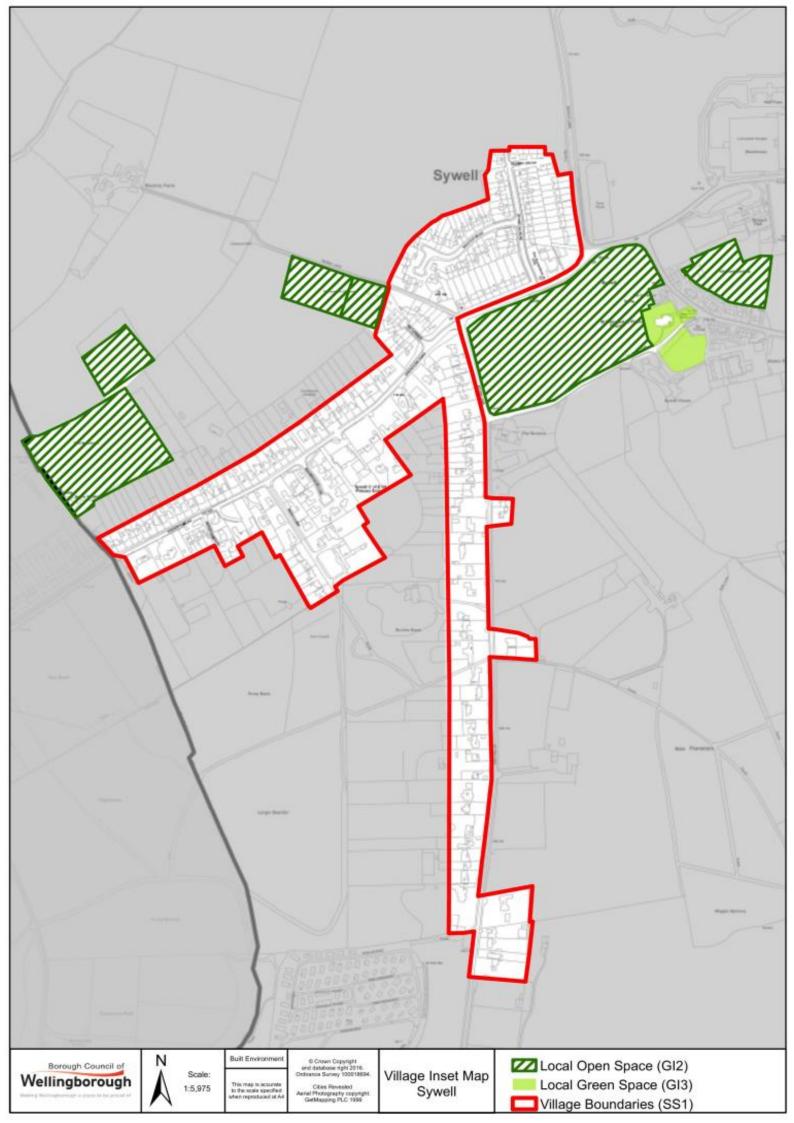


C.15 Strixton



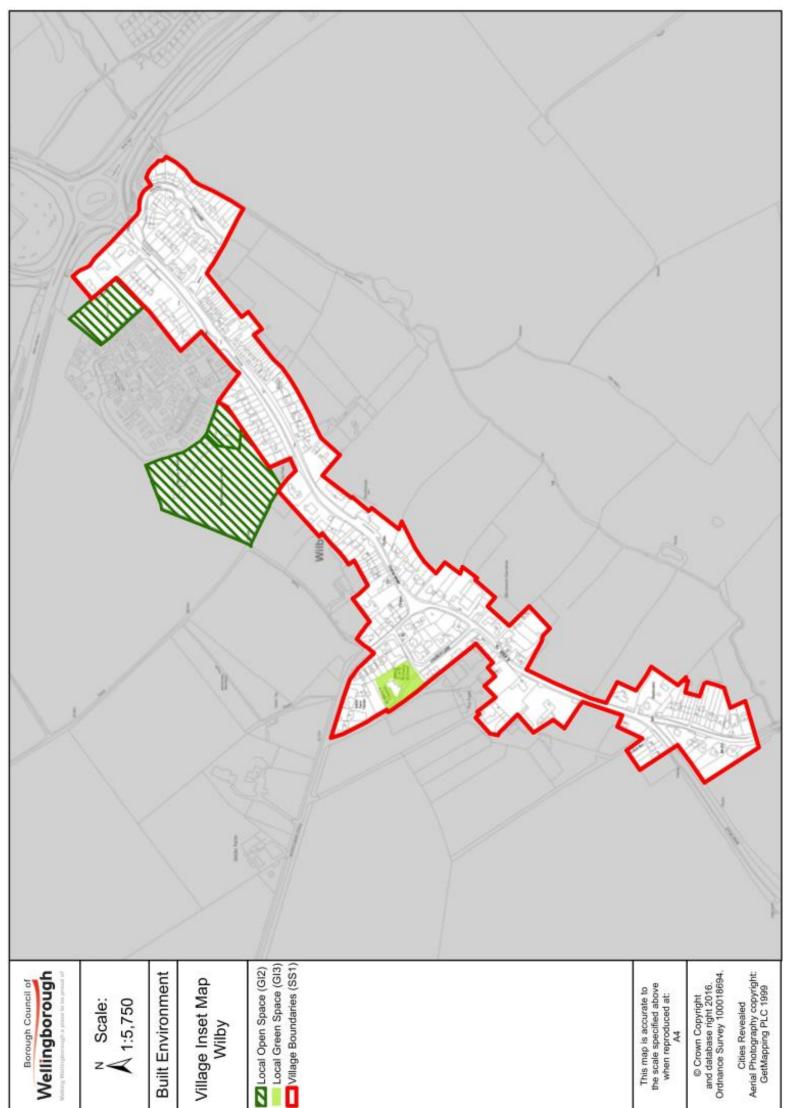


C.16 Sywell



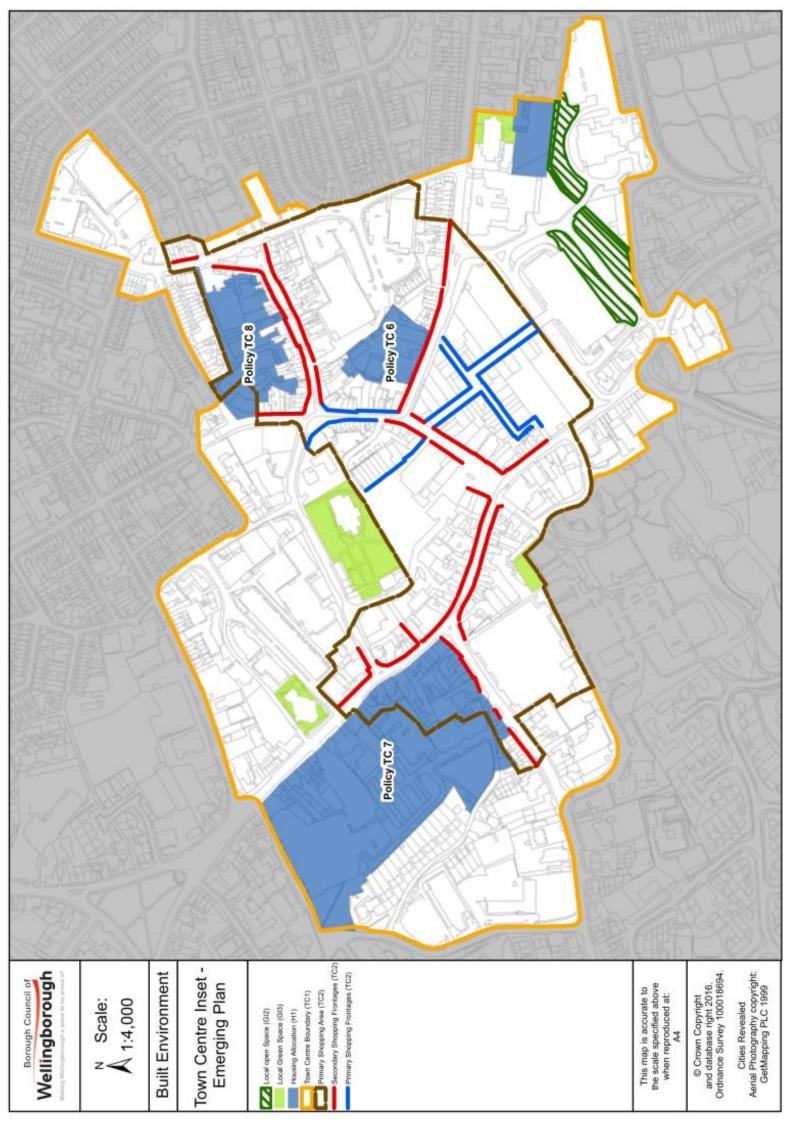


C.17 Wilby





C.18 Wellingborough - Town Centre





C.19 Wellingborough - Town

Womingborough fown moot



· martine in

Service Contraction THE RESERVE

THE RESIDENCE IN - EXPENSE.

Na friends in large





C.20 Wellingborough - Borough

Borough i onoice map

