

Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2026



**Basic Conditions Statement
October 2018**

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Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Regulation 14 of Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012

Produced by the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee on behalf of Huntingdon Town Council:

2017/18

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Councillor Ann Blackwell
Councillor Jay Dyne
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Councillor Leedo George
Councillor Stuart Hassell
Councillor Patrick Kadewere
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2018/19

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The Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee has been supported by Hayley Burns from Huntingdon Town Council.

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Introduction

1. This Statement has been prepared to accompany the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Development Plan (“the Neighbourhood Plan”) under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”). The relevant local planning authority is Huntingdonshire District Council.
2. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Huntingdon Town Council, a qualifying body, (Section 38A(12) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004) for the Neighbourhood Area covering the Parish (Town) of Huntingdon, as designated by Huntingdonshire District Council on 23 April 2015. The name of the neighbourhood area is the 'Huntingdon Neighbourhood Area'. It does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there are no other neighbourhood development plans in place within the neighbourhood area.
3. The policies described in the Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area only. The document sets out the period of the Neighbourhood Plan which is from 2018 to 2026.
4. The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
5. The decision to develop a neighbourhood plan was based on ‘adding local value and needs specific to the Town of Huntingdon’ that are not covered in the NPPF or other parts of the statutory Development Plan.
6. The Statement addresses each of the four ‘basic conditions’ required of the Regulations and explains how the Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
7. The Regulations state that a neighbourhood plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
 - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
 - The making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - The making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);

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- The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
8. The Town Council established a Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee which is a working group made up of Town Councillors and local residents to progress the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee would be the main decision making body with additional input, support and scrutiny from the Elected Members of the entire Town Council.
 9. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan prepared by the local planning authority (Huntingdonshire District Council). Huntingdonshire District Council defined which policies are considered to be 'strategic' with regard to the production of the Neighbourhood Plan.
 10. The Neighbourhood Plan must also be in conformity with Cambridgeshire County Council's Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Specific Proposals Plan.

Conformity with National Planning Policy

11. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of July 2018. It is also mindful of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) published by the Government in April 2014 (as amended) in respect of formulating neighbourhood plans.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

12. Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan reference is made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
13. The NPPF provides a framework to produce locally distinctive Neighbourhood Plans which reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. The NPPF is clear that the planning system remains plan led. As set out in paragraph 2 of the NPPF, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 remains unchanged and requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
14. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. One of the most widely used definitions of sustainable development comes from the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission), 'Our Common Future' (1987), which defines it as "*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*". A more detailed definition is offered in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, Securing the Future, which includes the following five guiding principles for sustainable development.

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15. Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society - Meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion and creating equal opportunity for all.

Using Sound Science Responsibly - Ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of strong scientific evidence, whilst taking into account scientific uncertainty (through the precautionary principle) as well as public attitudes and values.

Promoting Good Governance - Actively promoting effective participative systems of levels of society - engaging people's creativity and diversity.

Achieving a Sustainable Economy - Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy which provides prosperity and governance in all opportunities for all, and in which environmental and social costs fall on those who impose them (polluter pays) and efficient resource use is incentivised.

Living within Environmental Limits - Respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity - to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.

16. The Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development.

NPPF Paragraphs 10, 11, and 12

17. Having a neighbourhood plan in place with suitable planning policies ensures that local needs are considered taking account the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and any strategic planning policy already in existence.

NPPF Paragraph 13

18. The Neighbourhood Plan positively supports the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy, the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan and the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and 2002 Local Plan Alteration. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to add local character and needs that are not covered in the other documents in the Development Plan.

NPPF Paragraph 24, 25, 26 and 27

19. Working with the Local Planning Authority has ensured that there are no conflicting elements within the Neighbourhood Plan. If agreed at referendum and once made the Neighbourhood Plan should be considered key, alongside any other material considerations in determining planning applications.

NPPF Paragraph 29

20. The Town Council believes that the Neighbourhood Plan has set a vision that reflects the views of the majority of the residents and the objectives and policies of the Plan will help towards delivering that vision for Huntingdon.

NPPF Paragraphs 80, 81 and 82

21. The Town Council considers that the retail, business and employment planning policies within the Neighbourhood Plan sets out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth of the Town.

NPPF Paragraph 85

22. The policies within the Plan, including those relating to retail provision and the town centre will help to deliver a competitive town centre environment and enhance the role and importance of Huntingdon Town Centre.

NPPF Paragraphs 91 and 92

23. The policies within the Plan, including those relating to retail provision and the town centre, infrastructure and the natural and built environment are aimed at facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. The residents' priorities have been taken into account and are reflected within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning Practice Guidance

24. The Planning Practice Guidance sets out the government's advice on how to undertake neighbourhood planning within England. This is set out in detail within Section 41 of Planning Practice Guidance.
25. Planning Practice Guidance highlights that: *“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.”*

General conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy

26. The table set out in Appendix 1 shows how each policy conforms with the relevant strategic policies of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy. Huntingdonshire District Council also proposes that some of the policies and allocations within the Emerging Local Plan to 2036 are to be considered 'strategic' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. Until the Emerging Local Plan to 2036 is adopted the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan has no obligation to be in general conformity to it, but as this will supersede the previous documents, the Neighbourhood Plan has considered how each policy conforms to Local Plan policies.

Contribution to Achieving Sustainable Development

27. Every Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider the need for a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) for the Neighbourhood Plan. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts. Through this approach, the SA for the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to sustainable development.
28. The Neighbourhood Plan achieves positive planning for sustainable development as defined under the NPPF that requires the following aspects to be considered when preparing and neighbourhood plan, 'an economic role', 'a social role' and 'an environmental role'. These factors cannot be considered in isolation as well designed houses and improved environmental aspects can lead to improving the lives and health of residents. Considering the economic, social and environmental roles throughout the neighbourhood plan process can help achieve sustainable development.
29. Part of the Neighbourhood Plan process is to ascertain if a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is needed, and to clarify any environmental impacts the plan may have. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report demonstrates that the Neighbourhood Plan will not have any significant environmental impact.
30. A specific Sustainability Appraisal has not been undertaken as this was not considered a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Neighbourhood Plan has taken account of the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Compatibility with EU Obligations and legislation

31. The Neighbourhood Plan is required to meet EU obligations, Paragraph 8(2)(f) Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
32. The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act 1998.
33. A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report has been produced which advises that the Neighbourhood Plan complies with all appropriate requirements. A Habitat Regulations Assessment has not been undertaken as the Neighbourhood Plan Area does not contain any EU designated sites, neither is it considered to be within influencing distance of any EU designated sites.

Conclusion

34. As a result of the assessment the Neighbourhood Plan-Sub Committee and Huntingdon Town Council consider that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the relevant 'Basic Conditions'.

Appendix One: Conformity with Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

The Table overleaf has assessed our plan's policies in terms of general conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy. In addition to the statutory consideration of the Core Strategy, reference is also made to the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan and the saved Policies of the 1995 Local Plan and 2002 Alteration for completeness.

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	Core Strategy	Huntingdon West AAP	1995 Local Plan	2002 Local Plan Alteration	Emerging Local Plan to 2036
Employment and Investment					
Policy E1 - Opportunities for Employment	CS1, CS3, CS7	HW4, HW5	E1, E2, E7, E11		LP2, LP19
Policy E2 - Business Investment	CS1, CS3, CS7	HW4, HW5	E1, E2, E7, E11		LP2, LP19
Huntingdon Town Centre					
Policy TC1 - Retail Development	CS3, CS8	HW4	S2, S10, S12, S13		LP22
Policy TC2 - Public Realm	CS1, CS8				LP13, LP22
Policy TC3 - St Benedict's Court					LP22
Policy TC4 - Town Centre Car Parking	CS8		T24		
Policy TC5 - Local Neighbourhood Shopping	CS8		S6, S7, S16		
Tourism, Leisure, Sports and Community Facilities					
Policy TL1 - Tourism Development	CS3		R1, To1, To2, To7		LP24
Policy TL2 - Leisure and Community Facilities	CS1		R1, R2		LP22
Policy TL3 - Provision of Sports Facilities					LP24
Policy TL4 - Protection of Community Assets	CS1				LP23
The Natural, Built and Historic Environment					
Policy NE1 - Local Green Space	CS1, CS9				LP3, LP34
Policy NE2 - Open Space and Green Infrastructure	CS1, CS9	HW6, HW7, HW8	R3, En22, En23		LP3, LP34
Policy NE3 - Setting of Huntingdon	CS1, CS9	HW6, HW7, HW8	En17, En20		LP3, LP12
Policy BE1 - Design and Landscaping	CS1	HW9	En6, En20, En25	HL5	LP12
Policy BE2 - Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics	CS1	HW9		HL5	LP12
Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets	CS1	HW9	En2, En5, En6, En11		LP36
Travel and Transport					
Policy TT1 - Sustainable Transport	CS1	HW1, HW2, HW3	T19, T20		LP17

Appendix Two: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan Policies on Sustainable Development

The Table below has assessed our plan's policies in terms of how it will deliver sustainable development in the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability. It shows how the plan's policies are contributing to the achievement of sustainable development by using the following indicators against the economic, social and environmental factors on a scale - ** = very positive * = positive - = neutral x = negative and xx = very negative.

	Economic Factors	Social Factors	Environmental Factors
Employment and Investment			
Policy E1 - Opportunities for Employment	**	**	-
Policy E2 - Business Investment	**	**	-
Huntingdon Town Centre			
Policy TC1 - Retail Development	**	*	-
Policy TC2 - Public Realm	*	*	*
Policy TC3 - St Benedict's Court	**	*	-
Policy TC4 - Town Centre Car Parking	-	*	**
Policy TC5 - Local Neighbourhood Shopping	-	*	*
Tourism, Leisure, Sports and Community Facilities			
Policy TL1 - Tourism Development	*	-	-
Policy TL2 - Leisure and Community Facilities	-	**	-
Policy TL3 - Provision of Sports Facilities	-	**	-
Policy TL4 - Protection of Community Assets	-	**	*
The Natural, Built and Historic Environment			
Policy NE1 - Local Green Space	-	**	**
Policy NE2 - Open Space and Green Infrastructure	-	**	**
Policy NE3 - Setting of Huntingdon	*	**	**
Policy BE1 - Design and Landscaping	*	**	**
Policy BE2 - Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics	*	**	**
Policy BE3 - Heritage Assets	-	*	*
Travel and Transport			
Policy TT1 - Sustainable Transport	*	**	**

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