

North Northamptonshire Partners

North Northamptonshire Market Towns and Rural Regeneration

Final Report

May 2004

Entec UK Limited

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Report for

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Entec was appointed by the North Northamptonshire Strategic Partners in February 2004 to undertake research and establish a framework for building sustainable rural communities of the future in the North Northamptonshire Growth Area. The Strategic Partners include Northamptonshire County Council, East Northamptonshire Council, Corby Borough Council, Kettering Borough Council and Wellingborough Borough Council.

The study was required to develop a comprehensive approach to the strategic planning of rural and local service centres and assess the potential to accommodate growth in the context of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan (Sustainable Communities Building for the Future, ODPM, February 2003). The following document sets out the results of our study based on the Project Brief as issued on 19th January 2004.

The study area covers rural parts of the four Boroughs of Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire, as indicated in **Figure 1** (after page 16).

1.2 Study Aims

The main aim of the study was to provide a framework that would enable the Strategic Partners to:

- develop a comprehensive approach to the planning of market towns and other service centres, that recognises rural distinctiveness;
- have an informed approach to the development of policies and actions with regard to wider regeneration and the activities of the Limited Liability Partnership in implementing sustainable growth; and
- identify a local response to the growth area proposals and the challenges facing the area's rural communities.

This study represents one of the first stages in this process and is not intended to present a finalised strategy. Further work will therefore be required to develop the long-term approach with the involvement of key stakeholders.

1.2.1 Key Issues and Considerations

In undertaking the study it was clear that that a wide range of issues need to be considered and based on the Brief these were identified as:

- the methodology and sustainability criteria for defining Rural and Local Service Centres, as well as other settlements and rural areas;
- the particular roles of settlements within a hierarchy and their interaction with their rural hinterlands and the main urban areas;

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- existing linkages between settlements, villages and groups of villages and the potential for development and enhancement;
 - the existing and proposed services and facilities provided in the study area, employment locations, education, leisure and social facilities and access to the public transport network;
 - the sustainability of individual settlements and rural areas with regard to the level of services they provide, the range and balance of job opportunities and accessibility (especially public transport);
 - the potential for additional development to improve a settlement's sustainability by supporting better education, medical facilities, shops, bus services or providing an improved housing-employment balance;
 - the sustainability of the rural area having regard to access to services and other urban centres within and immediately adjoining the study area, such as Peterborough;
 - the stock of available large complexes of buildings and large individual buildings and the potential for re-use, taking into account sustainability and local considerations; and
 - how best proposals for development and rural diversification could be expressed in Local Development documents (LDDs).

Furthermore, from our consideration of the issues we have also considered the following matters:

- Key environmental constraints associated with settlements and rural areas that may preclude or limit additional development, such as listed buildings, conservation areas or sensitive landscapes.
- Committed programmes and policies affecting the area, for example transport infrastructure proposals, community strategy, housing needs surveys, regeneration priorities.
- Other studies and guidance set out in PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas), PPG13 (Transport), PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres), MKSM Sub-Regional Strategy and Market Towns Initiative.
- The impact of the key urban extensions associated with the principal urban areas at Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough, for example improvements to service, employment, leisure and transport opportunities and their linkage and proximity to the rural areas.

All of this research and work has been brought together in the formulation of an overall strategy with recommendations for the spatial distribution of development. It has not been the purpose of this study to identify specific allocations/proposals in terms of numbers of houses or land, but rather the initial strategy framework that will be used to guide these decisions at a later stage of the work.

1.3 Report Structure

The remaining chapters of this report are as follows:

- Chapter 2 : Recent Research and Study Approach;
- Chapter 3 : Policy Context;
- Chapter 4 : Baseline Conditions;
- Chapter 5 : Settlement Linkages, Patterns and Roles;
- Chapter 6 : Emerging Strategy and Policy; and
- Chapter 7 : Summary and Recommendations.

2. Recent Research and Study Approach

2.1 Introduction

This section of the report sets out the approach taken to developing the strategy. It considers what has happened in the past, the traditional approach to planning in the rural areas and a literature review of recent relevant publications and research.

2.2 Recent Research and Studies

2.2.1 Planning For Sustainable Rural Economic Development (Land Use Consultants for Countryside Agency - March 2003)

This study was undertaken to explore how the revised planning system can be used to promote the types of sustainable economic development that bring lasting economic, social and environmental benefits. The study considers a wide range of recent research and defines sustainable rural economic development as:

“.... economic development which provides local social, economic and environmental benefits *together*.”

It also makes clear that what constitutes sustainable economic development will be different from place to place as needs and benefits vary and as a consequence a new approach to planning rural areas is required.

This new role has been identified as having two distinct functions of strategy development and implementation. In the past greatest influence has been through the development control process in setting the bottom line for acceptable development and having a limited role in promoting innovation. It is suggested that this often stems from a relatively poor understanding of local circumstances, weak linkages with other policies and programmes and a lack of overall vision for the rural area.

However, the study suggests that one of planning's greatest contributions to sustainable economic development should be in helping to understand the state of the countryside, setting a vision for the future, the key issues and objectives raised and the need for key policies and actions. The new role for planning is to influence and seek integration between different programmes and provide guidance on the type of development that is desired in different locations.

This new approach is based on understanding local circumstances and planning for growth in a way that can ensure economic development adds to rural sustainability.

As a consequence the recommended approach is:

- understanding the state of the local countryside, such as population patterns, services, infrastructure, housing etc;

-
- preparing a synopsis of the state of the local countryside, the synopsis should be spatial recognising the difference between different rural areas;
 - setting a vision that is realistic, ambitious and useful;
 - identifying objectives, that should be focussed and prioritised on areas where policy can make a difference; and
 - developing planning policy, that is both criteria based and area specific.

The guidance given is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather a general approach that will need to be adapted depending on the rural areas being considered.

2.2.2 The Role of Rural Settlements as Service Centres (Land Use Consultants for Countryside Agency - January 2004)

The purpose of the work was to examine concerns that market towns in rural areas are identified as rural service centres, and therefore the key locations for growth, without any real understanding of the functions, links or roles of the settlements. This type of approach has developed largely as a result of the thrust of national policy set out in the Rural White Paper (2000) and PPG7 (Countryside).

In looking at this issue the research indicates that while existing data sources can be used to examine some of these linkages and issues, they are often not well used and in any event will not give the detail needed to understand how settlements 'work'. The bulk of the research was therefore based on surveys of households and businesses in eight study towns and the villages within their hinterlands.

It is reported that the most important findings of the study relate to the patterning of the lives of people in rural areas, summarised as:

- **Shopping:** Market towns are generally significant for local shopping, top-up shopping, other main food shopping and convenience shopping. For non-food shopping and access to other services, urban areas and nearby large towns compete strongly. Local villages are considered to be less attached to the market towns than policy assumes.
- **Education and health:** Use is relatively localised given the nature of public sector provision.
- **Banking, finance and professional services:** Generally localised and focussed on the market towns.
- **Leisure and socialising:** The role of market towns is more important for socialising than for other leisure activities, similar can be said for residents in surrounding villages.
- **Work:** This indicates that to a significant extent residents live very different 'work' and 'service' lives. Journeys to work being longer and far more dispersed, and especially so for village residents.
- **Access:** Car use and walking are the dominant forms of transport, levels of bus use are generally low, below 10%; and

- **Businesses:** Local markets are important and provide the majority of work, but regional and national markets are also important. Local suppliers are important for basic services such as food, cleaning and professional services.

The discussion around these findings suggests that a continuation of the current and simplistic approach to rural planning, of directing development to the larger settlements may at best have a neutral impact, or even damaging effect (presumably through loss of character etc). It is also highlighted that the idea of a notional hinterland is naïve, given that residents use services in different ways. In terms of work opportunities the study considers that the role of market towns and connections with villages are overplayed, due to limited connection between where people live and works and access to relatively cheap mobility. In particular car access and ownership is seen as fundamental to this situation.

Crucial differences are identified between towns and villages in that residents in villages are less 'attached' to their locality than residents in market towns. In this sense the role of the towns is more important for their own populations than for neighbouring villages. The study therefore recommends that detailed studies are required to understand how settlements work, that market town initiatives and parish plans should inform the process and fill information gaps, and that the impact of all modes of transport should be addressed.

2.2.3 Are Villages Sustainable? A Review of Literature (UWE for Countryside Agency - June 2001)

This earlier research also expressed the view that recent planning policies of directing development to the larger settlements does not actually reflect the reality and complexity of what happens on the ground. Research has also shown that simply adding additional development to existing settlements has often done little to enhance or maintain services or reduce car travel, and allocating further employment uses has failed to attract local employees and encouraged commuting by car.

As a consequence the study concludes that a more detailed and sophisticated approach is required to understand how settlements function that is not simply based on the range of local services that are provided. Tools such as village appraisals should be used to identify the local differences and key issues and secure integration between different policies and programmes. This requires a more deliberate assessment of what type of development might be required to bring benefits and improve sustainability. It is interesting to note that the overall conclusion when considering whether villages are sustainable, in terms of whether economic, social and environmental needs are being met together, is 'no'.

2.3 Study Methodology

From a review of the above literature it is clear that a traditional approach to planning sustainable rural regeneration, i.e. simply directing development to the larger settlements with a range of services, is not sufficient in itself. The study evidence has shown that in many areas where this approach has been followed, the range of services and facilities in rural areas has continued to decline.

Nevertheless, it should be recognised that identifying the size of settlements and undertaking a comprehensive survey of the range of services, facilities and opportunities they offer is an important part of understanding the study area. It has not been part of the study brief to

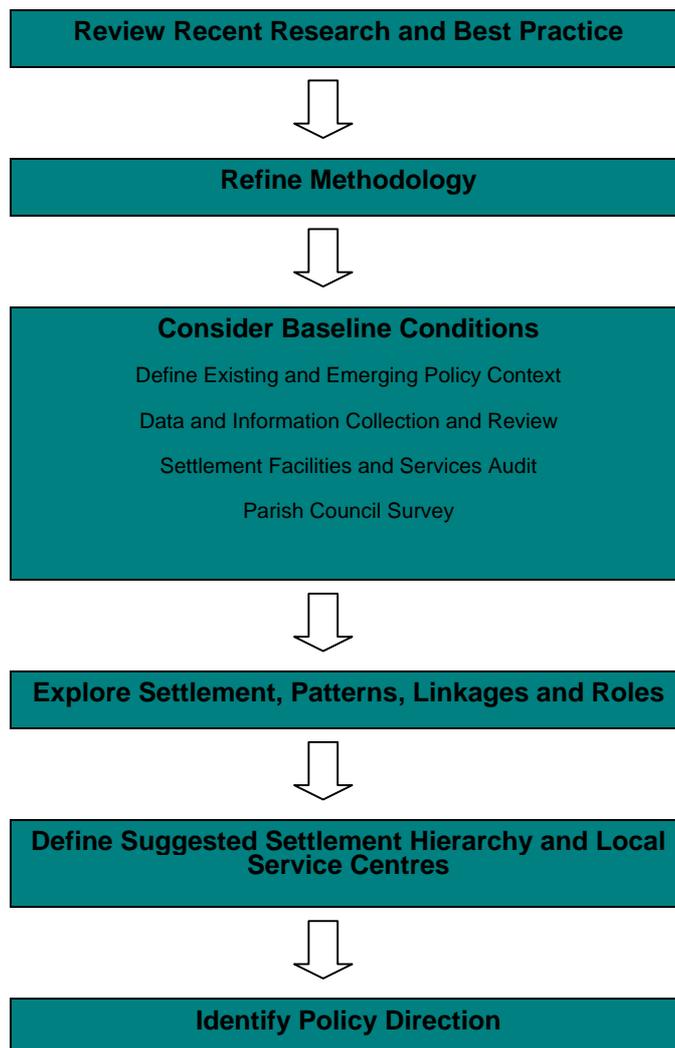
undertake new data collection and therefore available published sources have been used. These sources have included:

- Current and emerging National and Regional Planning Policy;
- Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan 2000, and monitoring reports;
- Northamptonshire Schools Organisation Plan 2003-2008;
- Development Plans and Issues Papers;
- Economic and Community Strategies;
- Supplementary housing and employment data and policy notes;
- Market Town Initiatives;
- Market Town Healthcheck Guides;
- Parish Council Appraisals/Plans;
- Growth Area Assessment Studies;
- Countryside Agency Studies/Publications and other Research;
- National Statistics Online;
- Discussions with Parish Council and Officers;
- Various Web Site Sources.

It is therefore necessary to try to go beyond this traditional approach and understand how settlements or groups of settlements actually work and relate. We have therefore sought to identify the local differences and issues facing individual settlements from the available material. We also undertook a telephone survey of selected parish councils to try and identify and understand their different views and attitudes towards the provision of services in their area and additional development. The notes of these discussions are set out in **Appendix B** and summarised in Section 4 of this report (**Appendix A** includes a copy of the Interview Proforma).

What has become clear in undertaking the study is that whilst there is a large amount of information already available, much of this is strategic in nature and does not actually give the level of detail required to identify the key differences and issues at individual settlement level. An additional issue is also the apparent disparity in the nature and quality of information available across the study area. For example, some settlements such as Great Doddington have Conservation Area Character Appraisals, Pytchley has a draft Parish Plan and larger settlements such as Desborough (a Town Centre Design Framework has also been provided for Desborough) and Thrapston and Irthlingborough have had Health Checks undertaken. In contrast, places such as Oundle, Burton Latimer and Earls Barton do not appear to have been considered to the same extent. This disparity makes it difficult to devise a robust area wide strategy and needs to be addressed.

Table 2.1 sets out the general methodology used.

Table 2.1 General Study Approach and Methodology

3. Policy Context

3.1 Planning Policy

This section of the report considers the existing policy context at the national, regional and local level. It also considers the emerging guidance set out in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy (MKSM SRS) which is aimed at delivering a significant step change in the rate of housing and employment growth in the study area over the period to 2021.

3.1.1 Planning Policy Guidance Notes

PPG3 - Housing

In general terms PPG3 sets out the criteria that should be used to determine where new development should be provided. These criteria are equally applicable to urban and rural areas and in this respect are a sound starting point when considering the suitability of settlements to accommodate growth and not just individual sites. The criteria are defined as:

- the **availability of previously-developed sites** and empty or under-used buildings and their suitability for housing use;
- the **location and accessibility** of potential development sites to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car, and the potential for improving such accessibility;
- the **capacity of existing and potential infrastructure**, including public transport, water and sewerage, other utilities and social infrastructure (such as schools and hospitals) to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure;
- the **ability to build communities** to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide sufficient demand to sustain appropriate local services and facilities; and
- the **physical and environmental constraints on development of land**, including, for example, the level of contamination, stability and flood risk, taking into account that such risk may increase as a result of climate change.

In addition, PPG3 goes on to expand on the approach that should be applied in rural areas. In terms of significant additional growth it is expected that this will be directed to nodes in major transport corridors. Elsewhere, additional housing will mainly involve infill development or peripheral expansion.

The Guidance states that villages will only be suitable locations for accommodating significant additional housing where:

- it can be demonstrated that additional housing will support local services, such as schools or shops, which could become unviable without some modest growth. This

may particularly be the case where the village has been identified as a *local service centre* in the development plan;

- additional houses are needed to meet local needs, such as affordable housing, which will help secure a mixed and balanced community; and
- the development can be designed sympathetically and laid out in keeping with the character of the village using such techniques as village design statements.

Clearly any strategy aimed at identifying the preferred locations for growth in the rural areas will need to take these guiding principles into account.

PPG6 - Town Centres and Retail Developments

In terms of guidance provided regarding the rural dimension PPG6 does not provide significant guidance. The overriding aim of this guidance note is for local authorities to adopt the sequential approach to retailing. This approach seeks to ensure that town centre options have been fully assessed before less central sites are considered for development of key town centre uses.

Guidance is provided on shopping in rural areas. This focuses on the understanding that village shops can play vital economic and social roles. Indeed, the guidance notes how such shops can be integral to the vitality and viability of villages. Annex A of PPG6 provides a glossary of terminology for retail development. This lists types of centre, of which 'Local Centre' and 'Town Centre' would apply to those settlements identified in this project.

- Local Centre - small grouping usually comprising a newsagent, a general grocery store, a sub-post office and occasionally a pharmacy, a hairdresser and other small shops of a local nature.
- Town Centre - in this guidance, the term 'town centre' is used generally to cover city, town and traditional suburban centres, which provide a broad range of facilities and services and which fulfil a function as a focus for both the community and for public transport. It excludes small parades of shops of purely local significance.

PPS6 - Draft Planning Policy Statement - Planning for Town Centres

The emerging policy in PPS6 states that in considering the hierarchy of centres, planning authorities should consider the pattern of provision of different centres, their network, and the roles, range of facilities at the regional and local levels. The aim being to ensure that an area is not overly dominated by the largest centres, that there is more even distribution of facilities, and that people's everyday needs are met at the local level. This is directly relevant to the study area.

The broad function of different-sized centres is outlined in Annex A of PPS6. In defining town centres specific recognition is given to the role of market towns in rural areas and the extensive hinterlands they can serve. District and local centres are also defined although it is not clear how well these definitions are applicable in rural areas where smaller centres may have an important function serving surrounding villages.

PPG7 - Countryside

This PPG places great weight on sustainable development in rural areas and provides guidance on how and where development should be best focussed.

Para. 2.10 deals specifically with Villages and Market Towns and notes how development plans should help promote healthy rural communities where people can both live and work. It notes that the main focus of new development should be in existing towns and villages (including networks of small villages) and other areas allocated by development plans where employment, housing and other uses can be accommodated in close proximity. The guidance notes that this approach can help to promote sustainable development by strengthening villages and market towns, protecting the open countryside, sustaining local services and moving towards a better balance between employment and housing in rural communities.

The guidance provides notes on a variety of development types in the countryside, including rural business, the re-use of buildings and housing. The guidance revolves around maximising the use of existing facilities and encouraging rural diversification where appropriate. Existing buildings provide excellent opportunities to be re-used for commercial purposes and residential where appropriate and justified, whereas new build residential development must be directed towards existing towns and villages and where possible to previously used land.

PPS7 - Draft Planning Policy Statement - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

PPS7 will eventually replace PPG7 as national planning policy guidance on sustainable development in rural areas. Much of the policy set out in PPS7 is the same as that in the current PPG7, although there are some proposed changes.

The key policy changes set out in Draft PPS7 are as follows:

- The Government does not consider local countryside designations to be necessary and believes that development plan policies which accord with PPS7 should provide sufficient protection for the countryside. The guidance therefore advises that in reviewing development plans, existing local designations should be removed and criteria based policies should be adopted to guide the location and design of rural development.
- The Government is proposing to remove the specific policy exception which currently allows large, high quality houses to be built in the open countryside. This has therefore been removed from Draft PPS7.
- It is proposed that the policy criteria applied to farm and forestry workers' dwellings should also be applied to countryside dwellings associated with other occupations, as appropriate.
- There is new guidance on equine-related activities and the policies on community services and tourism and leisure have been expanded.
- The guidance places emphasis on encouraging local authorities to be supportive of farm diversification schemes.

The policy guidance states that planning policy and development control decisions should be based on sustainable development principles and therefore the following policy relevant to this study can be identified as:

- **Location of development** - Outside urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres. These centres may be a country town, a single large village or a group of villages and should be identified in the development plan as the preferred location for such development. Away from these centres, planning authorities should allow some limited development to meet local needs.
- **Business development and employment** - Planning authorities should support a wide range of economic activity in rural areas, identifying suitable sites for future employment use, making provision for new buildings, as well as the re-use of existing buildings, for industrial and business development.
- **Community services and facilities** - Ensure people who live or work in rural areas have reasonable access to a range of services and facilities. Local planning authorities should facilitate and provide for new services and facilities and adopt a positive approach to planning proposals designed to improve the viability, accessibility or community value of existing services and facilities.
- **Housing** - The focus for most additional housing should be on existing towns and cities, but it will also be necessary to provide for some new housing to meet identified local need in villages.
- **Design and the character of rural settlements** - Protect and enhance rural and historic character of towns and villages.
- **Re-use of buildings within or adjacent to towns and villages** - The guidance urges Local Authorities to be supportive of the re-use of existing buildings within or adjacent to country towns and villages. The guidance notes that support should be given for the re-use to business and community uses as well as housing, in accordance with the policies of PPG3. Para. 20 sets out the criteria that should be applied to proposals for re-use.

3.1.2 RPG8 - Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands

Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands was adopted in January 2002 and is currently under review, with the revised RPG expected to be published late in 2004.

As such, it is advisable to consider the implications for rural development stemming from the emerging RPG. The review does not go into significant detail on rural issues, rather providing guidance on a number of priorities affecting the whole region. The guidance does provide guidance on the regional priorities for rural communities however, with Policy 5 dealing with regional priorities for development in rural areas. This policy aims to ensure that development plans, Local Transport plans and economic strategies provide for new development that strengthens rural enterprise and linkages between settlements and their hinterlands. The policy notes that this can be achieved by:

- encouraging the provision of public transport and opportunities for the use of other non-car modes of travel;

-
- providing for housing and a range of services in market towns to serve a wider hinterland;
 - providing for employment development to strengthen the vitality and viability of market towns;
 - identifying other settlements, or groups of settlements, which are accessible to the rural population, as the preferred location outside of market towns, for local needs housing including affordable housing and most other services; and
 - securing improvements in transport and communications infrastructure where it can be demonstrated that poor linkages have led to disadvantage compared to the rest of the region.

As well as providing general guidance on development in rural areas, the RPG also breaks the region down into sub areas, of which the southern sub area includes the study area for this project. The supporting text notes that Northampton exerts considerable economic and social influence over much of the study area. It also notes that Corby has a number of problems which need to be addressed in order for the town to experience widespread regeneration.

Policy 12 deals with spatial priorities for development in the Southern Sub-area. It notes that development plans etc, should ensure that development is concentrated in, or in planned extensions to, existing urban areas. The policy gives particular consideration to Northampton and Corby though also notes that the role of the small towns in the sub-area should be maintained through the retention of basic services and facilities, environmental improvements and the safeguarding of their rural hinterlands.

3.1.3 Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy (MKSM SRS)

The MKSM area is currently being considered as a major growth location as part of the Government's Communities Plan. A substantial amount of work has already been undertaken in developing the SRS for the area and to inform revisions to Regional Planning Guidance for the three Regions affected.

One of the key issues facing the MKSM area, and the study area, is the pace of development required over the period to 2021 and the level of supporting economic regeneration, social, physical and transport infrastructure needed to form sustainable communities. This has, as in other growth areas, brought about a greater need for cross boundary working and the consideration of 'Local Delivery Vehicles' to drive the process forward and co-ordinate strategy development, resource and infrastructure provision.

In Northamptonshire the key urban areas of Northampton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough have been considered in some detail and have been identified as the focus for growth and regeneration. The SRS also identifies other smaller settlements in the North Northamptonshire study area as 'Urban Hubs' (Burton Latimer, Desborough, Rothwell, Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough) and 'Rural Service Centres' (Thrapston and Oundle). Raunds has also been suggested by the LPA as a Rural Service Centre. Beyond this level 'Local Service Centres' have not been defined and are to be determined through Local Development Documents (LDD). **Figure 1** illustrates this emerging spatial context and the sustainable urban extension areas proposed.

For the four districts in the study area, the SRS sets out a requirement for 53,400 new dwellings over the period to 2021. Although most of this will be accommodated in the principal urban

areas (40,000 dwellings) a more modest, but still significant, 13,400 dwellings will need to be accommodated in other settlements and the rural areas. The requirement for the urban and rural areas is set out in **Table 3.1** below. It should be noted that in the original Growth Area Assessment (DTZ 2003) Burton Latimer was considered part of the Kettering growth area and therefore expected to accommodate part of the urban growth.

The SRS gives little guidance on how this development should be accommodated but identifies the role of the urban hubs and rural service centres in providing the focus for growth and provision of services. Para. 2.11 of the SRS acknowledges that in the past, much of the development in places such as Oundle and Thrapston has been residential and not always accompanied by increased job opportunities and service provision and that this imbalance needs to be addressed. The SRS puts priority on accommodating growth within the built up area of these towns only if additional land is required should sustainable urban extensions be considered.

Beyond these settlements and in the rural areas the emphasis is to be on meeting local needs and retention of basic services and facilities. In this respect Local Service Centres should be identified through LDDs where they provide basic local services to neighbouring villages and have a reasonable level of access, such as local bus service links. Small groups of market housing may be acceptable in such locations. However, there is no definition of what constitutes 'basic local services' or 'reasonable levels of access'.

Table 3.1 MKSM SRS Housing Requirements 2001 - 2021

LPA	Corby	Kettering	Wellingborough	East Northants
Estimated Urban Supply ¹	5300	2300	7300	N/A
Urban Allocation ¹	10500	8000	6600	N/A
Total Urban Allocation ¹	15800	10300	13900	N/A
MKSM District-Wide Requirement ²	16000	15200	15000	7200
Implied Remaining Rural Requirement	200	4900	1100	7200
Estimated Rural Supply ³	N/A	2260	649	4825
Residual Rural Allocation ³	200	2640	451	2375

Notes:

Source: MKSM SRS Public Examination March 2004 - Panel Briefing on Housing and Employment Matters, Table 1 (EERA, EMRA, SEERA)

Source: MKSM SRS, Northamptonshire Policy 1; The Spatial Framework. (It should be noted that the LPAs do not necessarily accept these housing figures)

Source: Estimates based on LPA data and information where available. For Corby only limited information was available based on the UCS 2001, this suggests that the level of rural supply is limited.

Although it is unclear exactly how the figures set out in the SRS have been derived, **Table 3.1** would suggest that for the most part the likely additional rural housing requirements to 2021 are relatively modest. **Figure 2** identifies the rural settlements with significant residential land commitments.

In East Northamptonshire it is unclear how much of the development should be directed to the Urban Hubs of Rushden and Higham Ferrers and at this time well over half of the requirement is already committed. Further work recently completed as part of the East Northamptonshire Capacity Assessment (DTZ March 2004) suggests that just over 7000 dwellings could be found on current sites, windfalls and other sites likely to come forward. This would mean that land for less than 200 additional dwellings would be required.

In Corby the level of growth targeted at the main urban area and urban extensions would suggest that only around 200 additional dwelling would need to be found within the rural areas. This would be reduced further when rural windfalls and commitments are taken in to account and would seem consistent with the limited rural area and lack of large rural settlements or Rural Service Centres in the Borough. From the information provided there would not appear to be any significant outstanding allocations or commitments in the rural areas (Corby UCS 2001).

Again, in Wellingborough the residual rural requirement is likely to be reasonably modest and for the most part committed. If an additional rural windfall allowance is assumed of seven dwellings per year (as set out in the current Local Plan) then additional land for some 451 dwellings may need to be allocated over the period to 2021. This will be reduced further if recent windfall rates continue, as these are higher than those anticipated in the current Local Plan.

However, the situation in Kettering is less clear even though nearly half of the rural requirement is already committed. As a result of current Structure Plan policy other large allocations are also being proposed in the Desborough/Rothwell Strategic Development Area. KBC indicate that this could deliver a further 1,700 dwellings and that other 'new' rural sites could deliver around 300 additional dwellings. If this were the case then it would still leave some 640 further dwellings to be found to 2021. The role of Burton Latimer is also unclear and at this stage it has been assumed that for the purposes of the SRS it is being treated as part of the Kettering Urban Area.

In employment terms the SRS gives little guidance on the requirements for the Boroughs within the study area and in particular the rural areas. It is expected that there should be an increase in the range and quality of employment opportunities through B1 office development and an emphasis on high value knowledge based industries. Support is also to be given to existing and emerging sectors but with an emphasis of diversifying the economies of the towns. Existing employment sites are to be re-appraised to ensure that a range of high quality sites is available.

3.1.4 Northamptonshire Structure Plan

The current Structure Plan covers the period to 2016 and although it currently forms part of the Development Plan it predates the SRS and therefore does not reflect current growth aspirations or the emerging spatial strategy. Policy GS4 identifies the urban areas as the priority for growth, these are as follows:

- Corby
- Kettering
- Wellingborough
- Burton Latimer
- Desborough
- Higham Ferrers
- Irthlingborough
- Oundle
- Raunds
- Rothwell
- Rushden
- Thrapston

The Plan does not distinguish between these towns and it should be noted that the Structure Plan also includes Raunds as an urban area. Beyond these settlements, Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) are proposed at Desborough/Rothwell and East of Wellingborough. These proposals are well advanced in the case of Wellingborough East and have been the subject of consultation in the case of Desborough/Rothwell. Both areas are being suggested as having substantially greater capacity than the minimum 1,000 dwellings and 20ha of employment and commercial uses required by Policy SDA1.

The development of housing and employment land in the remaining villages is to be restricted to within village confines established through local plans (Policy H3 and RE1). Restraint villages are also to be identified where the special character is to be protected and where conservation is the highest priority (Policy H4). The use of existing buildings in the countryside for business uses will be permitted subject to a number of considerations (Policy RE4).

3.1.5 Local Plans

For the purposes of this study the Local Plans for the four Districts are somewhat out of date and relate to the previous Structure Plan, which has now been superseded. The emergence of the MKSM SRS also means that the plans do not address some of the fundamental issues raised by the Strategy and in particular the location and level of growth envisaged over the period to 2021. As a consequence they offer little guidance on developing a strategy for the rural areas given this significant change in circumstances. **Table 3.2** sets out current LDF timetables.

Table 3.2 Local Plan and LDF Progress

LPA	Adopted Plan	Review Stage	LDF Deposit Expected ¹
Corby	June 1997	Issues Paper October 2003	Expected Summer 2004
Kettering	January 1995	Various Issues Papers 2002	Expected Summer 2004
East Northants	November 1996	Issues Papers 2001 and 2004	Possible early 2005
Wellingborough	Wellingborough Alteration Adopted March 2004	Alteration Adopted March 2004 (Housing and Employment Policies, and Wellingborough only)	Not specified

1. Likely to be superseded as LPAs are due to be working on a joint LDF core strategy

The current settlement strategies set out in the Local Plans are based on the superseded Structure Plan and follow the format set out in **Table 3.3**. Beyond the towns and urban areas the Limited Development Villages are identified as the main location for development having the greatest range of services and potential to absorb additional growth. The Restricted Infill Villages are considered suitable for small scale development and in Restraint Villages development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances in order to protect historic value and character.

However, this hierarchy needs to be revised in light of the SRS and the need to define rural service centres and local service centres and in seeking to achieve sustainable regeneration in the rural areas. The LPAs have responded to the MKSM SRS and in doing so not only disagree with the housing provision set out, but also comment on the designation and role of settlements.

Table 3.3 Existing Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy

Settlement Classification	Corby	Kettering	East Northamptonshire	Wellingborough
Towns/Urban Areas	Corby	Kettering, Burton Latimer, Desborough, Rothwell	Rushden, Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, Oundle, Thrapston, Raunds	Wellingborough
Limited Development Villages	Gretton, Weldon	None - (Broughton and Geddington restricted infill villages due to level of past development) New village under construction at Mawsley	Brigstock, King's Cliffe, Ringstead, Warmington, Woodford, Stanwick	Earls Barton, Finedon, Wollaston
Restricted Infill Villages	Cottingham, East Carlton, Middleton, Stanion, Great Oakley (rural part)	Ashly, Braybrook, Broughton, Crayford St Andrew, Cranford St John, Geddington, Great Cransley, Harrington, Loddington, Pytchley, Rushton, Stoke Albany, Sutton Bassett, Thorpe Malsor, Weston by Welland, Wilbarston	Aldwincle, Apethorpe, Barnwell, Upper Benefield, Bulwick, Caldecott, Chelveston, Clopton, Collyweston, Cotterstock, Deenethorpe, Denford, Easton on the Hill, Fineshade, Glapthorn, Great Addington, Hargrave, Harringworth, Hemington, Islip, Laxton, Lilford, Little Addington, Luddington, Lutton, Nassington, Newton Bromswold, Polebrook, Slipton, Southwick, Stoke Doyle, Sudborough, Tansor, Thorpe Waterville, Thurning, Titchmarsh, Twywell, Wakerley, Woodnewton and Yarwell	Bozeat, Ecton, Great Doddington, Great Harrowden, Grendon, Hardwick, Irchester, Isham, Little Harrowden, Little Irchester, Mears Ashby, Oringbury, Sywell (excl. old village), Wilby
Restraint Villages	Rockingham	Grafton Underwood, Little Oakley, Newton, Warkton, Weekley	Ashton, Lower Benefield, Blatherwycke, Deene, Duddington, Fotheringhay, Lowick, Pilton, Thorpe Achurch, Wadenhoe	Easton Maudit, Strixton, Sywell (Old Village)

In East Northants it is considered that Raunds should be defined as a Rural Service Centre given its size and range of facilities. It is suggested that King's Cliffe could be defined as a Local Service Centre, given its role in serving a number of smaller settlements in the north of the District (Managing the Release of Housing Land in East Northamptonshire, Interim Policy 2003). In Kettering the definition of Rothwell, Desborough and Burton Latimer as Urban Hubs is questioned and it is suggested that given their location and geography, they perform a role more akin to Rural Service Centres. The option of accommodating growth in 'free standing' village locations is also put forward (Kettering MKSM SRS EIP submission February 2004). These matters are discussed later in this report.

At present Local Plans identify the area generally to the north of Thrapston, around the northern fringes of Corby and running west to the north of Desborough as Special Landscape Area. Although these specific designations may be removed as a result of emerging policy in PPS7, the quality of the environment will still need to be acknowledged in making development decisions.

3.1.6 Community Strategies

East Northamptonshire

This strategy provides clear priorities and targets for improving the social, economic and environmental conditions within East Northamptonshire. Given the rural nature of the district the strategy pays particular attention throughout to the needs of rural communities.

The strategy is structured in such a way that a number of topic areas are addressed, with priorities and targets detailed for each i.e. Environment and Infrastructure and Health and Housing.

Of the priorities and targets listed in the strategy the following are particularly encouraging for development in the rural areas:

- To work with rural communities to protect and promote villages and the countryside as places to live, work, visit and enjoy.
- To promote the vitality and viability of market towns.
- To encourage and support the rural economy.

Targets

- Promote Village Design Statements as an ongoing project, adopting three by end 2004.
- Extend the 'Market Towns Healthcheck' initiative to cover all market towns by 2006.
- Undertake the projects identified in the Thrapston 'Healthcheck' action plan.
- Promote farm diversification, village retailing and other rural enterprises.
- Provide business advice for 20 rural businesses by 2006.

Wellingborough

The Wellingborough Community Plan provides a number of aims and targets, across a range of topic areas. The topics covered range from making the community healthier, to making the community a safer place to live and work etc. The aims and targets listed do not specify between the urban and rural dimension. Moreover, it is assumed that the community plan considers both urban and rural areas in its aims and targets, as there is no obvious specification of which areas of the community these are designed for.

Corby

Due to the urban nature of Corby Borough, the 'Inspirational Corby' document, which details the community strategy between 2003-2008, does not give specific regard to rural issues. Indeed, this strategy is very much geared towards the reinvention of Corby as a centre for

industry and economic performance, rather than an all-encompassing community document that pays attention to all segments of the community.

The strategy does note that the Local Strategic Partnership aims to develop closer working relationships with ACRE (Actions in Communities in Rural England), CPRE (the Council for the Protection of Rural England) and the Countryside Commission.

Kettering

The Kettering Community Plan 2002-2005 covers the whole of the District including the towns and the surrounding rural areas and identifies five key aims. These are:

- health and well being for all;
- learning for life;
- jobs and a strong local economy;
- care for our environment; and
- a safe place to live and work.

In addressing these aims the Plan identifies a need to address areas of deprivation, and outside Kettering identifies pockets of need in Rothwell and Desborough and in the rural areas where access to services is poor. Improvements to public transport, health, education and other support services and undertaking a housing need survey are key actions in response to these issues. Employment is identified as being higher than the national average, however, further efforts are to be targeted at developing Kettering Borough as a business location. Desborough and Rothwell have been successful in this respect in forming town centre partnerships and in benefiting from the Market Towns Initiative.

Protection of the environment and sustainable development are key priorities. With regard to the rural area protecting the Borough's landscape and habitats is considered important and improving transport and promoting village design statements are key elements of the strategy.

4. Baseline Information

4.1 Introduction

This section of the report summarises the baseline information under a series of key headings. The report does not address each source of information in detail, but aims to draw out the main points and present an overview for the study area.

4.2 Community Facilities and Services

One of the first tasks undertaken was to identify the settlements within the study area and to try to establish and summarise what local services and facilities they currently have. The Summary of Community Facilities Matrix has been developed by undertaking a comprehensive information gathering exercise using a number of sources, this included community web-sites, local directories (e.g. Yellow Pages), and information supplied by Northamptonshire County Council, and the Borough Councils. The methodology has been a desktop analysis of services and facilities in each village within North Northamptonshire. Although it is accepted that it may not be as accurate as actually visiting individual places the survey has provided a clear overview of the level of services within each settlement and therefore the role a settlement may play in the area. The full matrix is set out in **Appendix C** and has considered 110 identified 'rural' settlements (Urban Centres of Kettering, Corby, Wellingborough and Rushden are excluded from this list).

The study focuses on essential services such as education, health, transport, recreation, banks and retail facilities and has been expanded to incorporate public transport frequency, and access to key employment centres or local opportunities. With regard to transport availability within the Matrix each settlement has been ticked if it has a bus service and the services differentiated being either infrequent, daily, hourly or no service. The nearest key urban area to which a connection is provided is also indicated. Many of the smaller settlements are visited by mobile services such as hot and cold food shops and library, the facilities matrix distinguishes between mobile and permanent services where known.

The significance of this information is discussed later in this report when settlement hierarchies are discussed. However, it does clearly show the expected concentration of services and facilities in the larger settlements. The exception to this rule is in terms of transportation where access to good quality public transport would appear to be as a result of geography, i.e. the settlement being located on a key inter-urban route. Thrapston and settlements immediately to the north are a key example of this being only served by at best daily services and for the most part infrequent services (Public Transport Routes are shown in **Figure 8**).

4.3 Employment and Economy

4.3.1 Context

The Northamptonshire Partnership has drawn up an interim strategy for the County for 2002 - 2003. It is a response by the County Council to the challenges set by EMDA through the Regional Economic Strategy, which aims to raise the East Midlands to within the top 20 European Regions. The Interim Strategy aims to tackle issues and priorities in the local economy and identifies a number of themes and actions:

- Develop workforce skills and enhance employment potential of Northamptonshire's people to meet employer and individual needs.
- Stimulate creation, development and growth of competitive business.
- Use global ICT advances to create the capability for everyone in the County to use information and knowledge to maximum benefit.
- Promote Northamptonshire as a prime business investment location to secure additional job opportunities.
- Maximise the participation of communities and disadvantaged groups in the local economy to provide for a more equitable society.

Of these, the last theme deals specifically with the rural areas and the need for a sustainable rural economic development strategy that deals with key issues such as:

- local employment;
- access to training and business support and the potential of ICT;
- improving transport access in and to rural areas;
- access to services; and
- the role and function of market towns in the economic and social environment.

The purpose of this study fits well with these priorities for action and starts to address many of the key issues. Other strategies such as the Draft Economic Strategy for east Northamptonshire follow similar themes highlighting the need to address skills shortages, decline in traditional rural employment, shortage of start up premises and maintaining the vitality of market towns. In all the strategies ICT is seen as an important tool with the potential to stimulate competitiveness in rural areas and access to information and learning. **Figure 3** illustrates the general extent of Broadband Internet availability within the study area. It is understood that Gretton and King's Cliffe are soon to be added to this network, although at the latter broadband connection is already in place at the Resource Centre in the village.

4.3.2 Economies

In November 2003 an assessment of the likely supply and demand for commercial property was completed (Northamptonshire Commercial Property and Employment Land Assessment, RTP November 2003 (CoPELA)). The specific task for this study was to examine property and land requirements in light of the growth proposals set out in the MKSM SRS. In terms of considering the local economy of each district the following conclusions were reached.

Corby

Corby is predominantly an urban district with a number of immediately adjoining rural parishes heavily dependent on manufacturing jobs, 40% of total job provision (East Midland average 20%). This sector has declined whilst at the same time there has been some growth in wholesale distribution, transport and communications. The office sector is small and transport links are considered to be relatively poor. The creation of Catalyst Corby is likely to be a driver of change in seeking to deliver regeneration objectives.

Kettering

Kettering's economy is based on the town itself and has seen limited growth in recent years, (2%) below national and regional totals. The district is identified as having good transport links primarily due to the A14 and Intercity rail links. Desborough and Rothwell are identified as other significant settlements with good access to the A14 due to the opening of the A6 bypass. They are considered to have limited employment with most people leaving the towns to find work elsewhere. Burton Latimer is also identified and has major employers such as Weetabix Ltd close to the A14. Most employment land is within or immediately adjacent to Kettering.

Wellingborough

The economic focus for Wellingborough is the Town with no other significant settlements identified. Most office and distribution floorspace is within or immediately adjacent to the urban area. Unemployment is below the national and regional average and job growth above the national rate. The proposals for a major town expansion as a result of WEAST are considered key to the town's future.

East Northamptonshire

The study recognises the District's dispersed settlement pattern with the population concentrated in the six towns. Earnings and unemployment are below the national average but job numbers are the lowest in the County. The A45, A14 and A605 provide good communications links and have resulted in the expansion of distribution parks at Rushden, Higham Ferrers and Thrapston. Office stock is spread through the main settlements and primarily comprising small units for local needs. The District Council is one of the largest office occupiers and is based at Thrapston. The former British Steel Works are being refurbished at Irthlingborough for small office units, and Oundle is identified as being famous for its public school and serving as a commercial centre for the north of the District. Demand for office uses is generally for local needs, though further demand for distribution uses will be likely in the south of the District near to the A14.

4.3.3 Land Availability and Demand

Figure 4 identifies those rural settlements that have significant employers and employment opportunities due to the availability of land for development (with planning permission or outstanding allocation at 2003). The key rural employers have been mapped where they provide more than 25 jobs and as identified from NCCs Business Register. It should be recognised that this list is not fully comprehensive, relating only to jobs on employment parks and being dependent on company returns.

However, the information does indicate a general pattern and spread of key employment opportunities that is consistent with other evidence. Most notably the main employers are located to the rural south of the study area at the larger settlements, in more traditional industrial areas and close to the A45, A6 and A14. It is interesting to note that Oundle appears to have

few large employers and limited land availability, although presence of a number of schools and local service facilities will offer non-employment land job opportunities. This suggests that in more rural centres there is a higher dependency on small scale enterprises locally, non-employment land jobs or commuting to the main urban areas for work.

A similar pattern can also be observed for the availability of employment land. The main exceptions to this are the relatively large sites at Rothwell and Desborough. In some of the smaller villages there are a number of development opportunities but these tend to be substantially less than 1ha in size. **Table 4.1** below sets out the main rural employment sites.

Table 4.1 Rural Employment Sites

District	Location and Site	Area (ha)	Possible Use
Corby	-	-	-
Kettering	Land North of Railway Line, Desborough	16.9	General Industrial
	Latimer Park, Burton Latimer	28.8	Distribution
Wellingborough	Land off Mallard Close, Earls Barton	1.2	General Industrial
East Northants	British Steel Office, Irthlingborough	2.8	Office
	Meadow Lane, Raunds	3.5	General Industrial
	A45 Roundabout, Raunds	2.0	General Industrial
	A6 Bypass, Higham Ferrers	11.8	General Industrial
	A1/M1 Link, Thrapston	7.0	Distribution
	London Road, Raunds	19.0	Distribution*

*Site at Raunds has distribution emphasis but also includes B1 and B2 uses

Note : Excludes sites <1ha

Source: Northamptonshire Commercial Property and Land Assessment (RTP November 2003), LPA employment land data.

In examining the supply of employment land and premises, and job growth in the context of the SRS it is suggested that the following key points can be drawn from the CoPELA report for the rural areas:

- In East Northants office supply is restricted to edge of town sites in the south of the District (For example, outline permission for B1 and leisure uses at Skew Bridge on the edge of Rushden, within the Nene Valley), additional small scale town centre supply for local needs may therefore be merited in places such as Raunds, Thrapston and Oundle, sufficient distribution and general industrial land is available.
- In Kettering there is a need for in town supply of office space, and therefore Desborough and Rothwell could seek to attract a limited share of this particularly for local needs. Desborough and Rothwell are not seen as attractive business locations and therefore improvements are required to change this perception. Land at Desborough is considered to be poor quality and constrained.

- At Corby the focus is on regenerating the urban area which will have benefits for the immediate rural areas and villages in the north of the study area.
- In Wellingborough there is substantial land supply although this is heavily dependant on proposals at WEAST.
- The greatest job growth is overwhelmingly within the financial and business services sector, and to a lesser degree public administration and health. These uses should therefore be provided for in the key rural centres, particularly for local needs.

4.3.4 Housing Need

East Northants

The last Housing Needs Survey for East Northamptonshire was published in December 1999. It provided the first detailed analysis of housing needs issues carried out for the District. The survey looked at a range of key issues including the suitability of current housing, household income and affordability. The survey estimated that 1,280 households were in housing need at the time of the survey.

Considering this estimate, the report concluded that over the next five years i.e. to the present day, housing need will increase by around 306 households per year. The report notes that, considering repairs and renovations of existing properties could meet much need, an additional 550 affordable homes would be required between 1999 - 2004. In terms of national averages of affordable housing need (9%), the level of housing need in East Northamptonshire is roughly half at 4.2%.

The survey does not provide a rural perspective on housing needs. Moreover, it considers the needs across every settlement. Due to the rural nature of East Northamptonshire it is perhaps appropriate that no obvious distinction is made between rural and urban needs.

A new Housing Needs survey is currently being finalised and will give ward breakdowns and ward level models of housing needs.

Housing policy in the Adopted Local Plan does not provide a percentage of affordable housing to be sought on residential development schemes of certain sizes and densities. The LPA is currently seeking 30% provision on housing schemes greater than 25 units in the six main towns and at a threshold of 10 dwelling in the other rural areas, through adopted supplementary planning guidance.

Kettering

The most recent Kettering Housing needs Survey was published in 2001. Its primary objective was to determine the levels of housing demand and supply in the Borough and to determine the extent of the annual supply required to meet the demand throughout the planning period of 2001-2006. The survey is comprehensive and there is no distinction made between rural and urban areas.

The report concludes that the total affordable housing need annually is for 923 units. Considering re-lets of the existing stock will provide 376 units a year on average a massive shortfall is left of 547 units a year, a total of over 2,700 units by 2006. The survey notes that this need is unlikely to be met and when considering the projected growth of new forming

population over the next ten years it is envisaged that the need for affordable housing will be exacerbated.

In order to meet these needs the survey details a planning strategy, aimed at delivering affordable housing. It notes that the targets detailed above are neither deliverable nor sustainable.

The Planning Strategy notes that the council should negotiate with developers to achieve a target of up to 30% subsidised affordable homes from the total of all suitable sites coming forward for consent to 2011. The strategy notes that within the larger settlements the threshold for affordable housing should be 15 units or 0.5ha, with an even lower threshold considered for more rural areas if needs are to be met.

This survey reveals a considerable need for affordable housing in Kettering. However, the designation of land for urban extensions in the MKSM study will provide appropriate opportunities for such need to be met.

Wellingborough

The latest Housing Needs Survey for Wellingborough was completed in 2001. Although, various village need surveys have been undertaken, most are of a similar date, the exception being Orlingbury (2003) and Finedon (underway).

The survey presents three different scenarios for housing needs in Wellingborough.

1. Future (S1) - uses the data in the survey that asks respondents about their future moving intentions - 138 dpa;
2. History (S2) - uses the data in the survey that asks respondents about their housing history - 153 dpa; and
3. Housing Register (S3) - Housing Register information - 214 dpa

The survey recommends that housing history is a better predictor of housing need and advises that this is used as the basis for affordable housing policy in the future, therefore suggesting the housing need per annum is 153.

The survey notes some key targets for the provision of affordable homes. It notes that the County Structure Plan makes provision for 7,000 new dwellings in the Borough, 6,500 of these are to be located in the town. It notes that a substantial part of the town's development will be a major urban extension to the east of the town, providing around 3,000 new dwellings.

It continues to note that the Council plans to support the construction of at least 50 new social housing units per annum over the next five years, largely 1-bed and 2-bed flats and terraced properties. It also notes that the Council will seek to negotiate with developers to achieve a target of 250 or more affordable dwellings from all sites coming forward for planning consent, whilst promoting the delivery of 300 to 400 low-cost market homes in the period to 2003. The current draft SPG indicates a targets of 27% affordable homes on new proposals.

Of particular note in this survey is the analysis of the difference between the urban and rural areas of the borough. The survey provides useful statistics across a number of areas, in particular, housing costs and income and neighbourhood and community safety. These results suggest the outer wards are considerably more affluent than the inner wards of Wellingborough town. For example, only 9.6% of Wellingborough town households had a net monthly income

of £2,600 and above, compared with 17.1% of households in the outer wards. This is a considerable difference and an obvious indicator of where the majority of housing need lies.

From this survey we can see that there is a recognised need for affordable housing in Wellingborough. The survey suggests that much of this need will be provided in the urban areas of Wellingborough, as is driven by the Structure Plan requirements and the demographic indicators of affordability and household income. The urban extension to the east of the town and various schemes within Wellingborough will provide the majority of new affordable housing need for the Borough, supported where justified on appropriate sites in the outer rural settlements.

Implications for the Study Area

Considering the analysis above and our understanding of the study area, there are varying degrees of affordable housing need. Whilst the principle urban areas of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough have significant affordable housing needs there are also identified needs across the rural areas to be addressed. For example, discussions with King's Cliffe parish council revealed a notable affordable housing need in the village.

The housing need surveys above were completed before the MKSM study identified locations for sustainable urban extensions around Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. Considering the size of such extensions these urban areas will be able to soak up considerable amounts of the affordable housing need across the three western boroughs of the study area. More difficulty will come with meeting rural affordable housing needs in East Northamptonshire. The nature of the settlements in this district result in difficulties in providing affordable housing. By their nature and constraints, these settlements can offer limited infill development and often involve development that is not above an affordable housing threshold, therefore making it easier for developers to avoid affordable housing contributions.

The obvious consequence of affordable housing provision in the study area being focussed on the principal urban areas, is for those unable to afford to live in rural areas moving to the urban areas to seek an improved housing opportunity. This could then drive prospective employers further away from the rural areas and so their sustainability is hindered. It will be vital for the spatial strategy for the study area to focus on the most sustainable locations for growth, with consideration to where affordable housing can be realistically located.

4.4 Education

Local Authority Education within Northamptonshire currently operates with two school systems; a three-tier system is in operation within the Borough of Northampton (in the process of changing to two tier) and the north-east Northamptonshire area, based around Thrapston and Oundle. The system works by having pupils move from Lower to Middle School, and from there to Upper School. A two-tier system operates within the rest of Northamptonshire County, in which pupil's transfer from Primary to Secondary School.

The schools within the study area are located in rural areas surrounding Wellingborough, Corby, Raunds, Higham Ferrers/Rushden, Irthlingborough, Kettering, Wollaston and Rothwell. Oundle has an Upper School which feeds from the Middle School located in Thrapston. **Figure 5** identifies the locations of schools in the area.

The Admission system within Northamptonshire works on a Linked Area/Schools basis, the towns and villages within Northamptonshire are linked to the nearest Primary, which feed into

the designated Middle, Upper and Secondary Schools. Admission requirements, set out in the 'Schools Organisation Plan, 2003-2008' produced by Northamptonshire County Council states that admissions to Primary Schools are based on counts supplied by databases held by the Health Authority and parental choice in favour of schools which are not necessarily the closest. Admissions to Secondary Schools are based on the numbers leaving the feeder schools and parental choice.

Capacity issues have been assessed within the 'Schools Organisation Plan', represented on **Figures 6 and 7**, showing the catchment areas with capacity (at 2003) and areas with possible problems in future years (2008). This is reflected by the net capacity of each school compared to the total number of pupils, where the total number of pupils exceeds the capacity of the school or pupil numbers are close to capacity denotes possible pressure on places. In general terms the primary school catchments for the rural areas have spare capacity, with only Higham Ferrers and Rushden indicated to have problems by 2008. At secondary level Raunds is already over capacity, Rothwell is effectively at capacity and Kettering and Irthlingborough are expected to be over capacity by 2008. Expansion of Rothwell is already planned to account for increased pupil numbers. Note that Middle Schools in Thrapston need to expand capacity and developer contributions are currently being sought from housing developments there. These projections do not, however, take in to account the additional rural growth as part of the SRS.

Its clear that individually some schools are operating close to capacity levels and may have problems in the future, These are indicated in **Table 4.2**, however, within the rural areas overall there is generally a surplus of places.

Table 4.2 Rural Schools Future Capacity Issues

School Catchment Area	Over Capacity at 2008	Significant Under Capacity 2008 (>25%)
Corby	Gretton Primary	-
Rothwell	Loddington C.E Primary Rushton Primary	Rothwell Victoria Infants (32%)
Kettering	Geddington C.E Primary Isham C.E Primary	-
Oundle	-	Barnwell C.E Primary (72%) Easton Garfords Primary (54%)
Wellingborough	Earls Barton Junior Wilby C.E Primary	Bozeat Primary (28%) Grendon C.E Primary (35%)
Irthlingborough	Irthlingborough Infants	Finedon Infants (39%)
Rushden/Higham Ferrers	The Ferrers Higham Ferrers Junior	-
Raunds	Manor Secondary Stanwick Primary	-

Source: NCC School Organisation Plan 2003 - 2008

Importantly, **Table 4.2** also identifies those schools that currently and in the future are likely to have significant spare capacity. These have been defined as schools where spare capacity is greater than 25% based on the LEAs own targets. It is these schools that have falling pupil numbers and therefore their long term future is less certain. In this respect it is the more rural schools that show the greatest spare capacity and it is understood that the proposed closure of Barnwell Primary is currently a key issue for that village.

Northamptonshire County Council has recognised that school places will need to increase each year to accommodate increased pupil numbers. A new Primary School is due to be built in Higham Ferrers to help alleviate the pressure on school places, also there are proposals for a new primary school in south Rushden. A new village is currently being constructed at Mawsley in Kettering Borough and will include a new village primary school. The expansion to Manor Secondary in Raunds will increase its places to help reduce pressure. The current programme also includes expansion of the Upper School at Oundle to cater for expected numbers.

4.5 Transportation and Communications

4.5.1 Rural Public Transport

Northamptonshire County Council sets out public transport standards through the current Local Transport Plan 2000 (LTP) to service rural areas within East Northamptonshire, Corby, Wellingborough and Kettering. The LTP has created an 'Inter-Urban and Rural Toolbox' which details five levels of service in a bid to reduce rural isolation and promote social inclusion. The levels of service have been defined by their frequency between rural and urban areas, for the Study Area we have concentrated on the first three levels:

- Level 1 Limited Stop Service. Frequency - hourly or two hourly in intervals;
- Level 2 Frequent Stop Service. - Half hourly or hourly intervals; and
- Level 3 Daily Services (from larger villages to towns) Monday to Saturday work and off peak morning and afternoon service.

Currently the frequency of public transport services in rural areas can be hourly or two-hourly intervals and some even only have reliance on a daily service. The 'Inter-Urban and Rural Transport Toolbox' aims to introduce new bus services, increase access to transport information within rural areas and develop 'Rural Transport Partnerships' which will develop services to meet accessibility needs. A Public Transport Accessibility Map has been produced, **Figure 8**, which represents hourly and daily bus routes, the Map shows the linkages between the rural and urban areas.

The main bus operator Stagecoach, Community Transport schemes and directory searches provided information on public transport services within rural areas, this information has been included in the Summary of Community Facilities Matrix. Within Northamptonshire a number of Community Transport Schemes are now in operation, servicing rural areas, these include Dial-a-Ride, voluntary car schemes, and village minibus schemes. The Community Transport Toolbox, set out in the Local Transport Plan, aims to reduce the dependency on the private car, and reduce social exclusion. The Community Transport Toolbox, with the support of the Rural Bus Grant, aims to increase the use of Community Transport, and support the development of new Community Transport Schemes.

Northamptonshire's Public Transport Investment aims to improve the bus corridor between Kettering and Desborough and extending the hourly route between Northampton-Wellingborough-Kettering-Corby-Oundle-Peterborough to include Milton Keynes and increasing the frequency on this route to a half hourly service between Northampton and Corby.

As can be seen by **Figure 8**, access to regular bus services at frequencies that are likely to encourage higher levels of use, i.e. hourly, vary widely across the study area. In this respect the corridors that offer such access are:

- the north-south urban spine linking the main urban areas and intervening villages;
- the A6 north-west to south-east route linking Market Harborough - Desborough - Rothwell - Kettering - Burton Latimer - Finedon - Rusden - Bedford;
- east-west routes along the A45 and A4500 Linking Northampton - Earls Barton - Wellingborough and Rushden; and
- east-west routes linking Corby - Oundle - Warmington - Peterborough.

The remaining rural areas are at best served by daily services, which enable access to local towns for essential trips but will not be that attractive for other regular trips. This was a common theme expressed in our discussions with Parish Councils.

One of the most obvious issues that arise is the lack of frequent services to Thrapston and north-south connections between the main towns in East Northants. These settlements are identified or proposed as Rural Service Centre in the SRS and have been selected partly on the range and accessibility of services.

Services to the remaining rural areas are generally infrequent or dependent on community transport schemes. The rural areas between Thrapston and Oundle and along the eastern boundary of the study area with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire would appear to be the least accessible in public transport terms.

4.5.2 Highway Links

The primary road network is identified on **Figure 8**. In highway terms the study area is bisected by the A14 which is part of the Trans European Road Network, providing high quality east-west links to the M1, M6 and A1. The A45 to the south of the district provides good connections between Rushden, Wellingborough and Northampton and to the M1. The A6 provides linkages between Leicester, Kettering and Bedford. The north eastern part of the study area is served by the A605 and A47, which link Corby, Thrapston, and Oundle to the A1 and Peterborough in the East.

These routes are essential to maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of the rural area given that the car is the main form of transport and in enabling access to higher order services and jobs in surrounding urban areas.

4.5.3 Mode of Travel

Table 4.3 sets out a comparison of selected wards in the study area in terms of the average distance travelled to work, and three modes of transport. Although only a snapshot, the information in the table highlights a number of key issues:

- The level of bus use is extremely limited in most areas and in many rural areas is as low as 1%, and even where relatively high frequency services are provided.
- That in the market towns the percentage of people that walk to work can be as high as in urban areas.
- Low levels of bus use in the rural areas corresponds with high dependency on car travel.
- That in the rural areas average travel to work distances can exceed 20km highlighting the dependency on surrounding urban areas for employment, compared to 9-13km for urban and urban fringe locations.
- That there are distinct differences between market towns indicated by car use in Oundle being relatively low, with high levels of walking and average travel distances of 17km, compared to other settlements such as Irthlingborough.

This data also suggests that in order to understand the nature and linkages between settlements that a more detailed local level study is required that looks at the needs and travel patterns of individual residents and possibly local businesses.

Table 4.3 Comparison of Travel to Work Modes and Average Distance Travelled

Ward ¹	Type of Area	Total Employed Age 16 - 74	Travel to work by car (%) ³	Travel to work by Bus (%)	Travel to work on Foot (%)	Average Distance Travelled to work (km)
Oundle	Market Town	2342	66	1	15	17
Barnwell	Rural East Northants	1007	76	1	6	21
Raunds	Market Town	4300	75	2	10	17
Wollaston	Rural south Wellingborough	1906	70	4	12	16
Irthlingborough	Market Town	3607	74	3	12	15
Rothwell (Thresham Ward)	Market Town	1693	75	6	9	14
Welland	Rural Northwest Kettering	1118	71	2	4	22
Corby Central	Urban	2288	63	9	13	9
Wellingborough Quensway	Urban	2657	67	5	14	9
Burton Latimer	Urban Fringe	1635	73	3	11	13

1. Based on ward boundary and therefore for towns/villages will include associated rural area.

2. Source: Office National Statistics, Census 2001

3. Includes car driver and car passenger.

4.5.4 Proposed Improvements

As a result of the SRS and the substantial increases in growth envisaged a number of key transport improvement are proposed to facilitate mainly urban expansions. Of this package of measures most are aimed at dealing with transport issues in the existing urban areas and therefore have limited impact on the rural areas. However, it is considered that the following are of particular relevance:

- Strategic bus corridor development between Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough;
- A6 Rushden Higham Ferrers Bypass (Implemented);
- Rushden town centre link road (about to commence, is expected to remove a lot of Rushden traffic from Higham Ferrers town centre through route)
- A6 Desborough Rothwell Bypass (Implemented);
- A43 Corby Link Road;
- A509 dualling and Isham Bypass; and
- Desborough Multi-Modal Interchange and Rail Station.

Additional Growth area funding has been secured to commence other improvements to the public transport networks. Improvement to bus services between Northampton - Wellingborough - Kettering - Corby - Oundle - Peterborough to include raising frequencies to half hourly by 2007. Quality bus corridor improvements are proposed for 2004/2005 on the Kettering - Desborough Route. As well as dealing with increased traffic, highway improvements such as the A6 Desborough Rothwell bypass, Rushden town centre link road (removes traffic from Higham Ferrers) and A509 Isham Bypass will facilitate regeneration initiatives in the Market Towns by improving accessibility and environmental conditions within the settlements. However, it must be recognised that most of the schemes within the SRS are aimed at facilitating growth within the urban spine.

4.6 Healthcare

4.6.1 Location of Facilities

The general extent of healthcare facilities for the rural area such as GPs, pharmacies and dentists is set out in **Figure 9**, the main hospitals serving the area are also identified. As would be expected the main hospitals are located within the larger urban areas and population centres within the study area i.e. Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden and outside the study area at Bedford, Peterborough, Market Harborough and Stamford. The SRS currently identifies the possible need for a new district general hospital either to replace the existing ones at either Northampton or Kettering (the only one within the study area), or for an additional third general hospital, subject to feasibility studies.

With regard to other health facilities it is clear that the larger towns and rural areas close to the main urban areas have good access to facilities. In the north-eastern part of the study area Oundle is clearly an important centre providing access to a wide range of villages immediately to the south and north of the A605. However, discussions with parish contacts suggest that villages such as King's Cliffe look increasingly toward Stamford and Peterborough for their needs.

In the southern part of East Northants the collection of larger settlements means that for villages and residents in this area there is a wider range of opportunities to access medical facilities. This is either within smaller market towns such as Thrapston, Raunds, Irthlingborough and Higham Ferrers or larger centres such as Rushden and Wellingborough.

The larger settlements to the south of Wellingborough, such as Earls Barton, Bozeat and Irchester, can all offer doctors' surgeries. With the exception of Bozeat, all offer pharmacies and Earls Barton a dentist. This rural part of the study area and the smaller villages, therefore have reasonable access to medical services, especially when the proximity of Wellingborough and Northampton is taken in to account.

Settlements in the rural western flank of the study area extending from Mears Ashby in the south to Earls Carlton in the north are clearly heavily reliant on the main urban areas for access to services and to Northampton and Market Harborough to the west. The exceptions to this are Desborough and Rothwell, which offer a range of services appropriate to their size. They also appear to serve villages in the immediate locality such as Loddington, Harrington and Rushton.

Service Capacity

Repeated attempts have been made to discuss issues associated with the provision of medical facilities with the Primary Care Trust, though it has not been possible to secure a response to inform this study. Nevertheless, it has been possible to identify capacity issues from work undertaken by DTZ Pieda Consulting as part of the Growth Area Study and the East Northamptonshire Capacity Assessment (March 2004). Primary health care provision within rural North-Northamptonshire has also been assessed by information provided from Northamptonshire County Council, web-site searches and previous capacity studies.

Through the planned growth of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough it has been envisaged that additional primary care facilities will be required to support increased growth. The growth of Corby will increase the pressure on surgeries within the surrounding rural area, it has been anticipated that the Weldon extension will require a large health centre, and smaller additions to capacity will be necessary to accommodate growth at the villages of Rockingham, Stanion and Oakley.

Growth to the west of Kettering at the village of Thorpe Malsor will require small additions to capacity, and the planned growth option at Burton Latimer will also require additions to capacity levels to accommodate growth. GP practices within Kettering are generally at capacity with many having closed their patient lists. The planned growth of Wellingborough to the east will require significant additional primary care facilities.

Surgeries within rural East Northamptonshire are currently operating at or over capacity levels (assessed by patient to GP ratio), within the rural areas it has been identified that there is spare capacity in Raunds and Rushden. Within Irthlingborough one surgery recently completed an extension, this medical centre also provides a walk-in surgery for the village of Woodford for an hour and a half each day. The GP Surgery at Thrapston is currently awaiting planning permission for a new site, with other surgeries also set to increase GP numbers.

In terms of secondary health care Kettering District Hospital is currently operating at full capacity and it has been assumed that growth within the catchment area will need to be accommodated by increased capacity. Rushden Memorial Hospital is to be extended to include a minor injuries unit.

4.7 Utilities

In considering the utilities supplied by the water/waste, electrical and gas providers, we have contacted each supplier to understand the capacity to accommodate increased growth within North Northamptonshire. Despite repeated attempts, we have had no response from the water/waste and gas suppliers, in order to understand capacity issues we have therefore looked at previous studies. We have had useful discussions with the electricity supplier East Midlands Electricity.

East Midlands Electricity stated that the proposed level of growth within North-Northamptonshire does not fit with their current strategies and available funding levels. At present there is no strategy for the defined growth areas. Normal expected growth is in the order of 1% to existing Primary Substations, this would consist of small developments of less than a 100 houses. Any development above this threshold would mean reinforcement to higher voltage networks.

Within the areas of Raunds, Burton Latimer and Higham Ferrers there is little or no capacity to accommodate increased growth. Within Oundle, Thrapston, Irthlingborough, Rothwell and Desborough there is capacity. Of these, Desborough is best placed and could accommodate growth of some 5,000 new dwellings, the others could possibly accommodate up to 1,000 new dwellings.

Based on information from previous Growth Area Assessments the gas supplier Transco have anticipated no significant issues in accommodating increased growth within North-Northamptonshire. Transco has indicated that infrastructure will need to be upgraded and reinforced.

Anglian Water has indicated that upgrades will be required to supply networks and off site reinforcements and pumping upgrades. There will also have to be significant extensions to existing supply networks to serve the proposed growth at Weldon and Barton Seagrave and the diversion of large diameter trunk mains to the north and south of Corby will be required to support growth. Additional sewerage and sewage treatment works will be necessary to accommodate the proposed growth levels.

4.8 Parish Council Interviews

To add a more local dimension to the information we undertook a number of Parish Council interviews. Due to obvious constraints it was not possible to speak to each parish council in the study area.

We devised a broad sample of parishes and spoke to those contacts that were available to comment. The discussions with the parish contacts were driven by the questionnaire shown at **Appendix A**. This questionnaire was followed, though the discussions that took place evolved and many contacts were keen to discuss a range of issues.

The interviews revealed a number of issues at the local level and a number of trends across the rural settlements that need to be addressed.

In terms of housing the discussions that took place revealed some interesting differences throughout the study area. In particular, it was apparent that in the east of the study area (East Northants) there was a particular need for affordable housing in rural settlements especially King's Cliffe. Villages such as King's Cliffe and Easton on the Hill have become attractive

settlements to those looking to live in the rural area whilst working elsewhere in an urban centre. This has driven house prices beyond the reach of many locals, resulting in young people having to move elsewhere. Of the Parishes we spoke to there was a notable difference between those actively pursuing development to those desperate to resist additional schemes, many were unlikely to support extra development even if it helped support local services, often due to loss of character.

Other, larger settlements i.e. rural service centres are requiring more employment development, which is proving difficult due to the unattractive location to many firms and the value of land for residential development (The CoPELA study highlights the relatively low employment land values). This is a particular problem in the West of the study area, where it is felt that Desborough in particular faces a situation where employment land is required by local business but is not coming forward possibly due to landowners holding out for residential planning permissions. Such settlements require additional employment before residential development becomes sustainable. All of the settlements covered are dominated by residential use, which is appropriate to the smaller local service centres. However, the rural service centres needs to attract more employment and retail to improve vitality and vibrancy and therefore improve the sustainability of the location for residential development.

Besides the discussions on development requirements for employment and residential uses, the discussions also focussed on the provision of services. In the smaller settlements the quality of the local bus service was a common frustration, with many villages suffering from unreliable, infrequent services to a limited range of destinations. The quality of the bus service was considered poor even in the Rural Service centres, and most notably Thrapston. It is evident that the provision of public transport through the study area is insufficient, preventing many from commuting to work, therefore encouraging greater car use and more congestion on rural highways.

It was also suggested that problems associated with the perception of Corby may also be encouraging rural residents close to the town to travel further to places such as Peterborough and Stamford to access better retail, leisure and other service opportunities. However, employment links were suggested to be relatively strong with the rural area.

In the smaller settlements the issue of local services revolved around the lack of facilities for young children and teenagers especially. The failing of the local transport network makes it difficult for teenagers to easily access the facilities of surrounding urban areas. Some of the villages have football and cricket clubs but lack built facilities that can offer activities throughout the year. In the larger settlements similar problems were mentioned. Thrapston for example has a notable lack of youth facilities; which is resulting in criminal behaviour throughout the town centre.

5. Settlement Linkages, Patterns and Roles

Based on the information gathered we then set out to try and define the settlement linkages, roles and patterns as far as this was possible. It should be noted that wherever possible this was based on available data, however, often it was necessary to use general information from community web sites, discussions with Local Authority Officers and Parish Council contacts.

5.1 Existing Settlement Hierarchy and Patterns

From the initial Community Services and Facilities Matrix (**Appendix C**) it was possible to reduce the list of settlements being considered by looking at the range of services provided. The list was therefore sifted to only include those settlements that could offer:

- School;
- Food shop;
- Post Office;
- Pub;
- Church;
- Public Hall/Community Centre; and
- Sports Field or Pitches.

An exception was made to this approach for Earls Barton which does not appear to have a community centre but has a population in excess of 5,000 and a wide range of employment opportunities.

These settlements are set out in **Appendix D** and illustrated in **Figure 10**. This sets out the existing settlement hierarchy as justified by the need to provide certain basic services. This approach illustrates that this simplistic method for defining rural and local service centres is not ideal and throws up a number of issues and a wide range of settlements in terms of size, location and nature.

Most notably it does not reflect the quality of service provision, the relationship to other centres and the surrounding rural areas or the alternative options for gaining access to services. This is particularly the case for the rural area of East Northants north of the A14 where the only settlement of any significant size, good public transport and a wide range of services is Oundle. Adding an additional criteria, for example, based around significant employment opportunities would have ruled out most of the more rural settlements.

The exercise does confirm that Raunds should be defined as a rural service centre given that it is the largest in population terms (8,614) and has a good range of services, including secondary school serving the surrounding rural area, and hourly bus services. Although employment allocations are extensive (25ha) they are yet to be implemented and it may be suggested that

they are required to balance recent residential development in the town and locally in places such as Stanwick. This compares to Thrapston which has very limited bus services and relies on Oundle for secondary schooling, but has a number of employment opportunities, is an administrative centre, and has a new leisure centre under construction.

In looking to identify the possible local service centres the picture is less clear. It includes some 23 settlements that range from around 5,000 population (Earls Barton, Irchester) to smaller settlements of a few hundred (Aldwincle, Barnwell and Stanion). It would also suggest that some of the larger settlements could be considered as rural service centres when compared to places such as Thrapston. This is particularly the case with Earls Barton which has a range of local employment opportunities and good public transport access to the main urban areas.

Although the facilities selected to define local service centres could be refined to exclude the smaller settlements, the process would still have the same basic flaws. It would continue to simply direct further growth and supporting services and infrastructure to the existing larger settlements in the south and west of the study area. This has been the historical situation based on existing development plan settlement hierarchies and the sequential approach advocated in national guidance. It perhaps highlights the point that the role of individual settlements needs to be considered further and form a part of defining rural and local service centres.

5.2 Exploring Settlement Roles and Linkages

As a consequence of the issues discussed above we have attempted to try and define the roles and linkages that each settlement has. This is summarised in **Table 5.1**, and the final column identifies a suggested role for the settlement taking into account proximity to the main urban areas and whether the settlement can offer a particular function above the basic facilities set out in Section 5.1, such as:

- non-agricultural employment opportunities;
- medical, pharmacy or GP;
- secondary school;
- banking; and
- the proximity to key service centres and physical linkages to surrounding smaller settlements.

Experience in undertaking this exercise has highlighted conclusions reached in earlier research, and as discussed in Section 2, that the potential roles and linkages are extremely complex. They vary depending on the type of service or role being examined, location and scale of settlement and are difficult to define without detailed survey information to test the conclusions.

Other evidence also highlights the complexity of the study area. For example, research undertaken as part of the Peterborough Sub-regional Strategy (Llewelyn Davis, November 2003) clearly defines the area generally to the east of Oundle and running north to Stamford as part of the Peterborough Sub-Region, in housing market, job, leisure and comparison shopping terms.

Discussion with local contacts suggest that although villages close to Corby have employment links with the town, the perception and image of Corby means that residents are often likely to travel to alternative destinations further away such as Stamford for shopping or entertainment.

Health checks undertaken for Thrapston and Irthlingborough have attempted to define catchment areas. In the case of Thrapston this basically extends north of the A14 practically to Oundle and east over the County Boundary. This is probably not surprising given the number of larger towns to the south, but must overlap extensively with Oundle's main catchment area. For Irthlingborough the catchment area is restricted to only those few settlements along the minor road to the north, Great and Little Addington and Woodford. This is presumably a function of physical linkages, the relative proximity to the urban areas and competition from larger more attractive centres.

The variation of the linkages can generally be defined as:

- **Education and Facilities:** Schooling can be localised to the immediate villages or covering a much wider area if secondary provision is provided e.g. Raunds and Wollaston. Community facilities and convenience shopping are generally more localised or based around public provision. The larger market towns do have some limited comparison shopping, however, it is not of such a scale or quality to offer a more than local attraction i.e. to the immediate settlement and nearby villages. Recreation provision is generally limited to local sports provision/centres, community and village halls and public houses.
- **Transport:** Reasonable road links connect to most areas and for those with access to a car access to services is not a major problem. Public transport in the bulk of the rural area is relatively poor, only those settlements that happen to be on the key inter urban routes have a service of more than daily frequency, reflected in the low levels of use to get to work (refer to **Table 4.3**). The settlements on the A6, A45, A605 and A509 are generally well connected.
- **Work:** Patterns and linkages are likely to be extremely complex and it has not been possible to define the patterns for individual settlements. This is especially the case to the west and south of the study area due to the concentration and interrelated nature of key urban areas and smaller towns. When average distances to work are examined it illustrates the heavy dependency on the main urban areas with average distances being in the order of 16 - 21km. The higher value being for the more rural wards that lack a settlement of any significant size and are distant from the main urban areas (e.g. Welland, Barnwell).

Table 5.1 Settlement Profiles and Roles

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
Urban Hubs /Rural Service Centres							
Thrapston (pop 5063)	<p>The town has grown considerably over recent years and additional development is not viewed favourably with Town Council.</p> <p>Planning permission exists for 262 dwellings, whilst an allocation for 300 exists to the south east of the town.</p>	<p>Town has a number of larger employers, and appropriate land for further development. Town's key employers are East Northants Council, Scotts of Thrapston and ABX Logistics (located on A14 Business Park).</p> <p>Broadband available</p>	<p>Primary School & Middle School. Relatively localised catchment.</p>	<p>The town has a notable lack of youth facilities, with youths creating intimidating areas and vandalism. The new Leisure Centre is due to open later in 2004, having met with considerable delay. Town has weekly street market and thriving cattle market.</p> <p>Town has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy.</p>	<p>Bus service is poor and infrequent. Lack of frequent, reliable services to a range of destinations i.e. Northampton, connections to local villages are poor.</p>	<p>73.2 %(60.6) are employed, 81.1% (68.9) of properties are owner occupied, 11.7% (26.8) of households don't have a car or van, 10% (13.6) of the population are retired, 18.2% (19.8) have a degree or higher and 25.2% (29.1) have no qualifications.</p>	<p>Rural Service Centre</p> <p>Key Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Function • Employment and local retail centre • Local education and community facilities • Serves a range of villages north of the A14
Oundle (pop 5014)	<p>Attractive settlement with good education and local transport links. House prices are therefore high and development pressures considerable.</p> <p>Planning permission in place for 101 dwellings.</p>	<p>Town has only one company with greater than 25 employees. Possibly unattractive location to larger employers and distribution uses.</p> <p>Schools and small businesses important employers.</p>	<p>Primary School, two secondary schools (one public) and middle school. Education offer is strong and brings a lot of people/business into the town. Catchment is extensive with pupils coming from Thrapston and rural settlements to the north, west and east</p>	<p>Affluent settlement with good range of services, local retail, restaurants etc. Town has a range of comparison/ specialised retail. Town also has weekly market, bringing in trade and commerce and a monthly Farmers Market.</p>	<p>Bus service is reasonable, with relatively good services to Peterborough and Corby and settlements along the A605.</p>	<p>61.5% (60.6) of the population are employed, 72.4% (68.9%) of dwellings are owner occupied and 15.5% (26.8%) have no car or van, 12.9% (13.6) of the population are retired, 28.5% (19.8) have a degree or higher and 19.2% (29.1) have no qualifications.</p>	<p>Rural Service Centre</p> <p>Key Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key educational function • Key local retail, leisure and community facilities • Focus for rural business development and tourism

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
Oundle (pop 5014) (cont)		Vibrancy of the town makes Oundle an attractive location for rural business. Little employment land available. Broadband available.		Youth facilities could be improved. Town has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential focus. ▪ Serves a wide range of settlements to the north and south and along the A505 that have limited services
Raunds (pop 8614)	Does not have any existing allocations and has planning permissions for only 42 units overall.	Footwear industry has declined. Significant employment site available, Hotpoint occupy a site on Wharf Park. Town's other key employers are Wrekin Construction company and Pallet Solutions. New employment is required to stimulate regeneration and investment in the town. Broadband available	1 primary, 1 infant, 1 junior and 1 secondary school, serves extensive rural area.	Notable lack of youth facilities. Village suffers from apathy and often difficult to motivate people to action. The town does have children and toddler playgrounds (1 of each) and 3 recognised areas of recreational open space Town has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy.	Bus service is poor and improvements are required in terms of frequency, destination and journey time to urban areas. Hourly access to urban areas to the west only, rural links limited.	70.6% (60.6) employed, 81.1% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 13.95% (26.8) have no car or van, 11.45% (13.6) of the population are retired, 12.2% (19.8) have a degree or higher and 29.05% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<p>Rural Service Centre</p> <p>Key roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential with small, local retail function in centre. • Some Comparison retail offer • Town has local and wider educational function. • Development as an employment centre to address commuting. • Serves settlements such as Ringstead, Hargrave, Stanwick and rural areas to the east.

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
Desborough (pop 8200)	Desborough is identified as an area to accommodate considerable growth to 2021 in the MKSM. Housing land is more valuable than employment land and so little employment has been coming forward. Planning permission in place for 700 dwellings.	Desborough has an identified shortage of employment opportunities. Planning permission is in place for a number of additional units on the Industrial estate. However, there is a shortage of available land and buildings for new and expanding companies in the town centre. Broadband available. MTI Action Plan seeks to improve local retail, improve the street scene and to provide new employment facilities i.e. starter units. Key employers are Albany Sheds, Anglo Turkish International & Heritage Blinds.	Primary and Junior Schools and 1 Infants. Along with the secondary school in neighbouring Rothwell, educational capacity is good and can cope with additional growth.	Local retail is reasonable, with basic range of convenience though little comparison. Desborough has a good range of leisure activities mostly of a voluntary nature and run through local clubs and societies. Town has a GP surgery, dentists and two pharmacies.	Bus service is good to Kettering and Market Harborough and soon to be improved further. Access to settlements along the A6 route is good. New station and interchange proposals could further improve linkages and accessibility.	69.7% (60.6) employed, 83.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 16.95% (26.8) have no car or van, 12.7% of the population are retired, 13.9%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 29.8% (29.1) have no qualifications.	Rural Service Centre/Urban Hub Key roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local educational function, retail and service function. Development as a key employment and housing location through SDA Future transport Interchange, rail and bus Possibly serves limited rural area, extending to Braybrook and Rushton, possibly Willbarston
Rothwell (pop 7500)	Identified as area to accommodate considerable growth to 2021. Housing land more valuable than employment land so little land coming forward.	Less industrial than neighbouring Desborough, and has limited employment opportunities. Rothwell trying to gear itself as a centre for Arts & Heritage.	Infant, junior and secondary school. Serves rural area to the north to the County Boundary. Secondary also serves Desborough	Local services and retail are relatively good. Town has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy.	Bus service is good to Kettering and Market Harborough and soon to be improved further. Access route to settlements along A6 is good.	67.7% (60.6) employed, 78.95% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 18.85% (26.8) have no car or van, 27.05% of the population are retired, 14.3%(19.8) have a	Rural Service Centre/Urban Hub Key roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development as a key employment and housing location through SDA

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
	Outline planning permission received for 250 dwellings on single site.	The town is attempting to market itself as a tourist destination, playing on the attractive market square and specialised local retail. Need to develop the economy and job opportunities. Broadband available				degree or higher and 31.90% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong educational function for a wide rural area Tourism development Possibly serves smaller villages to the south and west Harvington, Orton and Loddington, and Rushton to the East, but for education serves wider rural area extending north to the County Boundary
Irthlingborough (pop 7620)	<p>Identified as an area to accommodate considerable growth to 2021 in the MKSM.</p> <p>Planning permission for 384 dwellings, with allocations totalling 100 units remaining from adopted local plan.</p>	<p>Town has a number of other large employers i.e. Homeseeker homes and Freightroute.</p> <p>Employment land also available at the former British Steel Offices.</p> <p>Regeneration and improvements to the town are required.</p> <p>Number of local employment opportunities but still dependent on manufacturing.</p> <p>Broadband available.</p>	Secondary, infant and junior schools, but still services a relatively small rural area to the north.	<p>Local retail offers convenience and range of comparison. Town accommodates Nene Park, home to Rushden & Diamonds FC. Also, working men's club and cricket club.</p> <p>Town has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy</p>	Hourly services to surrounding urban areas, proving access. Access from rural settlements is generally poor	69.7% (60.6) employed, 83.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 16.95% (26.8) have no car or van. 12.7% of the population are retired, 13.9%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 29.8% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<p>Rural Service Centre/Urban Hub</p> <p>Key Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational centre secondary level Residential and Employment role with, a range of employers Local services and facilities. Would appear to serve a relatively limited area covering Little and Great Addington and part of Woodford.

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
Higham Ferrers (pop 6435)	<p>Higham Ferrers has two principle areas assigned for residential development. To the north of the town and at Wharf Road.</p> <p>There are substantial residential commitments with some 371 dwellings committed with planning permission and around 90 units on remaining allocated sites.</p> <p>Town centre is an important conservation area</p>	<p>The leather and tanning industry has been important in the town for many years.</p> <p>Employment is focussed to the east of the town centre, though neighbouring Rushden offers more employment opportunities.</p> <p>New employment development in the town is heavily dependant on the proposed A6 bypass.</p> <p>Land identified under policy HF2 of the Local Plan makes provision for 11.75 ha of land for industrial and commercial developments, which it is noted cannot proceed until the A6 bypass has been provided.</p> <p>Broadband available.</p>	<p>Higham Ferrers has a good range of educational facilities, with infant, primary and a secondary school.</p> <p>New 210 place primary school will be provided as part of development south of the A45 bypass, to meet needs of new residential development in this part of the town.</p> <p>Capacity issues at primary level expected by 2008</p>	<p>Facilities in Higham Ferrers are more limited compared with those available in Rushden. However, proximity of Rushden enables easy access to such facilities. A monthly Farmer's Market has recently been established.</p> <p>The town has basic facilities such as library, GP surgery, recreation ground and a number of halls available for public use.</p> <p>New facilities will be provided as Duchy of Lancaster land south of the A45 bypass is developed.</p>	<p>Comparatively, access to public transport is relatively good in Higham Ferrers. Residents benefit from regular bus services to Rushden and further afield to Northampton, Wellingborough and Kettering.</p> <p>The A45 bypass has improved congestion on the local road network, therefore improving the reliability and frequency of services, whilst the A6 bypass has given further relief.</p> <p>Town centre traffic still a key issue to be addressed.</p>	<p>69.1% (60.6) employed, 77.8% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 17.3% (26.8) have no car or van, 11.4% of the population are retired, 14.1%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 28.5% (29.1) have no qualifications.</p>	<p>Rural Service Centre/Urban Hub</p> <p>Key Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational role with range of provision Residential role and proposed increase in employment role. Local services and facilities, though neighbouring Rushden provides many services/ facilities to the residents of Higham Ferrers. Close proximity to Rushden makes it difficult to identify a distinct rural service function, may serve some villages to the east.
EAST NORTHANTS							
Aldwincle (pop 336)	<p>Small village with possible potential for limited infill development.</p>	<p>Little employment.</p> <p>Broadband available.</p>	<p>Primary School</p>	<p>Village Hall, well used by local community</p> <p>Food shop, public house, community hall, post office</p>	<p>Bus service is poor and improvements are required in terms of frequency, destination and journey time to urban areas.</p>	<p>69.5% (60.6) employed, 66.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 11.1% (26.8) have no car/van, 13.5% of the population are retired, 23.2%(19.8)</p>	<p>Residential, Close to RSC of Thrapston</p>

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
						have a degree or higher and 25.4% (29.1) have no qualifications	
Barnwell (pop 448)	Small village with possible potential for small infill development. But conservation area issues.	Village has an identified employment site under 1ha. Location of village south of Oundle on A605 makes it an attractive location for the appropriate rural business.	Primary School, closure issue. Broadband available	Traditional small village facilities Food shop, public house, community hall, post office	Bus service is poor and improvements are required in terms of frequency, destination and journey time to urban areas.	69.2% (60.6) employed, 72.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 6.9% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.1% of the population are retired, 28.6%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 18.8% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential, limited employment, poor access, Close to Oundle
Brigstock (pop 1421)	Planning permission in place for 25 dwellings. Allocated site remains for 20 dwellings. These schemes could provide the required housing to meet new employment in Corby.	Large village but with little employment.	Primary School	Traditional village facilities and GP surgery. Food shop, public house, community hall, post office	Bus service is poor and improvements are required in terms of frequency, destination and journey time to urban areas.	70.4% (60.6) employed, 69.9% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 13.5% (26.8) have no car or van, 12.1% of the population are retired, 24.8%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 24.7% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential, local services isolated from other settlements
Easton-on-the-Hill (pop 1040)	Parish Council view is that few, if any, opportunities for development left. There has been a lot of infill development and local opposition would be fierce if more housing was proposed. Conservation area	Large village with little employment. Residents travel to Peterborough and Stamford for work. Broadband available.	Primary School. Nearby Stamford provides secondary school provision.	Traditional village facilities Food and non food shop, public house, community hall, post office, mobile library	Bus services are poor and access to neighbouring, larger settlements is poor i.e. Stamford.	60.2% (60.6) employed, 68.1% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 14.8% (26.8) have no car or van. 18.8% of the population are retired, 23.1%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 25.5% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential, some local services but close to Stamford

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
	Planning permission in place for 12 dwellings in village						
King's Cliffe (pop 1174)	<p>Housing is expensive here and there is a recognised need for affordable housing. The Parish Council are keen for more development.</p> <p>Planning permission in place for 22 dwellings</p> <p>Remaining part of local plan allocation for 35 units and adopted development brief for this site plus larger area of 'long term potential'</p>	<p>Large_village with little employment. But employment land available.</p> <p>Broadband partially available, access to be expanded</p>	<p>Primary School</p> <p>Middle Secondary school also serves immediate villages</p>	<p>Relatively, facilities are good for a settlement of this size.</p> <p>Food and non food shop, public house, community hall, post office</p> <p>Resource Centre below village hall has broadband connection, IT and training facilities for local businesses and community groups.</p>	<p>Bus service is typically poor. As is road access</p> <p>Village also has a notable car parking problem.</p>	<p>66.6% (60.6) employed, 62.5% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 10.8% (26.8) have no car or van, 14.7% of the population are retired, 25.2%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 23.9% (29.1) have no qualifications</p>	<p>Possible Local Service Centre</p> <p>Key role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of educational draw covers range of surrounding villages • Road access is poor, daily bus services to local villages. • Possibly serves a number of smaller villages such as Blatherwyke, Apethorpe, Bulwick, Nassington Yarwell. • Policy decision could be made to expand role to LSC.
Nassington (pop 737)	<p>Small village with possible potential for small infill development but conservation area.</p>	<p>Small_village with little employment</p>	<p>Primary School</p>	<p>Traditional small village facilities</p> <p>Food and non food shop, public house, community hall, post office</p>	<p>Need for improvement to level and frequency of service</p>	<p>68.8% (60.6) employed, 75% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 10.6% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.3% of the population are retired, 27.5%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 20.5% (29.1) have no qualifications</p>	<p>Residential with local education function</p>

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
Ringstead (pop 1524)	Large village with possible potential for small infill development	Little employment. Broadband available	Primary School	Traditional village facilities Food shop, public house, community hall, post office, but also library	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	71.4% (60.6) employed, 79.6% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 10.8% (26.8) have no car or van, 10.8% of the population are retired, 18.6%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 28.2% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential with local education function. Close to Thrapston and Raunds RSCs
Stanwick (pop 2002)	Large village with possible potential for small infill development Has seen significant development in recent years	Large village with little employment Broadband available	Primary School	Traditional village facilities Food and non food shop, public house, community hall, post office, but also mobile library service	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service although hourly service to Rushden	71% (60.6) employed, 84.6% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 7.1% (26.8) have no car or van, 11.5% of the population are retired, 21.9%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 21.8% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential with local education function Close to Raunds RSC
Titchmarsh (pop 618)	Small village with possible potential for small infill development	Small_village with little employment Broadband available	Primary School	Traditional small village facilities Food shop, public house, community hall, post office	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	69.2% (60.6) employed, 72.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 6.9% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.1% of the population are retired, 28.6%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 18.8% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential with local education function Close to Thrapston RSC

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
Warmington (pop 1005)	Large village with potential for limited infill development Planning permission for 10 dwellings. Large local plan allocation for 70 units recently completed	Large village with little employment Broadband available	Primary School	Traditional small village facilities Food and non food shop, public house, community hall, post office	Good bus links to Oundle, Corby and Peterborough.	68% (60.6) employed, 76.4% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 7.5% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.8% of the population are retired, 31.4%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 19.5% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential with local education function Limited links with nearby villages which are close to Oundle RSC
Woodford (pop 1279)	Planning permission for 71 units in total, including 45 on local plan allocated site at Mill Road. Large village with potential for limited infill development	Large village with some employment - local employment at Islip Furnace site just to north of village	Primary School	Traditional village facilities, but also GP practice food shop, public house, community hall, post office	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	68.1% (60.6) employed, 76.1% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 15.8% (26.8) have no car or van, 14.4% of the population are retired, 19.6%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 30.7% (29.1) have no qualifications	Residential with local education function Close to Thrapston RSC, other small settlements relate to Irthlingborough and Raunds RSC.
W'BOROUGH							
Earls Barton (pop 5353)	Large village/small town has become popular place to live, reflected in house prices and pressures for development Planning permission in place for 45 dwellings	3 key employers, Boxes Prestige (135 jobs), Brentmere Leisure (181), Barker Shoes (195) Broadband available	Junior School	Library, Badminton Club, Museum Settlement has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy and bank.	Service is good, with frequent and reliable services in and out of the village, there are good connections to Wellingborough and Northampton	72.4% (60.6) employed, 82.3% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 14% (26.8) have no car or van, 11.8% of the population are retired, 17.8%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 24.7% (29.1) have no qualifications.	Possible Local Service Centre Key Roles: • Residential with local education and services function, number of employment opportunities.

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close to Wellingborough and Northampton, may serve limited rural area and villages, such as Mears Ashby and Wilby
Finedon (Pop 4188)	<p>Large Village/small town has become popular place to live, reflected in house prices and pressures for development.</p> <p>Potential for limited infill development</p>	<p>Village has employment, driven by location on the A6 and proximity to Wellingborough and Kettering</p> <p>Broadband available</p>	1 Primary and 1 infant School	<p>Good range of services and specialised antiques retail.</p> <p>Doctors and library in addition to food shop, public house, community hall, post office</p>	Service is good, with frequent and reliable services in and out of the village, there are good connections to Wellingborough and Northampton	65.9% (60.6) employed, 70% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 23.6% (26.8) have no car or van, 14.4% of the population are retired, 11.1%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 36.6% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<p>Primarily residential though village does have some specialised retail function.</p> <p>Close to main urban areas and Urban Hubs</p>
Irchester (pop 4807)	<p>Large Village/small town , infill development over recent times though planning permission just approved for 24 unit scheme.</p> <p>Potential for limited infill development</p>	<p>Small industrial estate for small, local firms with most residents employed in neighbouring urban areas.</p> <p>Broadband available</p>	Primary School	<p>Good range of facilities and services incl. Recreation ground, mini-bus, good local retail offer, library etc</p> <p>Town has a GP surgery and pharmacy.</p>	Hourly services to Rusden and Wellingborough	66.4% (60.6) employed, 81.9% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 17.6% (26.8) have no car or van, 15.2% of the population are retired, 10.2%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 35.1% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<p>Residential and Employment</p> <p>Close to Wellingborough and Rushden UH</p>
Wollaston (pop 3046)	<p>Development of 100 dwellings has just been completed, and were sold quickly, house prices are rising. Permission for 31 dwellings</p>	<p>Village has two identified sites for employment development, both under 1ha, north and south of the village.</p> <p>Broadband available.</p>	Primary & Secondary School serving wider area	Village has a good range of facilities and, unlike many, has a GP surgery, dentists and pharmacy.	<p>Daily service only to Wellingborough, with connection to local villages</p> <p>Need for improvement</p>	70.5% (60.6) employed, 79.4% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 14.5% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.4% of the population are retired, 19.4%(19.8) have a degree or higher	<p>Possible Local Service Centre</p> <p>Key Roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential with local and wider secondary education function.

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
	<p>The perception is that there is a shortage of land for extra houses</p> <p>Conservation area issues</p> <p>Large village with potential for limited infill development</p>	Some local employment opportunities.				and 25.1% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical facilities and pharmacy • Appears to serve a number of smaller settlements generally to the south of Wellingborough & A45
Bozeat (pop 1937)	<p>Large Village with possible potential for additional infill development. Permission for 18 dwellings exists</p> <p>Conservation area issues</p>	Limited employment opportunities	Primary school	<p>Traditional village facilities and GP surgery.</p> <p>food shop, public house, community hall, post office</p>	<p>Daily service only to Wellingborough, with connection to local villages</p> <p>Need for improvement</p>	70.5% (60.6) employed, 79.4% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 14.5% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.4% of the population are retired, 19.4%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 25.1% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<p>Mainly residential role, with limited local services.</p> <p>Unlikely to function as a LSC to any great degree although has primary school and GP</p>
CORBY							
Weldon (pop 1644)	<p>Considerable residential development over recent years in line with growth of Corby.</p> <p>Large village with potential for limited infill development.</p>	<p>Large village with little employment., opportunities in adjoining urban area</p> <p>Broadband available</p>	Primary School	<p>Traditional village facilities and GP surgery.</p> <p>food shop, public house, community hall, post office</p>	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	64.6% (60.6) employed, 81.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 14.5% (26.8) have no car or van, 17.5% of the population are retired, 15.9%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 32.8% (29.1) have no qualifications.	<p>Weldon may operates as a commuter village to larger centres i.e. Corby.</p> <p>Associated with urban fringe</p>
Gretton (pop 1240)	Large village with possible potential for small infill development	<p>Small village with little employment</p> <p>Broadband available</p>	Primary School	Traditional village facilities and GP surgery, mobile library.	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	70% (60.6) employed, 80.1% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 12% (26.8)	Residential village with reasonable range of services, with local education function

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
				food and non shop, public house, community hall, post office		have no car or van, 12.1% of the population are retired, 20.6%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 26.7% (29.1) have no qualifications.	Close to Corby, small villages to the north may look to Uppingham
Middleton/ Cottingham (pop 912)	Much land west of Corby identified as appropriate for sustainable urban extensions in MKSM. These settlements may be able to accommodate some of this proposed development.	Small village with little employment. Broadband available	Primary School	Traditional small village facilities,	Hourly service connects with some local villages, Corby and Oakham	65.8% (60.6) employed, 84.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 10.9% (26.8) have no car or van, 17.8% of the population are retired, 21.7%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 23.1% (29.1) have no qualifications.	Residential with reasonable range of services, with local education function Close to Corby, limited functions, Possible links with Great Easton
Stanion (pop 873)	Development has been in line with the development of local industry i.e. steelworks in Corby. Recent development of executive housing on edge of village. Land to the South of Corby is identified in MKSM for sustainable urban extensions. Stanion may accommodate some of this development.	Small village with little employment. Broadband available	Primary School	Post office and couple of pubs. Fermyn Woods Country park close by.	Hourly Connections to Corby and Kettering, and Geddington	64.6% (60.6) employed, 81.2% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 14.5% (26.8) have no car or van, 17.5% of the population are retired, 15.9%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 32.8% (29.1) have no qualifications.	Residential with reasonable range of services, with local education function. Close to Corby unlikely to serve other villages

	Housing	Employment	Education	Community Facilities	Public Transport	Key Demographical Info (Average for England and Wales in brackets)	Suggested Role
KETTERING							
Broughton (pop 2047)	Large village with possible potential for small infill development	Large village with little employment. Broadband available	Primary School	Playing Fields and Village hall, indoor bowls club food and non food shop, public house, community hall, post office Potential for GP practice in the near future (alternatively could be located at Mawsley new village)	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	69.3% (60.6) employed, 77.5% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 12.3% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.6% of the population are retired, 21.7%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 23.8% (29.1) have no qualifications.	Local services only, residential . Close to Kettering, unlikely to have significant LSC role, given the limited level of services.
Pytchley (pop 496)	Small village with possible potential for small infill development, conservation area issues.	Small village with little employment. Broadband available	Primary School	Traditional small village facilities food shop, public house, community hall, post office	Need for improvement to level and frequency of service	69.3% (60.6) employed, 77.5% (68.9) of dwellings are owner occupied, 12.3% (26.8) have no car or van, 13.6% of the population are retired, 21.7%(19.8) have a degree or higher and 23.8% (29.1) have no qualifications	Local services, residential . Close to Kettering, unlikely to have significant LSC role.

5.3 Summary and Conclusions

From the appraisals undertaken above it is clear that current settlement patterns, their functions and relationships are extremely complex. In the west and south of the study area the close proximity of a number of large settlements means that these relationships are even harder to define. The information available to make these assessments for the most part does not provide the level of detail desired and therefore a number of assumptions have needed to be made. These should be tested either through consultation exercises or specific surveys.

Following comments received on the initial settlement hierarchy as set out in **Figure 10** (defined by services), a more detailed assessment was undertaken based on our earlier research. This aimed to try and define those settlements that appeared to perform as 'Local Service Centres' for the rural areas, i.e. they provide some key local services for a rural area or a number of settlements and have a reasonable level of access to surrounding villages, such as bus links.

What is apparent from the assessment undertaken is that the settlements that can be described in this context are relatively few in number and this is probably partly a result of past planning policy concentrating development in the larger settlements. There are therefore a large number of small settlements that do not appear to have more than a very localised function.

This would also suggest that it may be appropriate to make a policy decision to reinforce or expand the role of a particular settlement/s in order to meet a local need or function. To accord with existing and emerging national policy this would, however, need to be carefully planned and controlled to meet local needs and not result in unsustainable patterns of development. King's Cliffe and Wollaston could be possibilities in this respect, but as with most settlements in the northern part of the study area development at Kings Cliffe would need to protect and enhance the quality of the landscape and the historic nature of the settlement.

6. Emerging Strategy and Policy

From the analysis undertaken it is possible to start drawing together a number of conclusions regarding the policy direction that should be applied in the rural parts of the study area. These are discussed and set out in the following sections of the report.

6.1 Creating Balanced Communities

6.1.1 Service Capacity and Thresholds

In line with sustainable development principles, current and emerging policy it is essential that the need for additional services are properly considered in deciding where to locate development.

Need will very much depend on the nature, scale and location of any development proposed and the existing patterns of service provision and available capacity. **Table 6.1** gives some broad guidance on possible thresholds for additional service requirements in planning new residential developments. These are based generally on advice contained in 'Shaping Neighbourhoods' (2003) but have been modified to reflect local circumstances as set out in recent work undertaken by DTZ (Capacity Study for East Northamptonshire March 2004).

These thresholds are consistent with recent standards identified by Entec in examining options for a village expansion and new settlement as part of the Governments Communities Plan.

Table 6.1 Local Facilities - Possible Thresholds

Local Facility	Guide Catchment/ Dwellings Population Per Unit ¹	
	Population	Dwellings
Primary School ² 210 (420) Places	1,900 (3,800)	800 (1,600)
Secondary School ²	14,000	6,000
Additional Doctor ³	1,700	700
Doctor's Surgery	2,500	1,050
Public House	5,000	2,100
Corner Shop	2,000	800
Local Shopping Centre	5,000	2,100
Post Office	5,000	2,100
Health Centre	9,000	3,750
Library	12,000	5,000

1. Unless otherwise noted thresholds are derived from 'Shaping Neighbourhoods' (2003). Assumed current household size of 2.4 (2001 Census).
2. Local Education Authority standards requirements have been applied (DTZ Capacity Study for East Northamptonshire March 2004).
3. Primary Care Trust requirements have been applied (DTZ Capacity Study for East Northamptonshire March 2004).

What these standards do illustrate is that in the more rural areas, even in the context of the larger settlements, it is unlikely that individual developments would be proposed that are large enough to trigger new 'free-standing' provision. For example additional school capacity would be more likely provided by additions to existing schools.

The additional rural requirement beyond current commitments required by the SRS (**Table 3.1**) could translate to:

- **Corby:** 200 dwellings - some modest increase in capacity especially for education if located at Gretton.
- **Kettering:** 2640 dwellings - major increases in capacity in health, education and other services at Desborough/Rothwell as part of the SDA (1400 agreed by LPA, possible additional potential of 300 dwellings), additional primary school and doctors facility could be required dependent on location of remaining rural growth. Extra secondary capacity at Rothwell/Kettering.
- **Wellingborough:** 451 dwellings - extra pressure on GP facilities may justify further provision or absorbed in existing practices, insufficient to require new schools, south of Borough has capacity at Bozeat and Grendon, but Denton, Wilby and Earls Barton may require extension.
- **East Northants:** 2375 dwellings - sufficient to generate need for two new primary schools and doctors surgery. In reality development would be dispersed to main towns, may be able to take up some spare capacity in the north of the District at primary level, however, in most locations capacity at local schools would need to be increased.

From the limited information available utilities would not appear to be a major constraint in most of the rural part of the study area, with the exception of the area around Raunds and Higham Ferrers. Site specific issues may arise at a more detailed stage.

Thresholds would appear consistent with some of the issues identified in Section 4, in that those settlements with primary schools under threat of closure or with significant spare capacity are generally below the population thresholds in **Table 6.1**. A number of small settlements have facilities such as shops, schools, post office and doctors that the thresholds suggest can not be sustained, this illustrates the linkages with surrounding smaller villages and hamlets.

The thresholds also indicate that in achieving sustainable forms of development in the rural areas, concentrating development in a small selection of larger or more accessible settlements may be the best option. This would reinforce existing services, is the most sustainable option and provides a focus for the more rural areas. It would also ensure that most affordable housing is located in areas where a reasonable level of local services can be provided. Small additions to a wide range of settlements are unlikely to bring the extra patronage required to safeguard existing uses or trigger new provision.

The new Village of Mawsley (700 dwellings) on the western boundary of Kettering goes some way to illustrating this point. The site is under construction and there are plans to provide a village hall, primary school and local convenience retail. The scheme is not big enough to sustain any other services and the location of a new surgery, although temporarily in the village, is currently being debated between Mawsley and nearby Broughton. Access to the village by modes other than the car is relatively poor.

Even at a significantly larger scale it is unlikely that a further new settlement/village could be justified on sustainability grounds and given the level of rural development envisaged to 2021. It would also be contrary to current sequential policy that directs development to larger towns in the first instance. Recent experience shows that settlements of 5,000 - 6,000 dwellings plus are required to support higher order services such as secondary school provision and deliver significant sustainability benefits (Longstanton, Cambs, 6,000 - 8,000 dwellings, The Wixams, Beds 4500 -5800 dwellings). Another small rural settlement would simply encourage a dispersed pattern of development and is therefore not recommended.

6.1.2 Employment Development

One of the key issues in delivering sustainable rural redevelopment is in providing local job opportunities to not only reduce the need to travel, but support rural diversification and maintain the vitality of the rural area.

From a review of the current situation there would appear to be a relatively wide range of job and employment opportunities (land and larger businesses) in the main rural settlements to the south of the study area and closely associated with the Corby/Kettering/Wellingborough urban area. Public transport connections to job opportunities for residents are also significantly better. At Raunds implementation would appear to be the key issue.

At places such as Oundle and generally in northern East Northants, most sites are less than 1ha (ENC owned site at Oundle is 1.4 ha) and there would appear to be few large employers (>25 jobs). King's Cliffe has a large distribution permission (6ha) although access is poor and there is further land available at the old station site. Public transport access to wider job opportunities from settlements generally along the Nene Valley from Raunds and up to rural areas around King's Cliffe are very poor. The one exception being Oundle and settlements along the east-west Peterborough-Corby routes.

Interestingly, the larger settlements of Desborough and Rothwell would also appear to have relatively little employment given their size and proximity to the A14. The towns are repeatedly identified as having little employment land, relatively few employment opportunities and being overly dependent on the main urban areas. Public transport is good and due to be improved, with new bus service and proposed new station as set out in the SRS. This could enhance attractiveness to employers.

Although the level of commuting to the main urban areas inside and outside the study area is high, and reflected in the average travel distances, simply allocating additional employment land will not solve this problem. Recent evidence from the new settlement/village of Cambourne (S. Cambs) suggests that actually in new developments, even where local employment on employment sites is available, the proportion of employees drawn from the new settlement is very low (below 10%) and generally for lower skilled work.

This raises the question of how far aiming for a 'theoretical' resident-employment balance is a realistically worthwhile objective in sustainability terms. It must be recognised that in this respect the peripheral rural areas, and the main rural towns will remain heavily dependent on the urban areas for jobs and higher order services. It is interesting to note that average distances travelled to work are substantially higher in Thrapston, which has a relatively wide range of employment development and larger employers (21km) than Oundle (17km) which would appear to be more reliant on smaller local employers and jobs.

What it is possible to say is that:

- employment development should where possible be identified at nodes on good transport routes to maximise accessibility for residents and market attractiveness, rather than scattered at a wide range of locations. Supply on a district wide basis is not a particular issue at this stage, it is more quality and type of site;
- it is necessary to find additional land for employment purposes in the northern part of East Northants. In particular at Oundle provision for B1 for local needs may be most appropriate, and to a lesser degree King's Cliffe;
- settlements to the south of the study area would appear to be well served by employment and with land available. The quality of sites may be more of an issue and with a need to bring forward current permissions;
- settlements south of Wellingborough have limited provision with only small commitments less than 1ha. This could be improved by better public transport access to the main urban areas and expansion areas;
- employment development is required at Desborough and Rothwell to counterbalance the primarily residential and local service function of the towns and support the surrounding rural areas;
- rural areas of Corby are well served by the town and the regeneration and expansions proposals currently being proposed;
- better public transport access is required to Thrapston and to connect rural settlements running north-south along the Nene Valley in the eastern rural area; and
- in the rural areas economic development and planning policy should be focussed on meeting local needs to avoid commuting and maximise local benefits, with a positive policy towards diversification.

6.2 Diversification Of the Rural Economy

Part of the study brief has sought comment on the quantity of redundant farm buildings and large complexes of building that may have potential for re-use and the policy approach that should be applied through LDFs.

6.2.1 Quantifying the Stock of Farm Buildings

It has not been possible to provide a comprehensive overview for all of rural North-Northamptonshire as we have only received information from East Northamptonshire District Council. The list of sites that has been provided is in **Appendix E**, and is comprised of a mixture of stone barns, modern buildings and open yards/storage areas. There is no information available to determine whether these building are likely to be available for alternative uses, or when.

In considering this information it does raise the question as to how useful such an exercise this would be at such a strategic level, given that it is almost impossible to determine whether or when buildings may be available or the nature and diversity of uses to which they may be put. Actively identifying buildings could also encourage proposals for change of use that are

unwelcome and would otherwise not have been considered. Furthermore, uses could easily differ between the more rural areas where 'true' farm diversification schemes may be pursued, compared to urban fringe locations that could attract more 'footloose' or 'displaced' urban uses dependent on a labour pool in the main urban areas.

Nevertheless, recent application data held by the LPAs could shed further light on these issues and a brief analysis should be considered. There may also be some merit in undertaking further work to identify possible locations and the nature of farm complexes to gain a general understanding of the potential scale and type of buildings that may be available and aid policy development, this would require more detailed survey work than possible in this study.

6.2.2 Policy for Rural Diversification

In light of the comments made above it is suggested that the most appropriate way of dealing with rural diversification is through the development of positive criteria based policy that directs development to the most sustainable locations but protects the quality and assets of the area, including the buildings themselves. This should form part of the core strategy and set out the key objectives and approach to planning in the rural areas.

The most recent guidance is set out in the emerging PPS7 and paras. 18 - 20 set out the issues that could be considered. Where particularly large buildings are known to be available it may be appropriate to set specific criteria to overcome issues such as access constraints, to be expressed through SPG or development briefs.

Recent guidance set out in the Countryside Agency's position statement on 'Planning for Sustainable Rural Economic Development' states that the focus should be on **local** economies and the type of diversification that the area needs. An examination of recent research has highlighted the following main themes:

- That policies are not sufficiently based on an examination of local social and economic need.
- That nonetheless most applications for diversification are approved and planning is not unduly restraining development.
- Despite this the planning system could do more to promote diversification.
- Co-ordination with other aspects of diversification principally economic development and communication with farmers is relatively poor.

In developing policy, the approach suggested by the CA is one which is criteria based, area specific and that identifies development that would provide economic, social and environmental benefits together. Policy should set out the requirements that development should meet but not the type of development. We consider that this approach is essential in the study area given the diversity of the Districts as identified in this report.

As a consequence we would suggest that the following policy approach be considered:

- The partners agree on a clear set of policy objectives for the rural area that reflect the distinct differences between areas close to the urban fringe and more remote parts of the study area, in terms of needs, accessibility and sensitivity of the built environment and landscape.

- That the policy makes positive statements that actively encourage sustainable rural economic development, expansion of existing rural businesses and farm diversification.
- That robust criteria are defined against which proposals can be judged, to ensure development is appropriate, protects and enhances the quality of the environment and delivers local benefits, i.e. in more rural locations meeting local labour needs, having a good skills match or using local materials.
- Providing a positive policy steer to direct development to the most sustainable locations i.e. on good public transport routes or locations in or closely associated with rural and local service centres.
- Whether a more spatially restrictive policy approach is appropriate in the west and south of the study area near the main urban areas given that development in the smaller settlements or open countryside may not meet a local need.
- For any very large sites or complexes of buildings SPG be adopted to ensure that any proposals for re-use are in keeping with the area, meet local needs and take on board any site constraints, such as access.
- Whether farm diversification proposals should be required to be attached to a working farm to ensure local benefit.
- Undertaking work to identify the needs of local businesses and where appropriate make provision of land for expansion and retention of local firms.

Appendix F of this report reproduces two examples of a policy approach as set out in CA Policy Statement to illustrate these points.

Wellingborough District Council's 'The Conversion of Farm Buildings', acknowledges that diversification will sustain the economic viability of farming and will encourage alternative employment opportunities. The SPG is for the most part is based on current policy and guidance.

The SPG does introduce a '10 year' rule that is aimed at preventing the abuse of permitted development rights to secure inappropriate development in the countryside. Although an understandable objective this may conflict with emerging advice in PPS7 (Para. 20ii) which suggests that it is not necessary to prove that a building is no longer needed for agricultural use. A better approach could be by requiring that applications for diversification are part of a working farm, are connected to the existing farm business or are supported by a farm development plan (refer to case examples in **Appendix F** and comments above). Further consideration should be give to this issue.

6.3 Defining Rural and Local Service Centres

The primary purpose of the study has been to define the criteria for identifying Rural and Local Service Centres within the North Northamptonshire Study Area.

From our research it is clear that the traditional approach of simply directing growth to the larger settlements in the rural areas is not sensitive to local needs or location and simply reinforces the existing settlement hierarchies. This does little to address particular local needs

or circumstances. It is also apparent that a simple set of criteria can not be used to define different centres in such a diverse area.

6.3.1 Defining Rural Service Centres

From an examination of the roles and relationships between settlements it would appear that the distinction between Rural Service Centres and Urban Hubs is unclear. The SRS gives little guidance on what an Urban Hub designation actually means in practice and page 32 of the SRS simply states that they will 'complement' the central areas in Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough, no further explanation is offered. To add to this is the fact that some of the Hubs are established urban areas and other such as WEAST are being promoted as sustainable urban extensions.

In defining Rural Service Centres the SRS suggests that Thrapston and Oundle meet this requirement as they serve a wide and diverse rural hinterland and are away from the 'urban spine'. Based on our appraisal we would agree with these designations, but also suggest that Raunds meets this requirement and should be designated as a Rural Service Centre for the following reasons:

- The settlement is of a scale comparable to or larger than other RSCs.
- The facilities on offer are in some respects equal or better than those in places such as Thrapston, for example hourly bus services and secondary school provision.
- Although jobs are limited at the moment substantial employment commitments will enable a more balanced community with a wide range of job opportunities in the immediate area.
- The Town would appear to serve a number of nearby settlements within the study area and in the more isolated rural areas to the east such as Hargrave (Lower Dean and Covington - outside the county boundary).

It should also be noted that on this basis, and our appraisal, that Desborough, Rothwell and to a lesser extent Irthlingborough also function as Rural Service Centres. The fact that they are identified as Urban Hubs should not detract from this role and there is a need to recognise these functions.

In terms of Higham Ferrers and Burton Latimer the picture is less obvious. For the purpose of this study we have treated Burton Latimer as part of the Kettering urban area based on the SRS and Growth Area study. It would not appear to serve a distinct rural hinterland, however, it would appear to function as a standalone settlement severed from Kettering by the A14. It also has a number of large employers drawing from a wide area. We therefore have some sympathy with the view expressed by KBC that it should be treated as such in any spatial strategy.

Higham Ferrers has a close relationship with Rushden and is also identified as an Urban Hub through the SRS. Although a separate settlement with its own identity it is inevitable that there are strong connections between the towns, as can clearly be seen with the educational system in the area which essentially focuses on the urban areas of Rushden and Higham Ferrers. The town will inevitably have a rural service function given the range and scale of services it provides but this is likely to be limited and complex due to the close grouping of Rushden, Raunds and Irthingborough. It may therefore to some extent serve places such as Chelveston, Caldecott, Yeldon (outside study area) and Newton Bromswold to the east. This is unlikely to

be a simple relationship and again identifies the need to recognise that Urban Hubs will also have a rural service function, especially away from the principal urban areas.

6.3.2 Defining Local Service Centres

The criteria for defining Local Service Centres are set out in 2.17 of the SRS where it states that:

“ There are some rural settlements that although not having the service base or the size to be defined as a rural service centre, do play a role of serving neighbouring villages because they have some key local services and a reasonable level of access such as bus service links. These have the potential to be identified as local service centres.”

This approach generally echoes that set out in national policy guidance, which also states that development should be directed to these villages especially where it will support local services and meets local needs, for example affordable housing.

Following our review of baseline conditions we attempted to define the local service centres through an initial assessment of services and facilities and then through the roles and function of particular settlements. The initial approach identified a wide range of settlements, as indicated in **Figure 10** and set out in **Appendix D**, and although a good starting point, failed to consider range or quality of the services or linkages. The secondary assessment then sought to examine the linkages and try to determine which settlements appear to have this type of function.

Based on this review and comments from the steering group, we concluded that a local service centre should offer more than just a basic range of services, and therefore needed to play an additional role in the local area. For example, offer a range of non-agricultural job opportunities, have good public transport, higher level services such as GP or secondary school and be away from the urban fringe to avoid dormitory development. As set out in **Table 5.1** very few settlements come close to meeting these criteria and most are relatively small with limited services. None actually meet all these requirements and the only settlements considered further were:

- King’s Cliffe - relatively small settlement but would appear to service a number of smaller settlements and provide a wider educational role, some development potential for housing and employment.
- Earls Barton - Large settlement, good range of employment, good public transport, range of facilities.
- Wollaston - good range of facilities including GP, pharmacy, secondary education, would appear to service a number of smaller settlements generally to the south, limited employment.

From this it is suggested that Earl Barton be discounted due to its close proximity to Northampton and Wellingborough and the apparent lack of villages that are likely to rely on it to any great extent for access to services or jobs.

6.3.3 Sustainability of the Rural Areas

Of the remaining rural areas the western fringes of the study area are closely connected to the principal urban areas and Northampton. Given this close proximity any small scale development is likely to have a limited effect on reinforcing existing services and will probably

lead to an element of dormitory development with a predominance of commuting. This is not to say that places such as Broughton, Woodford, Bozeat, Irchester and Brigstock, and the other larger villages/small towns within the study area with a reasonable level of services, should not be favoured for limited development for local needs (refer to **Table 5.1**). This potential needs to be considered in greater detail, with particular reference to the quality and range of services and linkages with surrounding villages. This could also result in some settlements being elevated to a Local Service Centre if this type of role is identified.

North west of Kettering performs quite well given the presence of Desborough and Rothwell and with good public transport along the A6 and A427 connecting with Market Harborough and Corby. The most sustainable option here is to continue to concentrate development at Desborough and Rothwell to enhance their rural service function.

Areas to the south of the A45 are generally well served by the concentration of larger settlements and the range of services available. Improving and reinforcing the role of Wollaston could assist in supporting a number of smaller villages to the south.

It is within the rural areas of East Northamptonshire north of the A14 where access to services, jobs and transport become key issues. This is particularly the case for areas east of the Nene Valley where the relatively remote nature is based on a dispersed pattern of very small settlements with no public transport access and little prospect of improvement. Development in these areas should therefore be restricted.

North of Oundle is similar although Stamford to the north provides access to a larger range of services. Reinforcing the role of King's Cliffe could benefit the village and the surrounding area, subject to environmental constraints. In other areas around Brigstock, Woodford and Gretton the close proximity to the urban areas and the existence of few settlements means that the emphasis should be on local need and improving access to the main towns.

6.4 Summary and Conclusions

In terms of developing a strategy for the location of growth in the rural area it is considered that this assessment points to the following approach:

- Recognition of Desborough and Rothwell and other Urban Hubs generally as having a rural service centre function, accompanied by proposals for regeneration and additional housing and employment development.
- The importance of reinforcing the role of Oundle as the key rural service centre in the northern part of East Northants by directing more development to the town and expanding the availability of employment land particularly for local businesses and office uses in town centres, and expansion of existing firms.
- Considering a policy approach that enhances the role of King Cliffe and Wollaston as local service centres, by directing additional development to these settlements.
- The need to improve accessibility in the eastern part of the study area and with the main settlements and service centres by promoting the concept of a 'rural service spine' that links Raunds, Thrapston, Oundle and King's Cliffe with the smaller settlements in the Nene Valley. This is particularly the case for access to services and overcome social exclusion issues rather than for access to work.

- That beyond the Rural and Local Service Centres larger villages/small towns with a good range of services should be considered as the focus for development for local needs, e.g. Broughton, Woodford, Bozeat, Irchester and Brigstock. This matter needs to be investigated further.
- That a new settlement/village option for delivering rural growth would not perform well in sustainability terms and would conflict with a sequential approach.
- In the west and south of the study area within or close to the urban spine placing an emphasis on regenerating the existing settlements and in maximising the accessibility of smaller settlements to the main urban areas and proposed expansion areas by non-car modes.
- The development of a positive objective led policy to rural diversification that recognises the differing pressures and needs in the urban fringe and more remote rural locations based on a detailed assessment of local needs. It is important that criteria based policy sets out the requirements that development should meet but not specify the type of development.

7. Summary and Recommendations

Entec was appointed by the North Northamptonshire Strategic Partners in February 2004 to undertake research and establish a framework for building sustainable rural communities of the future in the North Northamptonshire Growth Area. The main aim of the study was to provide a framework that would enable the Strategic Partners to:

- develop a comprehensive approach to the planning of market towns and other service centres, that recognises rural distinctiveness;
- have an informed approach to the development of policies and actions with regard to wider regeneration and the activities of the Limited Liability Partnership in implementing sustainable growth; and
- identify a local response to the growth area proposals and the challenges facing the area's rural communities.

This study represents one of the first stages in this process and is not intended to present a finalised strategy. Further work will therefore be required to develop the long-term approach with the involvement of key stakeholders.

In undertaking this study we have considered a wide range of information from a variety of sources in trying to understand the complexity of the rural areas, the way in which they relate to the main urban areas within and outside the study area, and to settlements within the rural areas themselves. From this appraisal we are able to highlight the following key findings and recommendations.

7.1 Summary of Findings

- The rural areas across the study area are extremely diverse and face differing issues depending on their location and character. Devising one approach to the planning of the rural area is neither appropriate nor easy.
- There is a need to develop greater understanding of needs and issues in the rural areas from the bottom up, possibly through village and business survey work, settlement appraisals and other initiatives to underpin any policy approach.
- The roles and relationships between settlements is extremely complex and dependent on the physical proximity, accessibility and type of relationship being considered.
- The high level of dependency on surrounding urban areas must be recognised and dominance of the car in rural areas to access jobs and services. The importance of walking in market towns should also be recognised and public transport may be more likely to have a role in addressing social exclusion, for say the elderly, in giving access to essential services.
- There is an identified need for more employment development/land in northern East Northants, particularly at Oundle, and at Desborough/Rothwell.

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- In terms of service capacities there would appear to be few constraints on further development, and where these do exist it will be necessary for residential development to make additional provision through the S106 route.
 - Policy guidance set out in the SRS gives relatively little detail on the role of Urban Hubs, Rural Service Centres and Local Service Centres or on the level of development that these centres should be expected to take.
 - In sustainability terms the scale of rural housing implied in the Milton Keynes and south Midlands SRS to 2021 is not sufficient to justify a new village or settlement solution and would be contrary to current sequential policy. The development of urban capacity sites and sensitive expansion of existing settlements is therefore the most appropriate solution.
 - The largest challenge in meeting SRS rural housing requirements is likely to be faced by Kettering given the lack of suitable large villages.
 - That beyond the urban hubs, and rural service centres as defined by the SRS the rural area is characterised by a large number of relatively small settlements, with limited services - there are therefore few obvious local service centres.

7.2 Recommendations

- That Raunds is of a scale and offers a range of services consistent with the SRS definition of a Rural Service Centre and should therefore be designated as such.
- That the role of Urban Hubs should be clarified and expanded to recognise that they also operate as Rural Service Centres for local villages, this is particularly the case with Desborough and Rothwell where proposals for regeneration and additional housing and employment development should be encouraged.
- That further consideration should be given to identifying and developing Wollaston and King's Cliffe as Local Service Centres, and that a policy decision be made to explore the potential for directing further growth to these locations to build on and reinforce this role.
- That consideration be given to developing the concept of a 'Rural Service Spine' extending from Raunds generally along the Nene Valley and through Oundle to King's Cliffe. Within this area priority should be given to enhancing access and connections with rural villages by concentrating development at the Rural and Local Service Centres and improving public transport which is currently poor.
- That consideration should be given to making provision for further employment land, primarily for local uses and offices, and housing in the northern part of East Northants at Oundle and other service centres, to widen access to employment opportunities, affordable housing and support and enhance existing services.
- That further local survey and consultation work is required to examine, test and agree some of the basic assumptions made regarding:
 - the linkages and roles of individual settlements, travel patterns for work and to access services;

-
- the views of local communities, local businesses, and landowners regarding needs, key issues and additional development;
 - confirm the existing level and quality of services and facilities in individual settlements;
 - agree what 'reasonable' levels of access and 'basic' local services should be provided or aimed for;
 - what other larger villages beyond Local Service Centres should be identified for limited growth, and whether other settlements provide a Local Service Centre function;
 - identify the extent of rural buildings and complexes of building that may be available and their possible use.

This should underpin any strategy and would accord with best practice advice.

- In the west and south of the study area within or close to the urban spine placing an emphasis on regenerating the existing settlements and in maximising the accessibility of smaller settlements to the main urban areas and proposed expansion areas by non-car modes.
- The development of a positive objective led policy to rural diversification that recognises the differing pressures and needs on the urban fringe and more remote rural locations based on a further more detailed assessment of local needs and issues. Any policy approach should focus on the requirements that a scheme should meet but not the type of development it should be. This should form part of the core strategy of the LDF.

Appendix A

Parish Telephone Survey Pro-forma

2 Pages

Entec

Parish Council:

Key Contact name:

Guide Questions

Local Services and Settlement Relationships

1. Is it considered that the area has a reasonable access to a range of local services, such as convenience shopping, community facilities, education, library, post office, are there any obvious gaps in provision or problems with current provision?
2. Which towns or villages locally do people generally look to/rely on for access to these local services?
3. What sort of relationship does the area have to the main urban areas inside and outside the study area, i.e. where do people look to for access to jobs, leisure and recreation, comparison shopping, which urban areas do they consider are dominant and most attractive locations?
4. Are there any particular transport issues that make access to services, jobs or leisure activities difficult?
 - Is public transport a reasonable option? Which are the most important links/routes that should be improved/ maintained ?
 - What are the frequencies like, are they reliable?
 - Is road congestion or access an issue?
5. What is the general perception of the area and settlements within the parish?
 - Are they considered to be vibrant and healthy or declining/threatened? In what way and what are the main issues? Elderly population, few services/ loss of services, dormitory function, run down environment, regeneration required?
 - Are there any particular assets that should be protected and enhanced? Historic areas, recreational open space, vibrant businesses shops etc?

Additional Development

6. What is the PC's view with regard to additional development? For say housing, employment opportunities, community leisure uses, would they support growth? Are there any obvious reasons why further development should not be considered?
7. Would support be more likely for development that brought about improvements to local services, such as schools or better public transport?

Other Issues

8. Are there any additional local issues that you would like to draw to our attention?

Appendix B

Parish Survey Summaries

12 Pages

Entec

Ashley

Services

Services within Ashley are limited, the last shop closed in 1990 along with the post office. People will travel to Market Harborough, Corby or Medbourne for convenience and comparison shopping.

Members of the Women's Institute, a Mums and Toddler Group and other recreational activities, use the Village Hall. A mobile library service visits the village.

There is no industry within the village, people will generally travel to Corby, Market Harborough and London for employment.

Gaps in Provision

Public transport within the village is infrequent, the majority of people within the village have their own car, for older people mobility is a problem because they have rely on public transport.

Additional Development

The general consensus is that there should be no additional growth to the village, there is a fear that the character of the village would be lost.

Protection of the surrounding environment and the maintenance of the village is a priority of the Parish Council. The Church, Village Hall and local Pub are equally important to village life, the Parish Council aims to keep these well used.

Barnwell

Services

Village shop well used, provides a good service with varied stock, other than the village store there is little in the way of retail.

For convince/comparison shopping majority of villagers travel to Peterborough or Oundle (as it has small boutiques).

Village Hall is extremely popular and well used, strong Church going community.

Leisure facilities- people travel to the cinema in Peterborough, theatres in Oundle.

Employment people travel to Kettering or Peterborough.

Gaps in Provision

Closure of local School is a major issue within Village, as younger children will have to travel out with the village.

Public transport is extremely poor, infrequent and unreliable. The routes are poor, there is only a daily service to main urban areas.

Thrapston Volunteer Service is well used by Pensioners and the disabled.

Road safety issues: a new round a bout was proposed to alleviate pressure on traffic joining the A605, funding was withdrawn. Serious road safety issues, roads are heavily congested high percentage of fatal accidents. The Parish is now petitioning over the withdrawal of the proposed round a bout, and to reduce speed limits within the village.

Additional Development

Parish feels that because the village is a conservation area, it is important to protect the village.

The villagers would not support additional growth, even if services were improved, village will loose its character.

Other Issues

High cases of vandalism: there is a lack of activities and facilities for teenagers, the local Youth Club only allows children up to the age of 13 to join.

Affluent village, extremely popular place to live.

Easton-on-the Hill

Services

Village has a good range of basic services, including post office shop, three pubs, church, primary school, cricket and football pitches (NB - football pitch is located on outskirts of village and too far away for easy access to children) and village hall. The village Hall is in need of a facelift and could become an excellent facility if the funding could be found.

Church street in the village is in a conservation area and is somewhat of a local tourist attraction.

Due to nature of the village most residents work in the urban areas i.e. Peterborough , Stamford and to a lesser degree Oundle. Peterborough is the natural focus for comparison shopping and most food shopping is done in nearby Stamford (Morrisons). Residents of Easton also rely on Stamford for GPs and dentist.

Gaps in Services

Bus service is poor, with particularly irregular service to Stamford, only two miles north. As such, those without cars struggle to access services.

Civic pride is good, though consensus concerns over lack of services. There is a sense amongst villagers that the village gets a raw deal in terms of provision of services i.e. police and ambulance.

Additional Development

Commented that there would be local outcry if the village saw any more development. Infill development has been maximised and there are no acceptable areas for development left.

Finedon

Services

Village services include a Co-op, and a general store, which are both used, there are also a few takeaway food shops. In terms of comparison shopping the village has a number of expensive boutiques and exclusive stores.

For comparison shopping people will generally travel to Northampton, Wellingborough, or Milton Keynes. For convenience shopping most people will use the local co-op, or travel to the larger urban areas such as Wellingborough or Kettering.

The community centre is well used, there is also a tennis club and a sports ground, which are also well used and supported by the local community. People will travel to Wellingborough for the cinema/theatres.

There is no industry within the village, people travel to Wellingborough, Northampton for employment.

Most children within the village attend the local School, older children travel out with the village by school bus.

Provision of Services

Public transport is frequent and reliable in and out of the village, there are good connections to Wellingborough and Northampton.

There are no major issues with road safety speed limits are low through the village, access to the village is good, the A6 runs through the village, although this is said to be congested at peak times and rush hour. Village has good connecting roads to the main urban areas.

Additional Development

The village has become a popular place to live, house prices are rising within the village growth could possibly be accommodated and supported by some from the local community.

In partnership with Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association the Parish Council are producing a questionnaire on increased provision of affordable housing and were it could be accommodated.

General Comments

Popular place to live.

Gretton

Services

The village has a post office and general store, which is well used by the residents of Gretton. People will mostly travel to Corby or Market Harborough for convenience and comparison shopping.

The village has a Primary School, which has over 100 pupils, for secondary education children will travel to Corby.

Gretton has around 25 organisations ranging from sports and social clubs to the Parish Council, the Village Hall is well used. Bookings must be made and a hire fee paid to use the hall. There is a recreational ground, which is used by the local football team and hosts other sporting events.

A number of mobile services visit the village including a Library service which calls three times a month, mobile food vans delivery hot and cold food to the village calling once a week.

There is a lack of industry within the village, people will travel to Corby, Market Harborough or Peterborough for employment.

The village has newly obtained broadband Internet.

Gaps in Provision

Improvements to public transport, increasing the frequency and the routes. There are problems with parking provision within the village, cars are being parked on the recreation ground and on pavements blocking access for other road users and pedestrians.

Additional Development

The Parish Council have recently opposed a development of low cost housing on land which is not designated for building, the council have opposed a previous application for this land, However the Parish Council are set to discuss where the best location for low cost housing.

Gretton

The village is a thriving community with varied social activities, although a small village it is a popular place to live.

Isham

Services

The Village post office is well used, however there are no convenience shops and for comparison shopping people have to travel outside the village.

For convenience shopping and comparison shopping people travel to Kettering Wellingborough or Northampton. There is a Tesco in Kettering although the bus service does not run directly there.

There is no industry within the village, there is a clerical company, and people travel out with the village to Wellingborough, Northampton and London for employment.

For leisure facilities people travel to Kettering, the cinema is four miles away however the bus service does not run there directly.

Gaps in Provision

Public transport is infrequent and unreliable, it does not connect with other towns and villages, hard to travel anywhere by bus from the village.

There is a lack of shops, people are having to shop out with the village.

Road safety issues with the A509, extremely congested, high casualty rates. Isham bypass was proposed, to alleviate problems on the A509 at Isham, a route for the new bypass cannot be agreed.

Lack of community facilities.

Additional Development

Additional Development would not be supported by people living in the village, as the character of the village would be lost.

Parish feels that the village should be protected and preserved.

General Comments

Village is a popular place to live.

King's Cliffe

Services

Response was positive, comments that King's Cliffe is one of the few villages that has a good range of services i.e. post office, shop, church etc. The village has thriving football and cricket clubs.

King's Cliffe has essential services, though focus of shopping and employment trips are to Peterborough, with fewer to Stamford and Oundle. Corby suffers from a reputation of lawlessness and a poor offer of retail and employment.

Peterborough the focus for retail and employment trips. Trips are also made to Stamford and Oundle.

Civic pride is excellent although there is a massive demand for affordable housing in the village. Few properties available for less than £150,000.

The village will be connected to Broadband on 14 July 2004.

Gaps in Services

Bus service is poor and villagers are frustrated. The services are infrequent and always appear under utilised i.e. lack of awareness as to relevant services. The Village suffers from a shortage of car parking with the village 'littered' with cars. The Parish Council pushes for three to four spaces per dwelling in new development.

The village has a distinct lack of open space due to historic development and a recognised lack of children's play areas.

Additional Development

The Parish Council is extremely keen to see new residential development in King's Cliffe, with the emphasis on affordable housing to meet local need. The KC1 site has been the subject of development pressures for some time though there are certain 'factors' delaying planning permission i.e. ransom strip and ownership wrangles.

The Parish Council would demand investment in services from prospective development. There is a toxic waste landfill site two miles north of the village and the Parish battles for funds from the landfill tax .

Orton and Loddington

Services

The villages have no shops, people within the villages will either travel to Rothwell which is a mile away, for convenience shopping or Kettering. For comparison shopping people will travel to Rothwell or Kettering or Northampton.

There is some employment within Orton, the Parish Council states that 20% work within the village, there are a couple of farms which produce food for the local market, and an environmental contractor which employs local people. The some of the residents are retired or work outside the village either in Kettering, Northampton, Corby or London.

There is a vibrant social aspect to village life, most of the villagers are involved in the Parish Council, and take an active interest in village life.

For leisure facilities the local people will travel out with the village for cinemas and theatres to Rothwell, Kettering, or Northampton.

Provision Of Services

The Parish Council believes that although the bus service in the village is infrequent, people will generally walk to Rothwell. For older people and teenagers and for those that do not have access to a car may have problems travelling out of the village, however the introduction of the KATS service has helped mobility.

There are no issues with crime within both villages and there are no issues with gaps in services within the villages, as most people will use Rothwell because of its close proximity.

Additional Growth

The Parish Council would not support any additional growth to either Orton or Loddington, the Parish council are currently against a proposed development of more houses within Rothwell, which will cause more congestion on the A14.

Parking within Rothwell has also become an issue with the Parish Council, as they believe that additional development will cause increased congestion on the roads, at present access into Rothwell is difficult.

Following the publication of the MKSM Study, the Parish Council does not support the proposed housing numbers within the Growth Areas of Kettering or Corby, they feel increased growth on the urban fringe will encroach on their villages.

The Parish Council believes that access to and from the village is extremely poor and dangerous due to the increased use of the roads by heavy good vehicles. A proposed development on green field land for an industrial estate means increased use of the roads around Loddington and Orton causing more congestion and damage.

The Parish Council believes that the ecology and environment surrounding Orton and Loddington should be protected and there should be more done to protect the village.

They believe that any additional development to the village of Orton and Loddington would mean the character of the villages would be lost.

The A14 has become increasingly congested the Parish Council have stated that its destroying the quality of life of the villagers do to increased noise levels coming. They believe more should be done to cushion the noise levels, it has become extremely disruptive.

General Comments

The standard of living is high within both villages, and they are popular places to live.

Pytchley

Services

The village shopping facilities are limited, the local farm shops supplies its own produce, most people within the village will do their convenience shopping in Kettering due to its close proximity to the village. For comparison shopping most of the local people will travel to either Kettering or Northampton.

There is no industry within the village, main employers within the village are the local farms, a local coach company, and most people will travel to Kettering, Wellingborough or Northampton for employment.

There is a village hall, and recreation ground, which is used for cricket and other sporting activities. Social clubs within the village include a Parents and Tots club and the Bell Ringers club.

There is a village school, which is attended by local children, however 50% of the children within the village travel outside to other Primary Schools.

Most people within the village use their own transport.

There is a Parish Post, which is a free magazine distributed each month by the Church, its carries general information on clubs, societies and events within the village.

Gaps in Provision of Services

Public Transport within the village is poor and unreliable, residents of the village believe that there is a need for more frequent services, more routes and more late night services. It is difficult for older people access services outside of the village, school children have problems of accessing school activities and recreational activities outside the village.

The village has access problems, people have expressed concerns with parking on roads causing problems of congestion, and making the pavements unsafe for pedestrians. The consensus is that additional off road parking should be made available.

The village has a Neighbourhood Watch scheme the local residents believe that the police should be more involved.

Residents within the village believe that there is a need for a general store and post office, and improving the Village hall and recreation ground.

Additional Growth

More than half the residents within the village are opposed to any additional growth outside the village boundary. People within the village are opposed to any Greenfield development on the boundary between the village and Kettering the fear is that the village will be absorbed within the expansion of Kettering if any development were allowed.

There is a reluctance to see large housing developments within the village, there is however the view that there is a need for affordable housing.

The countryside is valued around Pytchley people living within the village feel this should be protected.

Raunds

Services

It is considered that Raunds offers a good range of key local services. The town has a relatively large foodstore (Somerfield) and a respectable comparison retail offer. This was compared to nearby Wellingborough, where comparison shopping is poor. However, many do their food shopping in Wellingborough or Rushden.

The town has children and toddler playgrounds (one of each) and three recognised areas of recreational open space.

Raunds suffers from a distinct lack of employment and so workers have to commute. At Warth Park the town does have a relatively large employer with the Hotpoint distribution warehouse and planning permission exists for similar sized warehouses and B1 and B2 uses for further employment opportunities.

Gaps in Services

The Bus service for Raunds is poor, both in terms of frequency and destination. It takes a particularly long time to get from Raunds to Northampton, as the rural bus service meanders through various settlements.

Additional Development

Noted that new development not really discussed at length (see note on apathy below). The main issue for Raunds is employment; the town needs more. The town needs to become a place to live and work rather than live and leave to work.

There is an apathy in the town towards development and being proactive.

Thrapston

Services

Thrapston has grown relatively rapidly over recent years, to the point where there is little (appropriate) developable land left. Thrapston has a lack of capacity in medical services i.e. GPs and Dentists due to growth of the town. Infrastructure has not kept up with the development and there are noticeable gaps in service provision.

Due to lack of services/facilities in the town residents of Thrapston have a significant relationship with the main urban areas. Thrapston is located in such a way that it is equidistant from the large towns of Northampton, Bedford and Peterborough. As such, employment is directed to a number of locations whilst comparison shopping is driven by personal choice of centre. Food shopping is done in either Kettering or Wellingborough. Of note, local convenience shopping is expensive and people are naturally inclined to shop at other locations, as part of combined trips i.e. food shopping on the way home from work.

Older generation are proud of heritage whilst the younger generation are very lethargic to doing anything proactive and aren't really motivated to improving the town. This is borne out of the lack of services and the dormitory nature of the town.

Gaps in Services

The town has a serious lack of youth facilities, illustrated in the problems faced by youths on streets and the high levels of vandalism.

Lack of GP's and Dentists to serve local population.

The bus services in Thrapston are poor and largely limited to Kettering. They are infrequent and journey times are considerable. This creates a natural demand for the private car.

Additional Development

The view is that the town has seen enough development and that services are already stretched.

As above, improved services are required although new development is not desired.

Contact wanted to re-enforce lack of youth facilities issue.

Warmington

Services

Warmington has a range of services including general stores, a Post Office, a butcher and upholstery repair shop. Residents of the Village will either use the local general store for their convenience shopping or travel to Oundle, for comparison shopping people will mostly travel to Oundle or Peterborough.

There is a Village Hall, which is used by a number of local groups and for private functions, the Village plays host to a number of events throughout the year organised by local social clubs.

The Village has some small business such as a secretarial firm, landscaping firm and an electrical engineering contractor. Most residents will travel outside of the village for employment to Peterborough, Corby or Northampton.

There is a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme within the Village working closely with the Parish Council and the Police.

There is a Primary School within the village.

Gaps in Services

The Parish Council has completed a Public Transport Survey, the outcome of the survey showed that the majority of bus users in the Village felt the buses were of satisfactory standard, the bus service should be routed through the Village with a more frequent service.

Road safety issues concerning speed limits within the village and traffic on the A605.

Additional Development

The Parish council wishes to protect the village, and have identified five conservation areas, the Parish Council believe that the surrounding environment natural and built features should be protected.

Any additional development would have to be in keeping with surrounding area.

Warmington

Village is vibrant, healthy, popular place to live.

Wollaston

Services

Village services include a Co-op and a general store, both are well used, most people will generally travel outside the village for comparison/convenience shopping in Northampton or Wellingborough.

There is a Primary and Secondary School within the Village both are well attended by pupils within the village and surrounding areas, travelling by school bus or public transport.

For Employment majority of people work outside the village, either in Northampton, Bedford or Wellingborough, a small minority work within the Chemical Firm, there is no industry within the Village.

Provision of services

There are no issues with public transport, the service is reliable, there are few complaints about the local service provider, and the connection to the larger urban areas is adequate to support the village.

There are no serious issues with access to and from the village, although the A509 can become heavily congested at peak times, this route provides easy access to the larger urban areas.

Additional Growth

People are moving into the village, a housing development of 100 dwellings has just been completed, and were sold quickly, house prices are rising, the village is not overly expensive but it has become more expensive to stay there in the last few years.

The perception is that there is a shortage of land for extra houses, and when plots do come up they are small and can only accommodate a small number of units. There has been some development within the village, so there may been some support for additional development if it was in keeping with the village and it was small scale.

General Comments

None.

Woodford

Services

Village services include a shop and a chip shop, basic facilities are provided, there is no retail within the village.

People mostly travel to Kettering or Thrapston for convenience/comparison shopping.

There is a new leisure centre to be built in Thrapston its more than likely that the people in Woodford will use this facility.

There is no industry within the village people travel to Kettering Wellingborough or Peterborough, people commute either by car or rail, there is a good rail service from Kettering.

There is a local School, which provides primary education. Older children have to travel to Thrapston, or Kettering, there is a school bus service provided for the younger and older children.

There are two Churches, which are well used.

Gaps in Provision

The frequency of public transport is poor, the service is reliable, but there are no buses entering or leaving the village after 6 pm. The Parish would welcome a more frequent bus service, connecting with the larger urban areas.

The village services and facilities are poor, there is no village hall. Our village survey shows that Woodford has the most services of all our villages.

Parking is a serious issue within the village, due to a lack of parking spaces to in comparison to the number of cars which are parked in the village High Street, is causing high levels of congestion within the village.

Access to the larger urban areas is poor, the road to Thrapston is poor due to overuse, the road to Irthlingborough is slightly better. Parish feels improvements have to be made to these roads as there have been some serious accidents in recent years.

Additional Development

Currently a development of 50 houses is awaiting planning permission, there has been opposition towards this development by local people, due to implications such as increased congestion within the village.

Perception is that additional growth would be welcomed by some but the majority may reject any proposal of increased development.

General Issues

General perception that the village is becoming a dormitory village, people are travelling outside the village for services and facilities.

Low levels of crime, in recent months however there have been problems with petty-crime.

House prices are rising within the village, one quarter of the housing stock is owned by the Local Housing Association East Northamptonshire Housing, and there is some sheltered housing accommodation.

Initiatives to attract people to get more involved within the village to promote and develop village facilities have been set up through the Women's Institute and the Church.

Appendix C

Community Facilities and Services Matrix

8 Pages

Entec

Summary of Community Facilities Matrix

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation
KETTERING BOROUGH																			
Desborough	8200		H (M,K)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			K 9km	16.9 ha
Rothwell	7500		H (M,K)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			K 7km	28.8ha
Burton latimer	7100		H (K,C,B)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		K 6km	
Broughton	2047		D (K,N)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓			K 5km	
Geddington	1504		H (K,C,)	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓		K 5km	
Wilbarston	767		D (M,C)				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		C 8 m	
Pytchley	496		D (C,K, W)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		K 6km	
Loddington	482		D (N,K)	✓				✓	✓					✓		✓		K 6km	
Rushton	451		I (K)	✓				✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		K 7km	
Cranford	414		D (K,,C)	✓			✓	✓	✓					✓		✓		K 7km	
Braybrooke	338		D (C,M)	✓				✓	✓					✓		✓		M 5km	
Stoke Albany	319		D (C)					✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		C 9km	
Great Cransley	283		D (K,N)					✓	✓					✓		✓		K 5km	
Weekley	242		H (C,K)					✓						✓		✓		K 3km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																Available employment land allocation	
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities		Designated Conservation Area
Ashley	217		D (C					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	C 11km	
Dingley	209		D (C													✓	M 4km	
Little Oakley	147		N										✓		✓	✓	C 8km	
Newton	147		N												✓	✓	K 8km	
Thorpe Malsor	144		D (K,N										✓		✓	✓	K 3km	
Warkton	144		I (K)				✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	K 4km	
Weston by Welland	135		D (C, M)					✓					✓		✓	✓	M 9 km	
Grafton Underwood	134		I (K)				✓						✓		✓	✓	K 7km	
Harrington	134		N					✓					✓		✓	✓	K 12km	
Sutton Basset	94		D (C,M)										✓		✓		M 6km	0.1ha
Brampton Ash	70		D (C M)										✓			✓	M 7km	
Orton	69		N										✓				K 9Km	
Pipewell			I (K)										✓			✓	C 9 km	
CORBY																		
Weldon	1644		H (P,CK,N,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	C 6km	52.5ha
Gretton	1240		D (C)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	C 9km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation
Cottingham	912		H (,C,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		C 5km	
Stanion	873		H(K,C)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		C 5km	
Middleton	328		D (C,							✓				✓		✓		C 5km	
East Carlton	270		D (C,						✓				✓	✓		✓		C 5km	
Rockingham	115		D (C)										✓	✓		✓		C 6km	
EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE																			
Raunds	8614		H (N)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		W 15km	25.4ha
Irthlingborough	7620		H (K,W,N)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		W 7km	2.8ha
Higham Ferrers	6435		H (W,N,)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 9km	12.3ha
Thrapston	5063		D (P,K,C,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		K 17km	7ha
Oundle	5014		H (P,C,N,W)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	C 19km	
Stanwick	2002		H (N,W)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		W 12km	
Ringstead	1524		D (C)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		K 15km	
Brigstock	1421		D (C,)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	C 8 km	0.4ha
Woodford	1279		D (K,C)	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		K 12km	
King's Cliffe	1174		D (S,P)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	S 13km	6ha

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																Available employment land allocation		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities		Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location
Easton-on-the-Hill	1040		D (S,P)	✓		✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓	✓	S 4 km	
Warmington	1005		H,(PCK,W,N)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		P 16km	
Islip	874		D (C)			✓*		✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓	✓	✓		K 15km	1.4ha
Nassington	737		D (P)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	P 16km	
Titchmarsh	618		I (C)	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		K 20km	
Chelveston-cum-Caldecott	585		I (B)					✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		W 15km	
Collyweston	484		D (S,P)			✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	S 6km	
Woodnewton	483		D (S,P,)						✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓	✓	P 20km	
Polebrook	455		I (P)	✓					✓	✓	✓*			✓		✓	✓	C 23km	
Barnwell	448		I (C,)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	C 25km	0.08ha
Upper Benefield/ Lower Benefield	371		H (P,C,W,N)					✓		✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓	✓	C 13km	
Aldwincle	336		I (P,C,K)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		K 19km	0.02ha
Great Addington	311		I (W)	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓		K 12km	
Yarwell	296		D (P)			✓*			✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓		P 15km	
Lowick	295		D (C)					✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓			✓	✓	C 15km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation
Glaphthorn	284		D (P)	✓						✓	✓*			✓				C 16km	
Denford	282		D (C,K)						✓	✓			✓	✓				K 17km	
Little Addington	276		I (W)	✓		✓*		✓	✓		✓*			✓				K 14km	
Hargrave	273		N					✓	✓	✓	✓*			✓				W 20km	
Harringworth	225		D (C)			✓*		✓*	✓	✓	✓*			✓			✓	C 15km	
Duddington and Fineshade	212		D (S)						✓	✓	✓*			✓			✓	S 9 km	
Apethorpe	200		D (S,P,N)						✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓				P 20km	0.6ha
Tansor	192		D (P)			✓*				✓	✓*		✓	✓				C 20km	
Twywell	186		D (K,C)			✓	✓		✓		✓*			✓				K 11km	
Laxton	171		N (✓		✓	✓*		✓	✓				C 13km	
Southwick	171		D (S)						✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓				C 17km	
Ashton	162		I (K,)						✓	✓	✓*			✓			✓	C 20km	
Cotterstock	155		D (P,)							✓	✓*			✓			✓	P 20km	
Sudborough	155		D (C)						✓	✓	✓*			✓			✓	C 12km	
Bulwick	153		D (S)	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	C 11km	
Thorpe Achurch and	147		I (C)			✓*			✓		✓*			✓				C 20km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																Available employment land allocation		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities		Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location
Thorpe Waterville																			
Lutton	145		I (P)			✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		P 19km	
Wadenhoe	128		I (C)			✓		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓	C 20km	
Fotheringhay	120		D (P,S)						✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	P 20km	
Deenethorpe	118		N													✓		C 9 km	
Clopton	109		I (C))					✓	✓					✓		✓		K 25km	
Thurning	97		I (C)							✓				✓		✓		K 27km	
Wakerley	89		N													✓	✓	S 12km	
Hemington	86		I (C			✓*		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		P 27km	
Blatherwycke	70		D (S)			✓*								✓		✓		C 13km	
Lilford and Wigsthorpe	68		I (K,C)													✓		K 25km	
Stoke Doyle	66		I (C)						✓					✓		✓		C 20km	
Pilton	65		I (C)			✓*								✓		✓		C 20km	
Newton Bromswold	57		N (✓	✓				✓		✓			
Deene	52		N							✓				✓		✓	✓	C 10km	
Luddington	44		I (C)			✓*			✓							✓		P 25km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities		
Slipton			D (C)					✓		✓				✓			K 10km	
WELLINGBOROUGH																		
Earls Barton	5353		H (W,N,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 7km	1.2ha
Finedon	4188		H (K,W,B,N	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 6km	
Irchester	4807		H (W,N,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			W 5km	
Wollaston	3046		D (W)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 6km	0.5ha
Bozeat	1937		D (N,W,K)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		W 10km	
Great Doddington	1061		H (K,W,N)	✓				✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	W 6km	
Little Harrowden	881		D (C,K,W)	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		W 5km	1.13ha
Sywell	811		H (K,W,N)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	W 9km	1ha
Isham	743		H (WKCPN	✓				✓	✓				✓			✓	K 5km	
Wilby	621		H (NWKCP	✓					✓				✓				W 3km	
Grendon	477		D (N)	✓				✓	✓				✓			✓	W 9km	
Mears Ashby	442		D (W,N)	✓					✓				✓			✓	W 6km	
Orlingbury	395		D (C,K,W,)						✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	W 6km	0.28ha
Ecton	439		N	✓					✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	W 8km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES														Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation			
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church			Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area
Easton Maudit	92		D (W)				✓							✓				W 10km	
Great Harrowden	83		H (K,WNPC)											✓		✓		W 4km	0.28ha
Hardwick	61		N											✓				W 5km	
Little Irchester			H (W,N)					✓						✓				W 3km	
Strixton	24		D (W)											✓				W 7km	0.25 ha

* Denotes Mobile Service

Bus Services

I = Infrequent Service; D = Daily Service; H = Hourly Service; N = No Service

Principal Urban Areas

C = Corby; P = Peterborough; W = Wellingborough; B = Bedford; K = Kettering; S = Stamford; N = Northampton; M = Market Harborough

Appendix D

Existing Settlement Hierarchy - Justified By Services

4 Pages

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Settlement Hierarchy- Justification by Services

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation.
Rural Service Centres/ Urban Hubs																			
Raunds (RSC)	8614		H (N)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		W 15km	25.4ha
Desborough (UH)	8200		H (M,K)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		K 9km	16.9ha B
Irthlingborough (UH)	7620		H (K,W,N)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		W 7km	2.8ha
Rothwell (UH)	7500		H (M,K)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		K 7km	28.8ha
Burton latimer (UH)	7100		H (K,C,B)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	K 6km	
Higham Ferrers (UH)	6435		H (W,N,)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 9km	12.3ha
Thrapston (RSC)	5063		D (P,K,C,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		K 17km	7ha
Oundle (RSC)	5014		H (P,C,N,W)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	C 19km	
Possible Local Service Centres																			
Kettering																			
Broughton	2047		D (K,N)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		K 5km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation.
Pytchley	496		D(CKW)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	K 6km	
Corby																			
Weldon	1644		H (P,CK,N,)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	C 6km	52.5ha
Gretton	1240		D (C)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	C 9km	
Cottingham	912		H (,C,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	C 5km	
Stanion	873		H(K,C)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		C 5 km	
EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE																			
Stanwick	2002		H (N,W)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓		W 12km	
Ringstead	1524		D (C)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		K 15km	
Brigstock	1421		D (C,)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	C 8km	0.4ha
Woodford	1279		D (K,C)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		K 12km	
King's Cliffe	1174		D (S,P)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	S 13km	
Easton-on-the-Hill	1040		D (S,P)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*		✓	✓		✓	✓	S 4 km	
Warmington	1005		H,(PCK,W,N	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓			P 16km	
Nassington	737		D (P)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	P 16km	

Settlement/ Village Name	SERVICES																		
	Population	Rail Station	Bus Service (no. of services to Main Urban Areas in peak hours)	Primary School	Secondary School	Food Shop	Non-Food Shop	Post Office/shop	Public House	Public Hall Community Centre	Library	Bank	Sports Field/ Centre	Church	Health Centre/ Doctors Surgery	employment opportunities	Designated Conservation Area	Nearest Employment Location	Available employment land allocation.
Titchmarsh	618		I (C)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		K 20km	
Barnwell	448		I (C,)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	C 25km	0.08ha
Aldwincle	336		I (P,C,K)	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		K 19km	0.02ha
Little Addington	276		I (W)	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓*			✓		✓		K 14km	
Bulwick	153		D (S)	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	C 11km	
WELLINGBOROUGH																			
Earls Barton	5353		H (W,N,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 7km	1.2ha
Irchester	4807		H (W,N,)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			W 5km	
Finedon	4188		H (K,W,B,N	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	W 6km	
Wollaston	3046		D (W)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W 6km	0.5ha
Bozeat	1937		D (N,W,K)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	W 10km	

* Mobile Service

Rural Service Centre (RSC); Urban Hubs (UH);

Bus Services - I : Infrequent Service; D : Daily Service; H : Hourly Service; N : No Service

Principal Urban Areas - C = Corby; P = Peterborough; W = Wellingborough; B = Bedford; K = Kettering; S = Stamford; N = Northampton; M = Market Harborough

Appendix E

List of Farm Building in East Northamptonshire

1 Page

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Appendix F

Examples of Policy Approach to Rural Diversification

2 Pages

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Example 1 : Planning Policies for Sustainable Rural Economic Development in a Remote Rural Area

Whereshire is a remote and attractive county in England. It has one central city, a network of market towns and surrounding villages. A motorway runs through the north of the county and feeds into a conurbation 40 miles further to the west. Other than this the road and rail infrastructure of the county is limited. The county is an area of traditional mixed farming although livestock enterprises now dominate.

The main issues faced by rural communities in the county are largely a product of its relative isolation. Though the local economy is already quite diverse there is a problem that a significant proportion of jobs are low-skill and poorly paid. Agriculture is facing hard times. Tourism is an important element of the rural economy but is not growing. The market towns remain centres for rural life but their retail and service roles are in decline. In the north of the county the influence of the motorway and accessibility to jobs in urban centres outside the county means that commuters are taking up local housing, making housing increasingly unaffordable to local people.

The local planning authority has set the following objectives for sustainable rural economic development:

- To protect the rural environment both as the cornerstone of the rural economy and as the essential context for the lives of rural residents;
- To encourage new economic development to lift the skills and wages of rural workers;
- To support the diversification of agricultural businesses;
- To be more circumspect of economic development close to the motorway.

These objectives mean that across most of the county the local planning authority encourages new economic development in market towns, in villages and on farms. This is because the relative isolation of most of the county means that development in all three locations is still likely to meet local employment needs and increase the vitality of the towns and villages.

It is open to a wide variety of new types of economic activity. It recognises that most commuting is likely to be by car as there is little transport alternative. The motorway, though, is likely to attract more 'footloose' enterprises to the northern extremities of the county, which may not address local employment needs and could contribute to an already expensive local housing market. Policy is different from this area, therefore, in seeking to allow only development in larger settlements which addresses known local economic and social needs.

Farm diversification is recognised as important in both adding to farm incomes and providing local employment opportunities. Policy requires that farm diversification development is attached to a working farm and of a type to meet local employment needs. The county wishes to avoid the fragmentation of farms. In line with the broader spatial strategy in the north of the county closer to the motorway it is also a requirement that farm diversification should not be of a type likely to attract 'footloose' enterprises.

Example 2 : Planning Policies for Sustainable Rural Economic Development in a Rural Area close to a Major Conurbation

Messex is an attractive county in southern England close to London. It has a network of market towns and villages. A motorway runs through the centre and on to the M25. There are also two mainline rail links up to London running through the county. In accord with the rest of the South East, car use is the highest in England and growing. The county was traditionally dominated by small mixed family farms which are now, in many areas, of marginal viability.

The main issues faced by rural communities in the county are largely a product of its proximity to London and the strong influence of the conurbation on the county as a whole. A significant proportion of the county's population commutes to London. Much of the remainder commutes within the county but also well beyond it. Economic activity in rural areas is strong and businesses in rural areas are not greatly different from those in its urban areas, or in the wider south east. Market towns with a mainline railway station are foci for commuting. Other market towns have a stable if modest retail and service function. Agriculture is increasingly marginalised and many holdings are no longer commercially farmed having passed into non-farmer ownership. Housing in all rural and urban areas is expensive.

The local planning authority has set the following objectives for sustainable rural economic development:

- To protect the rural environment principally as a crucial resource for the residents of the county and London;
- To curb economic development in locations likely to add to commuting by car;
- To support the diversification of agricultural businesses and encourage value-addition to land-based products;
- To specifically encourage economic development allowing greater access and enjoyment of the countryside for the local and sub regional population.

These objectives mean that different sorts of economic development will be favoured in the county compared to Whereshire in Example 1.

The local planning authority is keen to direct 'footloose' rural economic development to market towns and larger villages only. The 'rural' economy of the county is dominated by its urban areas and particularly by London. Commuting is widespread. Demand for certain types of rural business space is high. But it is unlikely that development in smaller settlements or the open countryside such as farm diversification will automatically serve local employment needs or support the vitality of local communities. Instead it may fuel further commuting, almost all by car, threatening the relatively scarce environmental resources upon which the large sub-regional population substantially relies.

There are important exceptions to this general position though. Farm diversification with a clear attachment to a working farm and of a type meeting local employment needs is strongly supported. So are businesses related to land-based activities away from settlements, especially those adding value to land-based products with easy access to a large and affluent market. Equally there is strong support for businesses providing workspace for local (rural) residents and those providing rural services. Leisure and recreation activities serving the needs of local communities and the wider sub-region are also strongly supported where they can also contribute to the maintenance and improvement of the county's landscape and environment.

Overall this is a purposefully more restrictive policy stance than that in Example 1, reflecting justifiably different objectives for sustainable rural economic development.