Foreword

Higham Ferrers is a small town with a big heart and a unique heritage going back over a thousand years.

Higham Ferrers has seen considerable growth over the last 20 years with some mixed results. It is the first time in the life of the town that the local community has had the opportunity to plan its future thanks to the Localism Act 2011. Maybe if a Neighbourhood Plan had been available previously, things would have been different.

This is our Neighbourhood Plan for the Town for the next 20 years. It has been produced by a Steering Group representing the Community and is fully supported by the Town Council. We believe the Plan reflects community observations, comments and aspirations regarding the future of our Town and, that when implemented, will make Higham Ferrers a better place in which to live and work. The Plan will need to be reviewed and updated periodically during the plan period. Following a majority ‘Yes’ vote at the referendum on 18th February 2016 the plan was made by East Northamptonshire Council on 11th April 2016.

We would like to thank everyone who has responded to our questionnaires and public consultations. Your contributions have provided the basis for this Neighbourhood Plan and the Steering Group could not have carried out its work without them. At times it has been challenging but enjoyable work so let’s hope it achieves the vision and objectives that are at the heart of our Plan.

Nigel Cheetham

Richard Gell

Nigel Cheetham – Steering Group Chairman

Richard Gell - Mayor 2015/16
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How this Plan is organised

The Plan is divided into seven sections:

Section 1: Introduction

This section provides an overview of how the Plan was developed and how the community was consulted. It outlines the Neighbourhood Plan boundary and provides a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal outcomes.

Section 2: Portrait of the Town

This section gives a summary of the history of Higham Ferrers, describes its location and provides some background facts and figures about the town.

Section 3: Vision, Objectives and Approach to Sustainable Development

This section sets out the overall vision and objectives for development in future years, as well as the approach to sustainable development.

Section 4: Neighbourhood Plan Policies

This section sets out policies that have been developed to support the overall vision and objectives of the Plan.

Section 5: Plan Delivery and Implementation

This section explains how the Plan will be delivered over the plan period.

Section 6: Monitoring and Review

This section outlines how the Plan will be reviewed and monitored over time.

Section 7: Community Action Plan Proposals.

This section lists the Community Action Plan Proposals and how they relate to the Neighbourhood Plan Policies.
1. Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 provides local communities with the direct power to influence the planning of the area in which they live and/or work. The Neighbourhood Plan is about use and development of land and buildings. It can set out how much, what type and where development can take place and how it looks, but it cannot be used to prevent development that the local planning authority (East Northamptonshire Council) has identified as being required. It does not cover minerals and waste matters as these are addressed in a separate countywide plan. The Neighbourhood Plan must conform generally to higher level planning policies already in existence for the area, these include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), adopted North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (2008) and its emerging replacement the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) review and any saved policies from the East Northamptonshire Local Plan (1996) which are relevant.

In December 2011 Higham Ferrers Town Council agreed to work towards producing a Town Plan. A steering group was set up with representatives from the Town Council and the community with the Town Clerk as Project Leader. The name was changed to Neighbourhood Plan in February 2012 following the agreement of the Steering Group. In April 2013 a member of the community, Nigel Cheetham, was elected as Chairman with Philip Toogood as his Vice-Chairman and Project Manager, to spearhead delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Following a series of consultations, the first stage was the production of a Community Plan to deal with a range of issues that could not be addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan. This was published in August 2013. The steering group then went on to undertake further consultation, building on the earlier feedback received to reinforce the evidence base for the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan covers a 20-year period (2011-2031), but will be reviewed approximately every 5 years. This plan has been developed from significant research and robust community engagement and consultation. Therefore it should from this point forward form a reference point for development within the town and act as a material consideration for planning applications. After public consultation, the draft Plan was scrutinised by an independent examiner appointed by the local authority. He recommended that the plan be submitted to a local referendum once some minor modifications had been made. The Referendum took place on 18th February 2016. 91.62% of those who voted, voted YES to the plan.

The Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan was made at the meeting of East Northamptonshire Council held on 11th April 2016.
1.2. Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

The boundary for the Neighbourhood Plan (Figure 1) incorporates the entire parish of Higham Ferrers, which extends as far as Chelveston-Cum-Caldecott and Newton Bromswold to the east, Stanwick to the north, Rushden to the south and Irthlingborough on the west. The built up area is constrained within the A45 and A6 and accounts for about a third of the total parish area.

During the period of preparing the Plan and following the Parish Boundary Review the parish boundaries have changed slightly in relation to two adjacent parishes, Irthlingborough and Chelveston-cum-Caldecott. The Neighbourhood Plan boundary has been altered to reflect this change following consultation led by East Northamptonshire Council.
1.3. How This Plan Contributes towards achieving Sustainable Development

Neighbourhood Plans are not statutorily subject to sustainability appraisals, although they are required to demonstrably achieve sustainable development. They do have to be in general conformity with the Development Plan, which will have been subject to a sustainability appraisal in terms of the scale and distribution of the growth planned. The Neighbourhood Plan at a more local level can direct and influence development within Higham Ferrers for the benefit of the whole community. It can do this in relation to seeking to balance the three facets of sustainable development.

These are:-

**Economic** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.

**Social** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

**Environmental** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

The plan’s vision seeks to integrate these elements delivering sustainable development and promoting limited growth to meet the needs of the local community within the urban boundaries of the town. The plan also recognises the future growth of Rushden and will help to facilitate the delivery of this by enabling a comprehensively planned sustainable urban extension at Rushden East which could also accommodate any longer term future growth requirements for Higham Ferrers.

1.4. Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

Sustainable development is an important tenet which cascades from European and National policy down to local planning policy. It is important that sustainable development can be achieved and the Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan contributes to this objective. It can do this by ensuring that its development policies and proposals will meet the needs of people living and working in the town.

As part of the sustainability appraisal a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulation Assessment screening exercise were undertaken to determine whether under EU law, significant impacts were likely to accrue from the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Due to the scale and nature of the development proposed in the plan it was concluded and agreed by the statutory authorities that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment was not necessary. The Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening report also concluded that there were no Likely Significant Effects arising from the plan.
1.5. Community Engagement

Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan belongs to the residents of Higham Ferrers. The membership of the Steering Group consists of at least 50% from the community rather than Councillors. The Plan has been developed from the views of local people gathered using a variety of consultation methods including town wide questionnaires, consultation leaflets on two separate occasions, stalls at the Farmers' Market, drop in sessions at the Town Hall, Stall at Medieval Day and attendance at the Business Forum.

In addition to the residents’ consultation, stakeholders were invited to participate in workshops on transport issues and character assessments of the town.

There is a large amount of background information that has helped in producing the Neighbourhood Plan which is known as the ‘Evidence Base’. The Evidence Base is available on the website:- www.highamferrersneighbourhoodplan.org.uk.

A consultation statement detailing the consultation process has been produced to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Portrait of the Town.
2.1. Location and History

The historic market town of Higham Ferrers is located in the Nene Valley in East Northamptonshire, close to the Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire border. It forms a single urban area in conjunction with Rushden to the south. Its close proximity to the junction of the A45 and A6 provides excellent links to the national routes of the A1, M1 and A14.

Its defensive position on high ground looking across the River Nene towards Irthlingborough gave the town its importance in early times. The town's fine buildings and large ornate Church add testament to the historic significance of the town in the Middle Ages. The Doomsday Book of 1086 records its name as Hecham, a Saxon word which means "settlement on the hill." The first Charter of the town approved by Henry III was in 1251. This was the result of a deliberate act of a far-sighted Lord of the Manor, William de Ferrers, who added his surname to the town to give the present name Higham Ferrers. At that time Chelveston-cum-Caldecott was part of Higham Ferrers. The parishes separated sometime in the 14th century.
The town has prospered with markets and fairs with ancient connections still evident by the number of historical sites in the town, including the site of William Peverel’s old castle. Henry Chichele (c. 1364 – 12 April 1443) was born in Higham Ferrers and is noted for becoming Archbishop of Canterbury and founding All Souls College, Oxford. He was also instrumental in the founding of Chichele College in 1422, the Bede House and the Chantry Chapel.

In the Lancastrian period Higham Ferrers became one of the centres of the administration for the Duchy of Lancaster. Some of this land has now been sold off for development, but the Queen, as the Duke of Lancaster, still has considerable landholdings around the town.

Higham Ferrers, despite its ancient charter and privileges was conservative in outlook, and although industry was carried on from early times, it grew comparatively slowly. It was one of the leading boot, shoe and leather towns in the county because hides were abundant from the cattle that was farmed in the Nene Valley and the river provided easy and cheap transport.

River transport declined once the railway arrived at the town in the mid 19th Century (Nene Valley Railway) near Raunds. In 1894 a short branch railway from the Midland Main Line at Wellingborough was opened with stations at Higham Ferrers (terminus) and Rushden. Although improvements were planned to link the line to the Kettering-Huntingdon line, this never happened and the line was closed completely in 1969.

For many years Higham Ferrers was larger than its neighbour Rushden, but as the town grew less rapidly than its neighbour in the 19th century, it has retained many of its historic limestone buildings in the town centre. Rushden is now much larger than Higham and growth patterns have seen the convergence of the two towns, but they both still retain their distinctive characteristics.

Higham Ferrers has now shared in the house building boom of the last two decades, expanding
considerably with the construction of the Kings Meadow Lane estates. There are now 3285 dwellings in the town (2011 census).

2.2. Demographics – Age Profile

Figure 3 Age Profile Chart - Percentages

Figure 3 shows that Higham Ferrers has a slightly higher population under the age of 20 than the national average and also in the age range 40 - 59. However, whilst the population for East Northamptonshire is ageing according to the figures by comparison the population in Higham Ferrers is getting slightly younger.
2.3. Population Change

Of greater significance the percentage change in population over the last 10 years has been 7.4% higher than East Northamptonshire and 9.3% higher than the national average. The total number of households has increased by 18.6% from 2838 in 2001 to 3365 in 2011. (Figure 4)

Figure 4 – Population Change

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<tbody>
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<td>+20.7</td>
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<td>86765</td>
<td>10215</td>
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<tr>
<td>England and Wales</td>
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<td>53,013,456</td>
<td>5,418,287</td>
<td>+11.4</td>
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2.4. Employment

Historically the primary industry in Higham Ferrers was the production of leather, as well as shoes and boots. These industries provided most of the employment, but this trade reduced in the 1980s – 2000s and many of the employment areas have been redeveloped for housing or alternative employment uses. Apart from the shops and businesses in the High Street and part of Wharf Road, the main employer in Higham Ferrers is Ferrers School. The former location of the leather works just off Kimbolton Road in Midland Road and Bury Close is one of the main industrial areas, along with the industrial area to the north of the town, adjacent to the Chowns Mill roundabout.

According to the 2011 census, a high percentage of the residents in the town are employed in the wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles (20.5%), which is higher than the national average of...
15.9%. Other sectors which provide a high percentage of employment for local residents are manufacturing (11.3%), education (9.4%) and health and social work (10.1%). The average length of journey to work is just over 12 miles, which means that many residents work outside Higham Ferrers.

Unemployment in the town is 1.2% which is lower than the national average of 2.3% and is consistent with the figure for East Northamptonshire of 1.4%.

(Jobseekers Allowance, DWP - Aug 2014)

2.5. Car Ownership and Public Transport

Private car ownership and usage is the main mode of transport with only 13.2% of households having no car and 48.3% having 2 or more vehicles, which is higher than the national average. The town is served by several bus services linking Higham Ferrers to Peterborough, Thrapston, Northampton, Kettering, Bedford, Milton Keynes and Leicester as well as the local Rushden-Higham link which is subsidised by Rushden and Higham Ferrers Town Councils. The nearest train station is at Wellingborough (Midland Main line) with regular services to London, although the emerging Joint Core Strategy (JCS) review includes a proposal to investigate the reopening of the former railway station at Irchester to serve Higham Ferrers and Rushden. Four regional airports can be reached within 70 minutes allowing business trips to many parts of Europe to be completed within a day.
2.6. Housing and Tenure Mix

Figure 5 below shows that Higham Ferrers has a higher than average home ownership with shared ownership as a tenure very low in line with the national figure.

2.7. Accommodation Type

As seen in figure 6, the majority of properties in Higham Ferrers are semi-detached and detached, which is higher than the national average but consistent with figures for East Northamptonshire. The number of flats is considerably below the average for England. (4.7% as opposed to 22.2%).
2.8. Services and Facilities

Higham Ferrers has a wide range of services and facilities consistent with a typical town of its size and character. These include:

- Doctors Surgery
- Library
- Dentist
- Optician
- Two Junior Schools
- Infants and Nursery School
- Day Nursery
- Pre-School
- Senior School
- Playing Fields
- Three Play Areas
- Golf Course
- Post Office
- Tennis Courts
- Multi-Use Games Area
- Bowls Pavilion and Green
- Cemetery

The Town Centre has waned over the years due to competition from out of town shopping. It now hosts mainly independent retailers and businesses as well as pubs, restaurants, takeaway outlets and a small supermarket. There is a Farmers’ Market once a month.
2.9. Environment.

Higham Ferrers is located within the Nene Valley, part of which was designated in 2011 as a Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar site under the EU Birds Directive. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is partially situated within the parish boundary and runs from Peterborough to Northampton. The previous surface mine workings have formed lakes which now provide habitats for a range of species including over 26,000 winter nesting birds.

The town is well linked to Stanwick Lakes which is just over 2 miles from the centre of Higham Ferrers, either by road or on foot or bicycle via the Greenway.

There are eight important open spaces within the historic town centre which can be enjoyed by members of the public, the main ones being Saffron Road Recreation Ground and Castle Fields. Riverside Park is a pocket park situated at the lower end of Wharf Road and has the back channel for the River Nene passing through it, the river having been diverted by the construction of the A45 bypass in the 1990s.

This is in contrast to the Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows Nature Reserve located within the SPA/Ramsar site which aims to limit access.

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1 Designated on the Townscape Appraisal Map

View over the Nene Valley towards Irthlingborough
3.1. Vision

The vision for Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by the Steering Group and refined via consultation with the community.

For the next 20 years the vision for Higham Ferrers is that the town will be:

- **A sustainable, vibrant, thriving community**
  
  *Strongly based on its history with an emphasis on its individuality, which encourages growth that complements its market town heritage.*

- **A community which encourages attractive, high-quality development**
  
  *Including new housing, commercial property and community facilities within a compact market town environment.*

- **A community that is inclusive**
  
  *With safe access to its town centre and excellent links to adjacent housing estates, the surrounding countryside and the regional transportation network.*

- **An attractive town centre**
  
  *With increased vitality and activity that attracts a variety of new businesses and supports existing businesses to create a thriving High Street and encourage tourism.*

Heritage Housing in the Market Square  
North End Housing
3.2. Objectives

SERVICES
To enhance residents’ quality of life by improving leisure, education, health and environmental facilities.

DEVELOPMENT
To promote sufficient housing and commercial development to meet local needs and to attract visitors, thereby providing a degree of growth and employment opportunity whilst preserving the historic character and compactness of the town.

TOWN CENTRE
To encourage a variety of new employment and the retention of the existing businesses.

DESIGN & ENVIRONMENT
To conserve and enhance the town’s heritage and environmental features and promote quality and visually attractive and sustainable design in all new developments.

ACCESS
To improve pedestrian / cyclist links within the town’s boundary and to the surrounding countryside; provide more and better parking.

METHOD
To deliver the above objectives in partnership with the residents, other stakeholders and all necessary statutory authorities.
3.3 Approach to Sustainable Development

The intention of this Plan is to provide a framework for sustainable development for the Town over the next 20 years. This requires economic, social and environmental elements to be in balance so that current and future generations can enjoy a high quality of life.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to conform to the National Planning Policy Framework which promotes the principle of sustainable development as its key tenet. To achieve this, the Town Council will work proactively with applicants and other stakeholders to find joint solutions to enable development to go ahead where it is sustainable and accords with the Plan.

The approach has also required a more direct and positive engagement with the local community as well as landowners and developers to identify where development can be accommodated to meet local needs.

Higham Ferrers is an historic settlement with a significant number of heritage assets which help to define the character and attractiveness of the town. These characteristics are highly valued by the local community and in accommodating further development the Plan requires that sufficient regard is given to them.

Environmental

Economic

Social
4. Policies

In order to achieve the Neighbourhood Plan’s Vision and Objectives the following set of policies have been developed to manage future development within Higham Ferrers. The policies should be considered together and as a whole when applicants or developers are formulating proposals and judging whether these would be acceptable.

The Neighbourhood Plan is the spatial expression of the community’s vision for the future and how this can be achieved through land use based policies. The Community Plan, which sits alongside this plan and considers wider issues which are not necessarily planning related, underpins the Neighbourhood Plan. Where linkages between the two documents exist these proposals have been highlighted within section 7.

To reflect the views and areas of interest of the community based on consultation feedback and evidence on local issues the plan policies have been divided into five separate themes which reflect the objectives of the plan:

- **DEVELOPMENT,**
- **SERVICES,**
- **TOWN CENTRE AND EMPLOYMENT,**
- **DESIGN & ENVIRONMENT,** and
- **ACCESS, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.**

These have been colour coded throughout the plan to aid interpretation.

To provide further clarity for decision makers and applicants each policy is accompanied by supporting text setting out the rationale for the policies, views from the local community on that subject and the evidence, plans and strategies that offer support for its approach.

All policies have been framed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and the emerging North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.
4.1. Development

Objective: To promote sufficient housing and commercial development to meet local needs and to attract visitors, thereby providing a degree of growth and employment opportunity whilst preserving the historic character and compactness of the town.

Intention and Context

The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges the requirement that the Plan should make provision for the needs of its residents over the plan period. This will include the need to meet local housing demand and provide affordable housing opportunities especially for young people as well as considering the growing housing requirements for the elderly and disabled.

Consultation has revealed that the growth ambitions of Higham Ferrers is not significant. People value the historic and compact nature of the settlement and have been concerned by the increasing amount of infill development which has occurred over the last 20 years, which has reduced the level of open space. However, limited housing and employment land would be acceptable in the right location to provide houses and jobs for local people. It is also accepted that the ambitions of Rushden are to see significant growth. Consent for a major retail shopping destination at Rushden Lakes adjacent to the A45 and the proposals for Rushden East, which might deliver up to 2,500 dwellings, employment land and associated infrastructure, could be perceived as a threat to the town but can also be viewed as an opportunity. Rushden Lakes will create several hundred retail jobs which will be good for local employment especially amongst the young. Although, the fear might be that town centre retailers will not be able to compete with these larger stores for labour and that spend will also be drawn away from the town centre. Equally Rushden East will ultimately represent a major housing development and centre for community activities and residents may be attracted to facilities in this area rather than Higham Ferrers. However, opportunities exist for the town and residents to benefit from these developments through an increase in spend overall and for Higham Ferrers town centre to be viewed as a complementary offer due to its unique heritage and independent retailers and services.

Higham Ferrers, since the opening of the A6 bypass in 2003, has been constrained to the east by this barrier, to the north and west by the A45 and the south by Rushden. Giving due consideration to the emerging Joint Core Strategy, which requires the allocation of at least 560 dwellings for Higham Ferrers to 2031, once completions and planning consents for dwellings since 2011 are deducted, a total of approximately 300 houses would need to be allocated. The justification for housing requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan is set out in the supporting document – Housing Requirements and Site Allocation report.
Land East of Ferrers School
The only remaining significant uncommitted potential development site within the built up area of the town to accommodate this future growth is the area adjacent to the Ferrers School. This lies between the school and the A6 bypass. It has previously been allocated for industrial and commercial land in the 1996 District Local Plan under saved policy HF2. However, this allocation has not been brought forward for that use, and Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states that planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of it being used for that purpose. Also, with the proposals for Rushden East, further employment land could be allocated within this development, which would provide a bigger quantum of development and better location than the Ferrers site. The supporting document to this plan, Housing Requirements and Site Allocations December 2014, sets out this rationale in more detail. However the allocation of this site for housing provides the opportunity to meet the housing needs of the town over the plan period to 2031. The site could also come forward for this sole use under the present planning framework. Therefore it is better to plan the area positively with a use that is likely to be viable. Considerable late Iron Age and Roman archaeological remains are known to be present at this site and developers will need to work collaboratively with English Heritage and Northamptonshire County Council to evidence this heritage asset and to fulfil any obligations in recording this historical location before developing proposals for the site.

Rushden East
Further development for limited housing, employment and community facilities could be provided adjacent to Rushden East within the Higham Ferrers boundary. Consultation with the community indicates that modest growth in this location associated with the urban extension would be supported. The master planning of Rushden East will require considered thought over an extended period to refine the proposals, however, the principle of utilising John Clarke Way Roundabout as one of the main accesses would seem to be fixed. In order to facilitate the achievement of a properly master planned urban extension of Rushden, the identification of a proposed future direction of growth for Higham Ferrers associated with Rushden East with guidance on development criteria will assist in this master planning process.

Small scale residential development and windfall sites would be acceptable within the town boundary so long as they conform to development and design principles within this Plan and elsewhere, and do not compromise existing open space. This will assist in the regeneration of small areas and may improve amenity for neighbouring properties if sites have become redundant or derelict. Proposals will be supported where they do not significantly impact on the surrounding area through loss of daylight, privacy, visual intrusion or car parking and
additional traffic pressure resulting from the development.

**Justification and Evidence**
The use of infill and windfall sites can have an impact on the delivery of housing numbers within Higham Ferrers to meet the needs of local people. They also invariably utilise previously developed land or land of lesser environmental quality by their very nature which supports one of the core planning principles of the NPPF. The redevelopment of derelict or vacant sites such as the Midland Business Centre site can bring positive benefits to neighbouring uses and prevent vandalism and blight. Higham Ferrers is an ancient settlement with significant archaeological remains and heritage assets. There are extensive records that have been produced by Northamptonshire Archaeology and documented in the Extensive Urban Study 2000 Archaeological Site report. The Ferrers site report (07/150) produced in September 2007 is particularly helpful in setting out the findings for this site so far.

North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2012, the recent update completed in 2015 which takes account current demographic and affordability evidence and up to date work undertaken by the District Council (Housing Mix Requirements Assessment), indicate that the most pressing need within Higham Ferrers is for smaller sized properties. The updated SHMA underpins the emerging Joint Core Strategy housing policies and suggests that East Northamptonshire will face the greatest growth in older households over the next 20 years within East Northamptonshire increasing by 79%. Existing housing stock is dominated by larger properties (75% are 3 bedrooms or more), whereas this contrasts sharply with the household size profile derived from the 2011 census which shows that 62% of households comprise one or two persons. This lack of smaller properties within Higham Ferrers will limit the ability of households, especially the elderly, to downsize and restricts the choices of people at the entry level. It is important to deliver a balanced mix of houses within the development, but also the type of housing that people require within their own communities. These should be at an affordable price so that they can get onto the housing market via a range of different tenures and progress onto other housing as lifestyle and finances permit. Development should provide for affordable housing at the level identified in the Core Spatial Strategy or by subsequent adopted strategies subject to viability considerations.

In providing a range and mix of housing it is also important to provide choice and variety. Of those consulted 35% expressed a need for more bungalows and 30% for sheltered housing of some form. There will be a continued requirement for the delivery of affordable housing within Higham Ferrers with a desire that local residents or those with a strong connection with the town should have a priority.
Consultation Feedback
Of those responding to the options consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received in relation to the Development Objective:-
- Allocation of land adjacent to Ferrers School for housing - 45% support.
- Provision of a reserve site at Higham Ferrers East to deliver:-
  - Infrastructure Needs
  - Additional housing land if necessary
  - Sports pitch provision
  - Strategic Green corridor linking new development to Higham Ferrers Town Centre
  - Employment land provision
    65% support.
  - Inclusion of bungalows and self-build opportunities along with the required level of affordable housing
    67% support.
  - Smaller house sizes are required (1 & 2 bed properties) and will be promoted through the plan for young families and older residents
    74% support.

Conformity
NPPF 47, 48, 50, 53,
CSS Policy 9, 13 l), 15.

Saffron Road - New Housing in Character with the Existing Area

William Steele Way
# HF.H1 - Windfall Sites and Development Infill - Residential

Proposals for residential development on windfall or infill* sites within the town including redevelopment will be supported subject to proposals being well designed and where such development:

- Fills a small, restricted gap in the continuity of existing frontage buildings or on other sites within the built-up area of the town where the site is closely surrounded by buildings.
- Will not involve the outward extension of the built-up area of Higham Ferrers to the east of the A6 and north and west of the A45.
- If considered to be ‘garden’ development or subdivision of plots, it will be necessary to demonstrate that this is appropriate, through giving consideration to access arrangements, the amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the locality; e.g. through the consideration of the Character Assessment for Higham Ferrers.
- Provides a beneficial net contribution, through the provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes, including single storey dwellings and self-build properties, towards meeting both market and affordable housing needs in accordance with the most up-to-date demonstration of need.
- Ensuring the design of an infill development shall be in keeping with the local vernacular (as set out in the Character Assessment) and will use sympathetic materials.

*Infill refers to sites within the built up area of Higham Ferrers bounded by the A6 and A45.

# HF.H2 – Type of Dwelling

Residential development proposals will be required to be developed in general conformity with the relevant standards for affordable housing, mix and tenure set out in the Local Plan. For Higham Ferrers this means that housing developments will be required to provide for a mix of housing types ensuring a minimum of 50% being smaller homes (1 & 2 bed properties including for instance single storey dwellings), suitable as starter homes for young families or as homes for the elderly. Housing mix should also provide homes suitable for the disabled.

An alternative housing mix provision may be appropriate but would need to be justified by an up to date local needs assessment, viability appraisal or particular masterplanning and design considerations.
Figure 7 – Location Plan for Land East of Ferrers School and Higham East

Site Adjacent to Ferrers School
Support will be given for the comprehensive masterplanning for access and infrastructure associated with Rushden East required from the John Clarke roundabout within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Subject to the demonstration of future need for housing, employment and community facilities required by Higham Ferrers, or in the event of other housing sites not being delivered, additional land will be provided within a future growth area ‘Higham East’ as identified on the Proposals Plan. No development will come forward without prior approval by the Local Planning Authority of a phasing proposal for land within the Neighbourhood Plan area as part of the co-ordinated masterplanning of the combined growth areas of Rushden East and Higham East. Any future masterplan proposals for this growth area should consider:-

- Provision of a strategic green corridor to accommodate an enhanced pedestrian and cycle route through the Urban Extension along the existing public right of way (UK2).
- Provision of a safe and high quality link across the A6 between this site and land to East of Ferrers School site connecting the existing Greenway and Footpath UK2.
- Allocation of housing and employment land to meet the needs of Higham Ferrers residents.
- Allocation of future community facilities including potential land for allotments and sports pitches.
- Strategic landscaping to protect visual amenity and sympathetically accommodate new development within a greenfield setting.
- Avoiding potential impacts on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar Site. Any potential impacts must be assessed to the satisfaction of Natural England prior to any development being consented. In the event that any possible adverse impacts are identified, appropriate mitigation measures must be agreed with Natural England prior to commencement of development.
- Opportunities to protect and enhance existing priority habitats.
- Planning obligations will be sought in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations for access management measures at the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar Site. This will include the delivery of additional strategic greenspace to ensure no likely significant effects to this important site as a result of increased recreational pressure from development.
- The need to demonstrate the promotion of sustainable transport through provision for walking and cycling and through provision for public transport penetration.
Provision is made for 11.75 ha of land to the east of Higham Ferrers School for the development of approximately 300 houses accessed from John Clarke Way Roundabout. The development will be permitted providing the following criteria are met:

- Provision of affordable housing in line with policies elsewhere in the Development Plan and a range of house types dependent on need as suggested by an up to date Housing Needs Survey or other assessment of local need unless viability considerations suggest otherwise.
- Provision of formal and informal open space, Sustainable Urban Drainage systems and landscape buffer and screening between the development and Higham Business Park and the Ferrers School; with any measures to reduce potential impact on the SPA/Ramsar site.
- Safe-guarding and enhancement to the Public Right of Way (UK2) linking John Clarke Way Roundabout to Queensway and contribute to the extension of the Greenway through to William Steele Way and the Town Centre and providing additional alternative walking and jogging routes for new residents.
- Facilitates provision of a secondary vehicular access for Ferrers School and improved pedestrian and cycleway connectivity to the school.
- Design consideration and contributions to an enhanced connection in the form of a safe, direct and high quality link across the A6 to the countryside.
- Appropriate archaeological investigation to be undertaken prior to development and findings recorded in accordance with English Heritage and NCC Archaeology.
- Design and access statement to be provided which addresses the relationship and interaction between the site and the future Rushden East Urban Extension. It will also demonstrate how the scale, proportion, materials, layout and amenity space respects the local context and fully considers the Higham Ferrers Character Assessment.
- Financial contribution to access management measures at the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar Site and/or the delivery of additional strategic greenspace to ensure no likely significant effects to this important site as a result of increased recreational pressure from development, if required.
- Provision for convenient access to public transport.
4.2. Services

4.2.1 Provision of Community Facilities

Objective: To enhance residents’ quality of life by improving leisure, education, health and environmental facilities.

Intention and Context
Higham Ferrers is located adjacent to Rushden, which is a substantially larger urban area, with a consequentially higher range of services and facilities. However, due to Higham’s historical development the town is relatively well catered for in terms of community facilities and services. Although there is an overall deficit of open space and community or sports halls in public ownership, there are a number of community facilities which include parks and open spaces, two play areas, private community halls, tennis courts, school facilities and a library. However, as development continues to be delivered greater pressure will be placed on these facilities as well as health and other services. Some facilities will be built upon, such as redundant allotments; which will need to be re-provided elsewhere, or other facilities improved to cater for increased demand. The delivery of new growth within the town will need to progress in tandem with the timely provision of infrastructure to support this development. The intention of this policy is to set out the approach to planning obligations.

Justification and Evidence:
Any new development will inevitably have some impact on Higham Ferrers and increased population will exert a pressure and create additional demand on local services and facilities. Infrastructure such as highways, public utilities and waste services may need to be upgraded. The NPPF sets out the framework within which Planning Obligations can be used to make otherwise unacceptable development permissible. Obligations have been negotiated traditionally through s106 agreements (Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). In future it is likely that a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be adopted which provides a flat rate fee against certain types of development based on floor space area. Currently the CIL for East Northamptonshire is being developed and consulted upon. However, once the Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan is adopted and the CIL is in place, 25% of the Levy is to be apportioned to the local area to contribute towards local facilities.
New development will be permitted subject to the timely delivery of infrastructure and facilities to provide for a balanced and sustainable community. Subject to viability testing, financial contributions will be required from developments of 11 dwellings or more to mitigate the impact of the development on essential infrastructure such as education, public utilities, libraries, policing, waste services, public transport and highways. Contributions should be:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms,
- Directly related to the development, and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Conformity
NPPF 203-206.
CSS Policy 6.
4.2.2. Protection and Enhancement of Community Facilities.

Objective: To enhance residents’ quality of life by improving leisure, education, health and environmental facilities.

Objective: To encourage a variety of new employment and the retention of the existing businesses.

Intention and Context
Higham Ferrers has a relatively strong town centre with a number of community facilities centrally located. It is not, however, immune to the competition and pressure of out of town development and the internet. The provision of facilities in a central location where all residents can access them most easily promotes and enhances the sustainability of the town. Most services and facilities within the town centre cater for a local need and the loss of these community services and facilities would be to the detriment of the town as a whole.

This policy seeks to encourage new facilities within the town and retain those that are existing. Policy CD2 should be read in conjunction with policy TCE1 which promotes the vitality of the town centre commercial area. While community facilities should be focussed on the town centre where possible, this may not always be achievable due to space requirements or locational issues. Therefore to accommodate the range of facilities that are potentially required a flexible approach should be adopted.

The Higham Ferrers Nursery and Infants School and Junior School on Wharf Road are both constrained in terms of future expansion land. Henry Chichele School, predominantly serving the Kings Meadow housing estate, was opened as a one form entry school and currently has plans to expand on the school site to a two form entry school for the school year 2016/17. This is to cater for demand in the town due to existing and proposed development. The intention of policy CD3 is to provide future expansion land for the rest of the plan period should additional space be required.

Justification and Evidence:
Community facilities are an important asset to the community and their loss needs to be protected against, if the town is to function as a sustainable settlement. Where necessary the Town Council will work with East Northamptonshire Council to consider expanding the list of Assets of Community Value to ensure that the opportunity exists for the community to purchase or gain control of key properties which might be able to provide services for local residents.

The Education Authority determines the needs for future school places across the County and the timing and delivery of new capacity. By safeguarding the site to the rear of Henry Chichele School (see map pf LGS8 in appendix 3) for potential future expansion to be utilised for playing fields or recreational areas, it will help to enable the additional expansion of this facility if required. It is considered that future secondary school capacity can be provided at the
New and/or improved community facilities will be supported providing that the new facility is appropriate to its location having regard to its use, size and design, impact on traffic, the environment and neighbouring residents. The loss of existing community facilities and any future Assets of Community Value (ACV) will be resisted unless it can be shown that the facilities are no longer needed or viable or where acceptable alternative provision exists or is proposed concurrently.

Consultation Feedback
Of those responding to the consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received:

- Location of a new community centre at the Methodist Church site – 77%
- New and/or improved community facilities - 82% support.
- Location of new sports pitch provision and open space associated with Higham Ferrers East Reserve site – 69% support.
- Safeguarding land next to Henry Chichele School for potential future expansions – 78% support.

HF.CD2 – Protection and Enhancement of Community Facilities

New and/or improved community facilities will be supported providing that the new facility is appropriate to its location having regard to its use, size and design, impact on traffic, the environment and neighbouring residents. The loss of existing community facilities and any future Assets of Community Value (ACV) will be resisted unless it can be shown that the facilities are no longer needed or viable or where acceptable alternative provision exists or is proposed concurrently.

In the context of this plan community facilities includes, but is not necessarily restricted, to the following:

- Leisure and culture facilities (including arts, entertainment and built sport facilities).
- Community offices and meeting places (including places of worship, libraries).
- Facilities for children (from nursery provision to youth clubs).
- Education (including adult education).
- Social Services.
- Healthcare facilities.
4.3. Design and Environment

4.3.1. Design Standards

**Objective:** To conserve and enhance the town’s heritage and environmental features and promote quality and visually attractive and sustainable design in all new developments.

**Intention and Context**

Higham Ferrers has a wealth of historical buildings within its central core and defined conservation area. There are numerous archaeological sites with remains dating back to the Iron Age and Roman times. It also has a range of distinctive character areas as set out in a separate document the Higham Ferrers Character Assessment September 2014 (see Figure 9 on page 39 for a plan of the areas). It is the protection of the historic built environment and promotion of good design in new development which has been highlighted through community consultation as being important with 54% of respondents supporting high quality design in new developments.

This policy will support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provisions for requiring good design, as well as its promotion for conserving and enhancing its historic environment.

The intention of these policies is to provide clear guidance to those preparing applications for development and those assessing them within the Plan area that the design proposals have taken into consideration the North Northamptonshire Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2009) and they adhere to the Character Assessment September 2014 for Higham Ferrers. Any proposals also need to fully assess and evaluate the historical and archaeological legacy of Higham.
Ferrers utilising the existing knowledge and data as well as working with the statutory agencies (see Appendix 2). This will ensure that design quality of all development proposals is of a consistently high quality and the historical significance and settlement remains are not lost for ever.

Sustainable drainage solutions are an important facet of any new development to protect against on-site flooding and to ensure that flood risk across the wider water catchment area is minimised. Proposals for Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions and schemes should be designed and integrated within development proposals at the earliest stage taking advantage of landscape features and topography.

Where Design and Access Statements are required to support planning applications developers should address the following areas in detail:

- Assessment of context and character (including historic context.)
- Connection with the countryside (where appropriate).
- Design quality and rationale, including response to existing character.
- Pedestrian, cyclist and public transport access.
- Car Parking provision and arrangements.

In undertaking this analysis developers should also give full consideration to the Higham Ferrers Character Assessment.

Justification and Evidence:
The Higham Ferrers community highly values the historic character of the town centre. In response to the consultation carried out in June 2012, 65% of people stated that what they most liked about the town was its physical appearance and historic buildings. This policy incorporates the key principles of the NPPF in promoting good design in all new development and builds on the requirements in the North Northamptonshire Sustainable Design SPD. The policy is justified by the need to ensure that development is integrated with the existing built form and relates sympathetically in terms of scale, character and density. Higham Ferrers has grown rapidly over the last 20 years and not all of the recent development has related well to the historic core of the town in terms of layout and design.

In order to provide greater guidance on acceptable design the community has surveyed the entire town and designated various character areas. Within this, various positive and negative aspects have been recorded to highlight what is considered to be good design elements within each area.
The Higham Ferrers Character Assessment 2014 is divided into five character areas. (see map on page 39).

The ‘Nordens’ (represent the historic core and is defined by the conservation area.
- ‘Walnut Tree Farm’ (Higham Ferrers North),
- ‘The Royals’, (Higham Ferrers North East),
- ‘Westingham’ (Higham Ferrers West) and
- ‘The Burys’ (Higham Ferrers South East).

The last four have some areas of commonality although three of the areas have been subdivided. In order that design and layout issues are given the attention that is required to individualise development, it will be necessary for residential and commercial development to demonstrate they have taken proper regard of the Sustainable Design SPD and the Higham Ferrers Character Assessment. Developers should also take into account guidance set out in the Tree and Landscape SPD adopted in June 2013 to ensure that this element of character is fully assessed and considered when new development is being proposed.

Conformity
NPPF 56-58, 60, 61, 64, 66, 93, 95.
CSS Policy 13h), i), l), m), n), o), q).

HF.DE1 – Achieving High Quality Design

New development will be expected to be of a high quality design and must preserve and enhance the settlement of Higham Ferrers by:
- Recognising and reinforcing the distinct local character (as set out within the Higham Ferrers Character Assessment 2014) in relation to height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings.
- Respecting and protecting the amenity of existing residents.
- Protecting natural assets and enhancing the natural environment and biodiversity, particularly the SPA/Ramsar site.
- Incorporating adequate landscaping to mitigate the visual impact of the development and to ensure that proposals merge into the existing context. Landscaping schemes should seek to include locally appropriate native species.
- Seeking to retain mature or important trees and hedgerows. Development that damages or results in the loss of ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and/or amenity value and hedgerows will not normally be permitted.
- Ensuring new boundary treatments reflect the distinct local character in relation to materials and design.
- Development proposals which promote modern designs using contemporary materials will be supported where the applicant can demonstrate they are of high quality and can be successfully integrated into the existing context. Specific attention should be paid to the Character Assessment to ensure modern design can be assimilated without adversely impacting the positive characteristics of the area.
- Ensuring sustainable drainage solutions are designed in accordance with the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage and locals SUDs standards.
Figure 9 Higham Ferrers Character Areas

- Neighbourhood Boundary
- CA - "Nordens" Conservation Area
- 1 - "Walnut Tree Farm"
- 2A & 2B - "The Royals"
- 3A, 3B, 3C & 3D - "Westingham"
- 4A & 4B - "The Burys"
4.3.2 Natural Environment

**Objective:** To conserve and enhance the town’s heritage and environmental features and promote quality and visually attractive and sustainable design in all new developments.

**Intention and Context:** Higham Ferrers is an historic town and many of the remaining open spaces and areas of public realm play an important role in enhancing the built environment. As new development has been built important areas of open space have been added providing areas of recreation and relief from the built up area. These green spaces need to be preserved and protected and in the case of new development additional provision will be required.

The town also sits alongside the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits which was approved as a Special Protection Area (SPA) in April 2011 because of the range of habitat and topography, which provides valuable resting and feeding conditions for major concentrations of wintering water birds, especially ducks and waders. Some species also spend
time feeding and roosting on surrounding agricultural land outside the SPA/Ramsar Site. In addition, the site has also been listed as a wetland with international status under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Wildfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention). This is because it regularly supports 20,000 or more water birds as well as 1% of the bird individuals of Mute Swan and Gadwall. New development must protect the conservation objectives of the SPA.

Other linkages to the open countryside are also important and the barriers imposed by the A6 and A45 make the links across these routes even more important to join up with the network of footpaths and cycleways to connect to the wider green infrastructure corridors. This alongside the provision of new open space, will help to provide alternative recreational areas and reduce pressure on the most sensitive areas of the SPA/Ramsar site.

There are eight important open spaces within the historic town centre, the main ones being Saffron Road Recreation Ground and Castle Fields. Riverside Park is a pocket park situated at the lower end of Wharf Road and also provides for quiet recreation. The intention of these environmental policies is to designate and protect existing important open space from development and to ensure that new development contributes and links to this integrated network.

**Justification and Evidence:**
The SPA/Ramsar site was designated in 2011 and provides international protection for wintering birds and their habitats within the whole of the SPA/Ramsar site which runs from Northampton to Thorpe Waterville (near Thrapston). The area just to the north of Higham Ferrers is known as Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows, which is particularly sensitive due to the close proximity of both Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough. The Nene Valley and its main tributaries are also designated as a Nature Improvement Area (NIA), which provides further opportunities for green infrastructure enhancement. The Nene Valley forms part of a main sub-regional Green Infrastructure corridor with local corridors extending outwards from it. Higham Ferrers sits adjacent to the one extending from Rushden to Souldrop.

The Northamptonshire Environmental Character and Green Infrastructure Suite (2006), Core Spatial Strategy (2008) and North Northamptonshire Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2014) all identify these assets and highlight the importance for developing and improving the County’s Green Infrastructure. The Nene Valley Strategic Plan (2010) also identifies opportunities and areas for development within the River Nene Regional Park, while still protecting the characteristics of the SPA/Ramsar Site which are potentially under threat. Consultation responses indicated that nearly 50% of all respondents strongly agreed that access to the Countryside needs to be improved due the barriers
imposed by the A45 and more latterly the A6. Existing open space within the built up area of the town is also an important resource. The Local Authority’s Open Space Supplementary Planning Document adopted in November 2011, sets out what constitutes open space and requirements for new open space within future developments. Developers should refer to this when bringing forward schemes. Designated open space areas for Higham Ferrers are identified in the East Northamptonshire Local Plan (1996) and will be reviewed in the Four Towns Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan takes the opportunity of designating local green space which have either historical or a significant community value and can therefore be protected as set out in the NPPF. The Local Green Space assessment (2014) identifies these areas and appendix 3 provides location maps for the sites.

Consultation Feedback
Of those responding to the consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received:-

- High quality design will be supported, protecting and enhancing the different character areas of the town 74% support.
- Larger scale housing (over 50 dwellings) will be required to provide a design brief setting out the parameters of the scheme 65% support.
- Important hedgerows, mature trees and nature conservation features will be retained where possible to increase local biodiversity 93% support.
- The plan will protect areas of open space which are valued by the community by designating them as Local Green Space 93% support.
- No adverse impact on the Nene Valley Special Protection Area 90% support.
- Sites with known recorded historic settlements to have intense archaeological investigations 86% support.

Conformity
NPPF 76, 77,99,113.
CSS Policy 5, 13g),o),q).

View towards Larkin Gardens across Lakes.
HF.DE3 – Access to Green Infrastructure Network

New development will be expected to contribute towards and facilitate access to the Green Infrastructure network and will be supported in the event that it:

- Does not have an adverse impact, either alone or cumulatively on the Special Protection Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or RAMSAR site which lies adjacent to the Town and forms a part of the sub-regional green infrastructure corridor.
- Encourages or provides for publicly accessible links from development sites to the wider footpath network/green spaces and Green Infrastructure corridors to address gaps in the network and to improve existing provision.

Opportunities will be sought to address gaps, as shown on the Proposals Map, in the wider footpath network when development proposals come forward.

HF.DE4 - Local Green Space

The areas listed below, identified on the Proposals Plan and set out in Appendix 3, are designated as Local Green Spaces which are protected from new development due to their particular local significance and community value unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Play equipment would be acceptable on these sites where appropriate:

- LGS1 Tollbar informal recreation area for Tollbar, Tenter Close, The Hedges and Handcross Way. (Figure 3.1)
- LGS2 Castlefields Scheduled Ancient Monument and recreation area. (Figure 3.2)
- LGS3 Saffron Road Recreation Ground Recreation area. (Figure 3.3)
- LGS4 Walnut Tree Open Space. (Figure 3.4)
- LGS5 Riverside Park Recreational and open space. (Figure 3.5)
- LGS6 The Ride Open space associated with Kings Meadow Lane. (Figure 3.6)
- LGS7 The Stirrup Open space fronting Henry Chichele School. (Figure 3.7)
- LGS8 Land to the rear of Patenall Way Open space and informal recreation. (Figure 3.8)
- LGS9 School Lane Green Infrastructure and open space. (Figure 3.9)
- LGS10 Common Land end of Stanwick Road Recreation area. (Figure 3.10)
- LGS11 John White Close Open Space. (Figure 3.11)
- LGS12 Upper Kings Avenue Open Space. (Figure 3.12)
4.4. Access, Transport and Communication

4.4.1 Road and Communications Infrastructure

Objective: To improve pedestrian / cyclist links within the town’s boundary and to the surrounding countryside; provide more and better parking.

Intention and Context
Higham Ferrers road network has developed from a historical pattern based on 'desire lines' linking to neighbouring settlements. This has been affected by the delivery of more strategic routes (A45 and A6 bypass) which have altered the way the town has developed and also the requirements for access to and from the town. Through-traffic no longer uses the High Street and College Street and therefore the requirements for this road in terms of highway capacity and use could be downgraded to lessen the impact of the car within and around the town centre. Residents consider the A class road running through the town a barrier to community cohesion.

Conversely, congestion at the Chowns Mill intersection of the A45 and A6 has significantly increased at peak times and it has become harder to enter or exit Higham Ferrers at these times with major tailbacks on all routes. Plans are being developed to provide a junction improvement scheme. However, even if this is implemented this issue will need to be kept under review for the lifetime of the plan as further development, such as Rushden East, takes place over the next 15-20 years.

Morning Traffic on the A6 approaching Chowns Mill Roundabout

As telecommunications improve and the ability to work from home increases there may be more opportunity to reduce work related travel at peak periods and thereby increase greater capacity on the road network and decrease congestion. This will require the provision of higher speed broadband along with telecommunication and technological improvements to improve the quality of a greater range of people and occupations to work from a home environment.

The intention of these policies is to identify the necessary infrastructure to accommodate new development, reduce congestion and the need to travel.

Justification and Evidence:
Since the completion of the A6 bypass the pressures and impact felt from through-traffic on the town centre has decreased significantly. However, at peak times the flow on the A45 from east to west in the morning and from
west to east in the evening causes significant queuing on Station Road to access the A45. Consultation feedback suggests that residents consider the Chowns Mill junction to be a safety hazard due to the speed of vehicles either entering from the A45 east or the A6. Current vehicle numbers per day are 28,556 (11% of which are HGV). This is estimated to rise to approximately 30,000 vehicles by 2026\(^1\). The Higham Ferrers Transport Study (January 2013) identified improvements for the Chowns Mill junction as one of the main transport priorities for the town. With the completion of the upgrading of Wilby Way roundabout at Wellingborough it is acknowledged that Chowns Mill junction is now the worst bottle neck for traffic on this part of the A45 corridor.

Funding to deliver an improved junction, taking account of increased traffic flows to 2031, was approved by the Government in December 2014 to be delivered as part of the National Pinch Point Programme. This will provide capacity for Chowns Mill junction which takes account of the existing congestion and future growth of Higham Ferrers and Rushden including Rushden East. It is anticipated that the junction improvements will be completed by late 2021. The project will be entirely funded and delivered by Highways England and therefore no new local developer contributions will be required or call made on Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

While the improvement of capacity of highway routes and junctions will assist in reducing queuing and journey times and help the future growth of Higham Ferrers, the Neighbourhood Plan also supports the reduction in vehicular trips overall. This supports the vision of the Northamptonshire Transport Plan\(^2\) which envisages improvements to technology and local accessibility will reduce the need to travel, whilst still supporting economic growth. The Plan promotes the transport hierarchy with sustainable modes of travel (walking and cycling) at the top down to the use of private motor vehicles at the bottom. The increased provision and access to High Speed Broadband, being delivered throughout the County by the Superfast Northamptonshire Broadband project, will be a part of helping to create the opportunities for more people to work from home and reduce the need to use the highway network at the busiest periods.

**Consultation Feedback**

Of those responding to the consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received:-

- Contributions towards improvements to Chowns Mill A45/A6 junction will be required and a longer term solution will be supported \(95\%\) support.
- Proposals to increase the access and delivery of high speed broadband throughout the Parish will be supported \(84\%\) support.

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1 Northamptonshire Major Roads Strategy, NCC, December 2013

2 Northamptonshire Transport Plan, NCC, 2012
Proposals to increase the access and delivery of super-fast broadband services and electronic communication networks throughout the Town will be supported subject to:

- The applicant fully exploring the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures;
- The number of radio and telecommunication masts being kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and
- The development being sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the character and appearance of the proposed location.

New development proposals must demonstrate how it can be serviced by suitable ducting to enable more than one service provider to provide a fibre connection to individual properties from connection chambers located on the public highway, or some alternative connection point available to different service providers.

**HF.TC1 – Chowns Mill Junction Improvements.**

Development proposals which have a traffic impact on the strategic highway network, and specifically on the Chowns Mill A45/A6 junction, will be required to mitigate their impact on the highway network, unless it is clearly demonstrated through a Transport Assessment that the proposal will not severely adversely affect highway safety or residential amenity.

**HF.TC2 - Telecommunications**

Proposals to increase the access and delivery of super-fast broadband services and electronic communication networks throughout the Town will be supported subject to:

- The applicant fully exploring the opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures;
- The number of radio and telecommunication masts being kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and
- The development being sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the character and appearance of the proposed location.

New development proposals must demonstrate how it can be serviced by suitable ducting to enable more than one service provider to provide a fibre connection to individual properties from connection chambers located on the public highway, or some alternative connection point available to different service providers.

**4.4.2 Pedestrian, Cycling and Public Transport**

**Objective:** To improve pedestrian / cyclist links within the town’s boundary and to the surrounding countryside, provide more and better parking.

**Intention and Context**

Consultation with the community has identified that existing pedestrian and cycle links to other parts of the town are not ideal and that people value the ability to navigate from one area of the town to another along safe and accessible routes.

Increased walking and cycling will benefit the health of the community at the same time as reducing the number of vehicles on the road network and therefore decreasing congestion if more people use this form of transport for short trips.
Access to public transport is also important to give people choice in the mode of transport they select for various journeys. Frequency and quality of the service are significant factors in increasing the patronage of bus services and closeness to the stop is also an important influence. New development will need to provide contributions to bus services where appropriate, and bus stops should aim to be located within 400m of new dwellings.

**Justification and Evidence:**
Residents of Higham Ferrers have indicated through consultation feedback that the majority of recent developments within the town are not properly integrated with existing areas providing safe and pleasant connecting routes that allow direct access to other parts of the town. The Northamptonshire Walking Strategy identifies this as a key barrier in reducing walking as it distorts the perception of distances and also creates an unwillingness to use this mode of travel if multiple roads have to be crossed. The encouragement of greater walking and cycling, however, will have benefits not only for the highway network and congestion but also for improved public health. In order to achieve this layout, design of development needs to improve, and to increase cycling safety, considerations need to be addressed and infrastructure delivered to allow for the securing of bicycles at popular and well used destinations. With greater integration and access to public transport the increase in these more sustainable modes of transport may be achieved.

**Consultation Feedback**
Of those responding to the consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received:

- All new development should have layouts that provide safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and for disabled users that connect to other developments and key destinations (town centre, medical centre, schools, playing fields and adjacent green space and countryside) in the town. 93% support.

- New cycle parking facilities at appropriate places will be supported. The extension of the greenway to the north linking Midland Road and Wood Street and its link to a new strategic...
corridor to Rushden East will be supported - 77% support.

- New development to be served by public transport and additional bus shelters and real time information will be promoted where necessary - 81% support.

Conformity:
NPPF 35.
CSS Policy 4.

**HF.TC3 - Access Design for New Developments.**

All new developments shall have layouts that provide safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and for disabled users that connect towards other developments and towards key destinations like the town centre, medical centre, schools, playing fields and the adjacent greenspace and countryside. Access to public transport services and subject to viability testing in accordance with paragraph 173 of the Framework, enhancements, where necessary, will be required and further provision of secure cycle parking at appropriate locations will be supported.

### 4.4.3 Parking

**Objective:** To improve pedestrian / cyclist links within the town’s boundary and to the surrounding countryside, provide more and better parking.

**Intention and Context**

As with many towns and villages around the country parking is a major issue for Higham Ferrers. Many streets and buildings were designed when motor cars were either not around or not as prevalent as today. Further solutions need to be considered to assist in managing on street parking in existing areas of the town, however, this policy seeks to limit the impact of development on surrounding areas by providing for the county standard for off road parking for all new dwellings.

**Justification and Evidence**

The issue of car parking both in residential areas and to better access the town centre was the biggest issue raised through consultation on the subject of highways and transport. The County Council’s Place and Movement Guide which provides guidance on parking standards identifies two methods for calculating parking spaces. It acknowledges that developments in rural areas will have a greater need for parking and that a flexible approach should be adopted. The Higham Ferrers Character Assessment September 2014 highlights developments where design and inadequate parking provision in
the right areas has led to inappropriate parking practices.

The provision of better parking facilities for the town centre has been investigated and set out in the Higham Ferrers Transport Study. Additional capacity will help to support the vitality of the town centre, improve highway and pedestrian safety and should be planned together with public realm improvements. These proposals will also be considered along with parking management measures.

Consultation Feedback
Of those responding to the consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received:-

- New housing developments will have adequate onsite parking, in accordance with Northamptonshire Council parking standards. Higher standards will be encouraged where the impact of on-street parking is compromised. - 91% support.

Conformity
NPPF39.
CSS Policy 13d), n).

### 4.5. Town Centre and Employment Policies

**Objective:** To encourage a variety of new employment and the retention of the existing businesses.

**Objective:** To promote sufficient housing and commercial development to meet local needs and to attract visitors, thereby providing a degree of growth and employment opportunity whilst preserving the historic character and compactness of the town.

**Intention and Context**
The town centre is the heart of the community and where many local people are employed. Higham Ferrers has a range of shops and services including hairdressers, coffee shops, newsagents, hotels and restaurants and niche shops. The Market Square also acts as an area to host the local Farmers' Market and other events.
It is important to concentrate retail and commercial activity within the town centre which is the most accessible place for all of the town and to maintain the vitality and vibrancy of businesses to ensure that the town continues to be economically healthy. Major employment sites will be located on the periphery of the town and subject to demand this may best be located in association with Rushden East.

To ensure the town centre is attractive for businesses to locate and invest in, further environmental improvements need to take place to the public realm to make it easier to negotiate as a pedestrian. Improvements are also required in relation to parking and to reduce the barrier presented by the current road alignment and its layout to downgrade its prominence.

The NPPF encourages Local and Neighbourhood Plans to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and develop policies which set out what uses will be permitted in such locations. The Proposals Plan (Figure 8) identifies the town centre commercial area which allows for and promotes a wide range of town centre uses. The primary shopping frontage, which is also identified on the Proposals Map, provides for a greater concentration and protection for A1 retail uses subject to other material considerations. A review of the shopping frontages within the town centre has been undertaken in collaboration with East Northamptonshire Council and the criteria for both this and the boundary for the Town Centre Commercial Area are set out in appendix 4 and 5. In light of future likely demand and potential provision of shopping facilities in the near vicinity it is considered that the existing primary shopping frontages should be maintained.

**Hot Food Takeaways**

Local planning policies have been developed in recent years in a response to concerns about the proliferation of hot food takeaways and concentrations of these uses which raise issues around the continued vitality and viability of local centres, the detrimental effects on the amenity of other town centre users and the effects on community health and childhood obesity.

While it is recognised that hot food takeaways can provide an important service to the community and complementary offer within the town centre they are more likely to have negative impacts than other town centre uses. Such impacts can include an increased incidence of litter, smells, crime and anti-social behaviour, noise and general disturbance, parking and traffic problems which can have a knock-on effect on the retail character and the function of town centre, as well as nearby residents.

The increased prevalence and availability of takeaway hot food, which in many cases is "energy-dense" with high levels of fat, sugar and salt, has been linked to obesity and related health conditions including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and some cancers. Of
particular concern is the effect of fast food consumption on children's diets and eating behaviour as significant health problems related to obesity start to develop at primary school age and behaviour established in early life has been shown to track into adulthood\(^3\). A range of policy responses have been called for in studies such as the Foresight Report (2007) and the Marmot Review (2010) which include spatial planning policies\(^4\). In Higham Ferrers the Town Centre Commercial Area, where most A5 hot food takeaways are located or might be acceptable as a location, is wholly within a 10 minute walking radius (400m) from the Nursery and Infant School, Higham Ferrers Junior School as well as the ‘After School Clubô (Pods) situated on Westfields Road, and on the fringe of it for The Ferrers School Academy. While it is not the intention to restrict all hot food takeaways within the town centre commercial area the aim is to prohibit the siting of any which are visible from the two closest schools which will reduce the ability of children to easily access these foods and also to limit the concentration of them in the town centre. This will help to support the aim of reducing adult and childhood obesity but also limit the impact on the character and vitality of the town centre.


\(^4\) NHS London Healthy Urban development Unit (Feb 2013) ÒUsing the planning system to control hot food takeaways: A good practice guide.Ó

**Justification and Evidence**

From consultation 70% of local residents agreed that supporting shops and businesses in the town centre was vital in strengthening Higham Ferrers and maintaining a strong sense of community. The retention and development of a healthy and vital High Street with a range of convenience stores, eateries, independent and niche shops as well as a variety of services for local people will allow Higham Ferrers to continue to thrive. In order to protect the historic environment (the town has 3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 51 listed buildings) it is important that these buildings are both accessible, where in public ownership, and have a function to serve the community without jeopardising their integrity. The policy is supported by the NPPF and its focus to direct these uses to town centre locations where they can be accessed most easily by the majority of residents. It is also clear at paragraph 17 that planning should Òtake accountÓ of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all...Ó and goes on to state at paragraph 69 that the Òplanning system can play an important role in facilitating social interactions and creating healthy, inclusive communitiesÓ In order to make the town centre attractive for businesses to locate there, further public realm improvements are proposed, as identified in the Higham Ferrers Transport Study, which will support a safer and more pedestrianised environment. Paying attention to the design of shop and business frontages will also protect the...
historic appeal and charm of the town centre and increase its value to attract both residents and visitors to use it.

Consultation feedback
Of those responding to the consultation the following agreed or strongly agreed responses were received:-

- Town centre public realm and transport improvements including - Traffic calming and pedestrian improvements around the town square, new/improved parking on High Street/College Street, new cycle parking within the town centre - 68% support.
- Increase and diversify the range of local shops and services within the town centre. - 77% support.
- Allow development/refurbishment of properties in the Conservation Area that respects local character and conforms to guidance on Shop Front Design. - 80% support.
- Expand the town centre retail and business area while protecting its historic character - 70% support.

Conformity
NPPF 23, 57-58, 69.
CSS Policy 12, 13a), c), d), e), j), n).
Support will be given to proposals that assist the delivery of public realm improvements and enhanced pedestrianisation or shared space features around the Market Square, as well as junction upgrades, traffic calming and parking schemes to facilitate better access to the town centre. (See Community Action Plan Proposals).

**HF.TCE1- Town Centre Commercial Area**

Proposals within the Town Centre commercial area (as defined on the Proposals Plan Fig. 8) that diversify and enhance the range of local shops, services and community facilities and create jobs strengthening the vitality and viability of the town centre will be encouraged, subject to the following criteria being met:

- That hot food takeaways (A5 Use Class) do not represent more than 10% of the total occupied units, with no more than two A5 units being located adjacent to each other and there being no less than two non-A5 units between a group of hot food takeaways.
- No A5 units will be permitted on Queensway visible from the Ferrers School or on Wharf Road visible from Higham Ferrers Nursery and Infants School and Higham Ferrers Junior School.
- Individual proposals will not generate unacceptable noise, fumes, smells or other disturbance to neighbouring properties.
- Access arrangement, deliveries and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without impacting on surrounding residential and non-residential uses.
- Proposals will respect the Conservation Area character and adhere to the Shop Front Design Supplementary Planning Document.
- Proposals will not lead to additional traffic congestion or adversely affect the free-flow of traffic on the A5028 or surrounding roads.

Proposals for the change of use from existing A1 shops to other main town centre uses within the Primary Shopping Frontage will be permitted, provided that:

- The proposals would restore the integrity of a previously sub-divided unit; or
- The proposal would result in a positive benefit to the vitality and viability of the town centre; and
- The proposals meet the 6 criteria in this policy set out above.

**HF.TCE2 – Public Realm Improvements**

Support will be given to proposals that assist the delivery of public realm improvements and enhanced pedestrianisation or shared space features around the Market Square, as well as junction upgrades, traffic calming and parking schemes to facilitate better access to the town centre. (See Community Action Plan Proposals).
5. Plan Delivery and Implementation

The Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan will be delivered over 15-20 years in conjunction with a variety of stakeholders and partners. In this regard it will be important that the Plan is monitored to ensure that the delivery of its objectives is achieved and that it can be reviewed in order to take account of changed circumstances. The Plan will be formally reviewed on a 5 year basis by the Town Council and the plan period runs up to 2031 to coincide with the emerging Joint Core Strategy. Information from the North Northamptonshire Annual Monitoring Report will be used to measure progress against the plan’s targets set out in section 6.

The Plan will act as a framework for change and development with the Town Council, amongst other organisations, being a key facilitator to ensure that the Plan is implemented and fully utilised to influence and guide development proposals.

The Town Council will work in collaboration with the Local Planning Authority, landowners, investors and developers to ensure that private sector funds are channelled into delivering the plan and achieving the highest possible quality and standards from new development and the use of land. It will also seek to coordinate and lobby for public sector funds and investment, liaising with the Planning Authority to prioritise s106 funds and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions towards the plan’s delivery.

Where CIL contributions are paid directly to the Town Council these will be applied to priority areas of investment as set out in Section 7.

The Neighbourhood Plan should be read in conjunction with the Community Plan published in 2013. The non-statutory proposals contained within the Community Plan and listed in Table 7.1 will require collaboration and involvement from the third sector (voluntary and community groups) as well as other public agencies.

6. Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan should be actively managed over the plan period and in order to understand what progress has been made a series of targets have been developed to aid monitoring.

The Plan will be monitored regularly and reviewed every 5 years (as stated above) to take into account possible changes to national planning policy or the adoption of Local Plans. While the Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan has been developed with full regard to the existing and emerging Core Spatial Strategy and Four Towns Plan, the Steering Group are aware that should, after adoption of the Plan, more strategic policies be in conflict then a review of the Neighbourhood Plan may be necessary.

Monitoring information will be made available on the Town Council website and a future Project Steering Group will be established towards the end of
the plan period by the Town Council to review and prepare a new Neighbourhood Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring indicator/Target</th>
<th>HFNP Policy</th>
<th>(2008) CSS Policy</th>
<th>Emerging JCS Policy</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of housing delivered</td>
<td>HF.H1/HF.H4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>560 by 2031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of smaller size housing (1&amp;2 bed) delivered</td>
<td>HF.H2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of affordable housing</td>
<td>HF.H2/HF.H4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement to Chowns Mill A45 Junction</td>
<td>HF.TC1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>By 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of existing open space</td>
<td>HF.DE3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>No reduction in 12 designated sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% change in retail and service premises in Town Centre commercial area</td>
<td>HF.TCE1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report on the Built Heritage Register</td>
<td>HF.DE2</td>
<td>13(h)/(o)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Community Action Plan Proposals – Non Statutory

The Neighbourhood Plan is the statutory land use and development plan for the Parish of Higham Ferrers. Alongside this sits the Community Plan adopted by the Town Council in August 2013 which has helped to inform and influence the Neighbourhood Plan.

Contributions for local community facilities will be prioritised on the following projects, subject to future revisions;
- Centrally located Community Centre.
- Town Centre Public Realm, highway and parking improvements.
- Environmental improvements towards enhancing open space and delivering the required
measures to mitigate impacts on the SPA/Ramsar Site.

- Additional Sports and Leisure facilities.
- Allotments.
- Cemetery.
- Extension of Town’s Greenway and network of footpaths/cycleways.
- Secure cycle facilities.

Below is a list of community aspirations and projects which will be supported by the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and help to deliver the Vision and Objectives of the community.

Table 7.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>HFTC Action</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Potential Funding</th>
<th>HFNP Policy Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SERVICES – Community Facilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Building/Centre</td>
<td>Queensway site - Work with Methodist Church to establish a joint way forward</td>
<td>TC SG Methodist Church</td>
<td>CIL/S106 Grants</td>
<td>HF.CD1/HF.CD2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts underused</td>
<td>Improve publicity and review access. Consider formal coaching sessions in holidays</td>
<td>TC Tennis Club</td>
<td>Town Council/Tennis Club Funds</td>
<td>HF.CD2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Planting and Shrubs</td>
<td>Establish an 'in Bloom' group</td>
<td>Higham Ferrers Tourism TC SG</td>
<td>Town Council Funds/Grants</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underuse of site outside Henry Chichele School</td>
<td>Subsequently agreed to use by school in expansion proposals</td>
<td>TC SG Henry Chichele School</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HF.CD3/HF.DE3 (LGS7 &amp; LGS8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of Allotments</td>
<td>Find land</td>
<td>TC SG Land owners</td>
<td>CIL/S106</td>
<td>HF.CD1/HF.H3/ HF.H4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Cinema</td>
<td>Establish a group to investigate feasibility</td>
<td>TC SG</td>
<td>CIL/Town Council Funds/Grants</td>
<td>HF.CD1/HF.CD2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Find land</td>
<td>TC SG Landowners</td>
<td>CIL/S106</td>
<td>HF.CD1/HF.H3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under use of Castlefields</td>
<td>Review use in liaison with English Heritage</td>
<td>TC SG English Heritage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HF.DE3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Youth Facilities</td>
<td>Work with young people to identify types of facilities needed.</td>
<td>TC SC Schools Youth Groups</td>
<td>CIL/S106 Town Council Funds</td>
<td>HF.CD1/HF.DE3/ HF.H4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Centre</td>
<td>Establish a group to consider where, what it should include</td>
<td>TC SG Chichele Society HiFars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>HF.CD1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### DESIGN & ENVIRONMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Responsible Parties</th>
<th>Funding Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dog Fouling</td>
<td>Map of location problems. Review and improve publicity &amp; Signage Research enforcement options.</td>
<td>TC SG ENC</td>
<td>Town Council Funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Maintenance</td>
<td>Pass comments/issues to Highways</td>
<td>TC SG NCC Highways</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve access to the Countryside</td>
<td>Review information on Rights of Way locally. More publicity.</td>
<td>TG SG Ramblers Group NCC</td>
<td>CIL/S106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Town approaches more attractive</td>
<td>Review Maintenance of the areas. Plant more flowers. Erect a town sign.</td>
<td>TC SG</td>
<td>Town Council Funds/NCC Highway maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ACCESS-TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Responsible Parties</th>
<th>Funding Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Centre access including signage</td>
<td>a) Enforce Parking restrictions b) Implement temporary car parking provision for Market Sq. events c) Implement increased car parking provision d) Campaign for Chowns Mill Roundabout improvements e) Introduce traffic calming measures f) Improve Rushden Higham Link Service, bus shelters &amp; timetable information g) Provide a cycle rack in Market Sq. &amp; improve cycle signage h) Investigate potential for 20 mph town centre speed limit i) Review existing traffic and cycle related signage j) Complete pedestrian/cyclist</td>
<td>TC SG NCC Highways England Bus companies</td>
<td>CIL/S106/Town Council Funds/NCC/ Highways England</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Links to enable safe segregated access to town centre facilities and schools from housing areas. | Kimbolton Road & Windmill Banks | a) Investigate potential for residents' parking permit scheme.  
b) Investigate improvements at Kimbolton Road/College Street roundabout.  
c) Link the Greenway to the northern and eastern access routes to the countryside  
d) Investigate car parking at Windmill Banks | TC  
SG  
ENC  
NCC Highways | CIL/S106/Town Council Funds/NCC/Highways England | HF.DE2/HF.TC4 |
| Connections with Kings Meadow | a) Extend Rushden Higham Link service  
b) Upgrade the pedestrian/cyclist link to Riverside park and Stanwick Lakes  
c) Improve access across the A45 for wheelchair, pushchair and bicycle users.  
d) Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing at North End/Station Road | TC  
SG  
ENC  
NCC Highways Bus Companies | | | HF.TC3/HF.DE2/HF.TCE2 |
| Future proofing for Town Development | a) Campaign for improvement to Chowns Mill roundabout before any new development is built  
b) Ensure new development include effective public transport and pedestrian/cyclist links | TC  
SG  
ENC  
NCC Highways Highways England | CIL/S106/NCC Highways England | | HF.TC1/HF.TC3 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN CENTRE &amp; EMPLOYMENT - Economy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve vitality of the town Centre including attracting more visitors as well as encouraging more residents to use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TC i Higham Ferrers Town Council / SG - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group / ENC i East Northamptonshire Council / NCC i Northamptonshire County Council
## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing does not include low cost market housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordable Rent</td>
<td>Affordable Rent is the main type of new housing supply funded by the Government and administered by the Homes and Communities Agency. Affordable rented homes will be made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is at present. Landlords will have the freedom to offer Affordable Rent properties on flexible tenancies tailored to the housing needs of individual households.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CfSH</td>
<td>Code for Sustainable Homes</td>
<td>An environmental assessment method for rating and certifying the performance of new homes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is a national standard for use in the design and construction of new homes with a view to encouraging continuous improvement in sustainable home building. The Government is currently seeking to incorporate these standards within the Building Regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>Community Infrastructure Levy</td>
<td>A new levy that local authorities can choose to charge on new developments in their area based on floorspace. In areas with adopted Neighbourhood Plans 25% of the CIL receipts for development completed within the area will be passed on to the Town or Parish Council. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhoods want. It can sit alongside site specific s106 contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation Area</strong></td>
<td>A defined area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CSS</strong></td>
<td>Core Spatial Strategy The current overarching strategic part of the Local Plan covering Higham Ferrers, adopted June 2008. This is a Development Plan Document setting out long-term spatial vision and objectives, and containing both strategic policies and generic policies which will apply to all development proposals in a local authority area as a whole.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLCA</strong></td>
<td>Current Landscape Character Assessment Northamptonshire’s Landscape Character Assessment which forms part of the wider Northamptonshire Green Infrastructure Suite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curtilages</strong></td>
<td>Planning term to define an area of land attached to a house and forming one enclosure with it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FZ</strong></td>
<td>Environment Agency Flood Zones For flooding originating from fluvial sources (river/watercourse), the Environment Agency (EA) is responsible for managing flood risk on “main watercourses” (River Nene; Skew Bridge Dyke). The EA classifies flooding into three main categories (1 - low risk; 2 - medium risk and 3 (3a and 3b) - high risk). Most types of development are precluded in Flood Zone 3. For other watercourses (e.g. Chelveston Brook) those for which the EA is not responsible the County Council is the designated Lead Local Flood Authority, with primary responsibility for managing flood risk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitats Regulations</strong></td>
<td>The European Union Habitats Directive aims to protect the wild plants, animals and habitats that make up our diverse natural environment. The directive created a network of protected areas around the European Union of national and international importance. They are called Natura 2000 sites. If development is likely to affect a Natura 2000 site, an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations is required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abbreviation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Needs Survey</td>
<td>An assessment of housing need for local areas following government methodology and guidance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGS</td>
<td>Local Green Space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Areas of local open space defined within the National Planning Policy Framework (Para 76-77) which can be designated and protected through Neighbourhood or Local Plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Plan</td>
<td>Existing Planning Policy Document (formerly known as the ‘Local Development Framework’) which sets out both strategic policies and generic policies which apply to all development proposals in the local authority area as a whole. The adopted Local Plan covering Higham Ferrers consists of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (adopted June 2008) and Saved Policies from the East Northamptonshire District Local Plan (adopted November 1996).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPA</td>
<td>Local Planning Authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localism Act</td>
<td>An Act of Parliament that became law in April 2011. The Act introduces a new right for local people to draw up ‘Neighbourhood Development Plans’ for their local areas. The Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared under provisions within this piece of legislation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIA</td>
<td>Nature Improvement Area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Twelve NIAs were designated and granted government funding in February 2012. Their purpose is to restore connectivity between wildlife sites, create new sites and integrate the surrounding land use to buffer the sites over significantly large areas. The Nene Valley Nature Improvement area was designated as part of this process and covers the Nene and its tributaries from Daventry to Peterborough.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF</td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The National Planning Policy Framework was published by the government in March 2012. It sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW</td>
<td>Rights of Way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | Public rights of way (public footpaths and bridleways) are statutory routes for public
| **SAM** | **Scheduled Ancient Monument** | A scheduled monument is a 'nationally important' [archaeological site](#) or historic building, given protection against unauthorised change under the [Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979](#). |
| **S106** | **Section 106 Agreements** | Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 includes a provision for planning obligations. S106 agreements are legal agreements between the parties concerned to ensure that, when implemented, a new development would be acceptable in planning terms (i.e. sustainable development). For S106 planning obligations to be secured, they must be:
   a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
   b) directly related to development; and
   c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. |
<p>| <strong>SSSI</strong> | <strong>Site of Special Scientific Interest</strong> | A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is one of the country's very best wildlife and/or geological sites which are designated and protected by Government. |
| <strong>SPA</strong> | <strong>Special Protection Area/Ramsar Site (Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits)</strong> | The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area/Ramsar Site was designated under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Under the Directive, Member States of the European Union have a duty to safeguard the habitats of migratory birds and certain particularly threatened birds. |
| <strong>SuDs</strong> | <strong>Sustainable Drainage Systems</strong> | SuDs are designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges. They seek to manage rainfall in developments that replicates natural drainage. |
| <strong>SEA</strong> | <strong>Strategic Environmental Assessment</strong> | Assessments made compulsory by a European Directive (the SEA Directive). To be implemented in planning through Sustainability Appraisal of |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SFRA</td>
<td>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
<td>An assessment as part of the local planning process, as required by the NPPF. SFRAs are primarily produced by local planning authorities, in consultation with the Environment Agency, and are intended to form the basis for preparing appropriate policies for flood risk management at the local level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHMA</td>
<td>Strategic Housing Market Assessment</td>
<td>Assessments which are made to determine the housing needs of sub-regions which typically function as a housing market area. The assessment is normally used to underpin evidence for affordable housing needs within Core Spatial Strategies and Local Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD/SPG</td>
<td>Supplementary Planning Document/Guidance</td>
<td>An SPD is a statutory Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a 'parent' DPD. Supplementary Planning Guidance has a similar role, but no statutory status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
<td>A process of appraising policies for their social, economic and environmental effects, which must be applied to all Development Plan Documents and can be used to assess the sustainability of Neighbourhood Plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town &amp; Country Planning Act 1990</td>
<td></td>
<td>One of the key pieces of legislation which constitutes the planning system within the United Kingdom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windfall Sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>A site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most &quot;windfalls&quot; are referred to in a housing context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Classes Order</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. <strong>A1 Shops</strong> - Shops, retail warehouses,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Made April 2016*
hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices (but not sorting offices), pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes.

**A2 Financial and professional services** -
Financial services such as banks and building societies, professional services (other than health and medical services) including estate and employment agencies and betting offices.

**A3 Restaurants and cafés** - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.

**A4 Drinking establishments** - Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not night clubs).

**A5 Hot food takeaways** - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

**B1 Business** - Offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

**B2 General industrial** - Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste).

**B8 Storage or distribution** - This class includes open air storage.

**C3 Dwellinghouses** - Residential housing

**D1 Non-residential institutions** - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.

**D2 Assembly and leisure** - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night
clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

Appendix 2: Built Heritage Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Age (Century)</th>
<th>Development Risk Factor (ENC Sustainability Assessment 2007)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saffron Moat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chichele College</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Motte &amp; Bailey (with ponds, warren and dovecote)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14th-15th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>Day to day management by HF Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churchyard Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nene River Bridge (part)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.2 English Heritage Listed Standing Buildings Jan 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Age (Century)</th>
<th>Development Risk Factor (ENC Sustainability Assessment 2007)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bede House</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manor House</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Church</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13th-14th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chantry Chapel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chichele College foundations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Hall</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War Memorial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19th</td>
<td>low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone built town houses,</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15th-19th</td>
<td>med</td>
<td>At risk from alterations to buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cottages, shops and attached</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outbuildings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Dragon Hotel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>med</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Griffin PH</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High St shops behind Hind</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19th</td>
<td>med</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stile Row</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn, Westfields Terr.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>med</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type K6 Telephone Box, High</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>med</td>
<td>At risk from High St traffic calming measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boot, Shoe &amp; Leatherwork</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19th-20th</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>Potential for redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Local Green Space

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Figure 3.1.
LGS1: Tollbar

Figure 3.2
LGS2: Castle Fields

Figure 3.3.
LGS3: Saffron Road Recreation Ground

Figure 3.4.
LGS4: Walnut Tree Open Space
Appendix 4: Town Centre Commercial Area HF.TCE1 – Basis for Calculation

Basis for Calculation

The percentage is based on the proportion of A5 units located within the Town Centre Commercial Area.

The existing number of properties with ground floor units able to be converted into town centre uses is 66.

The number of hot food takeaways is 6.

Appendix 5: Town Centre Commercial Area Boundary.

The Town Centre Commercial Area Boundary should;

- Include the primary shopping area
- Include areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area as defined by the NPPF as:

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

- Include any regeneration sites such as sites included in Master Plans/ Health checks in or near the edge of the town centre for town centre uses.
- The boundary will include sites with planning permissions for town centre uses in or adjacent to the edge of town centre uses.
- The building curtilage rather than the existing building will be included within the boundary to allow flexibility for redevelopment, unless the site is vast and it extends the boundary into an unsustainable location.
- Ensure that the town centre does not sprawl into poorly accessible areas.
- Boundaries will follow geographic features such as the line of the building, curtilage or other appropriate features such as roads, watercourses, green infrastructure-open space, green routes, defined areas of industrial use.
- Boundaries will be logical and easy to identify on the ground.
Appendix 6: Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the following for their assistance and co-operation in helping during the production of the plan.

- Steering Group (Past and Present):
  Nigel Cheetham, Philip Toogood, John Sidey, Katie Sheldrick, David Hudson, Lisa Caven-Quantrill, Derek Lawson, Pam Whiting, Sheila Mantle, Bert Jackson, Liz Brown, Jane Carpenter, Colin Hewson, Irene Hawkins, Barry Prigmore, Bob Savage, Anna Sauntson, Alan Dunn, George Whiting.
- James Wilson (Planning Consultant)
- Rachel Hogger (Planning Aid)
- Darren Carroll (Planning Aid)
- Higham Ferrers Library, Grove Street News and the Post Office (consultation drop-off points)
- Higham Ferrers Town Council Staff
- Sandra Mitcham Town Clerk

The Steering Group wishes to thank Locality and acknowledge the grant provided by Locality through the national Neighbourhood Planning programme, and East Northamptonshire Council for assistance with funding, without these additional resources the plan would not have progressed to the point it has.