

# Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

## What is it?

The Local Plan sets down the growth in population and employment that Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) wants to see and/or that it expects in its area during the next 20 years. Based upon these figures the Local Plan forecasts how many new houses will be built and how much land should be set aside to accommodate the businesses to employ all the new residents.

The Government requires local planning authorities (LPAs) to have plans in place to provide enough land for housing 'need' for the next 5 years. LPAs assess the development sites offered by land owners and those it considers suitable are allocated in the Local Plan for housing or business or retail or a mixture thereof. When the LPA has prepared and consulted on its Plan it is submitted for examination of its sufficiency and viability by a government Inspector. If it passes examination it is 'approved' by the District Council

The Local Plan is very important document in controlling development within an area. Once approved, development can only take place in the areas specified in the Local Plan and without one any area or site could effectively be 'open season' for developers to build what and where they like.

## How does it affect Hemingford Abbots?

HDC are forecasting the building of 21,000 new houses in Huntingdonshire during the next 20 years to 2036 increasing the population by 23% from 169,500 (2011) to 209,000. This 39,500 increase is almost exactly equal to the current combined population of Huntingdon and St Ives.

Hemingford Abbots is categorised in the Plan as a Smaller Settlement, which, due to its lack of facilities, has no scope for significant development with any development limited to infill sites within the existing built up areas of the village.

Of interest to Hemingford Abbots residents, however, are the plans for the very significant changes that will be made to the centres that serve them, that is, St Ives, Huntingdon and Godmanchester, their ability to access facilities in these towns due to pressures on infrastructure and the changing landscape and environment around the village.

HDC's principal allocations of housing adjacent the village of Hemingford Abbots are,

St Ives West (Golf Course, BBSRC, Houghton Grange)	500 houses
Godmanchester, Bearscroft Farm & sites in the town,	855 houses with 4.4 ha employment
Wyton on the Hill (Wyton Airfield)	4500 houses with 10 ha employment
Huntingdon (Ermine Street and various sites)	1833 houses with 2 ha employment
Alconbury Weald (Alconbury Airfield)	5000 houses with 150 ha employment

These 12,688 new houses equates to a population of 27,000 and for comparison St Ives has around 7000 houses and a population of 16,000

Whereas the major development at Alconbury is both virtually joined to Huntingdon, and has good transport links (A1/A14) and the promise of a new railway station, the Wyton Airfield development proposal is for a new town between Huntingdon and St Ives with poor road infrastructure. Residents will know of the existing traffic problems evident on the A1123, the A1096 and within St Ives itself even before development of Wyton Airfield and St Ives West commences. At present Cambridgeshire CC who are responsible for providing highway infrastructure have no satisfactory solution to the traffic problems that will be generated. Residents will also be aware of their suggestion of building a new link road from Wyton to the present A14 right across the River Gt Ouse meadows, adjacent the west end of Hemingford Abbots village and through Sites of Special Scientific Interest, or County Wildlife Sites and nature reserves.

The Parish Council will be responding to the HDC consultation on the current Draft Local Plan and the Public Meeting to be held on Wednesday 25th February in the Village Hall is the opportunity for residents to learn more about HDC's proposals, their implications for the quality of life for this village and to ensure that their opinions are reflected in the response.

**This is a last chance to have any influence on the future development of the area**