



WNDC

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WNDC Planning Principles



Foreword

The growth and regeneration of West Northamptonshire is a project of national significance. To support the aspiration of the existing community and government for the area, WNDC has been given specific planning powers.

In seeking to use these powers effectively for the interests of the existing and future community of West Northamptonshire, WNDC has sought to use its planning responsibilities in line with a set of core principles.

Through consultation, these “Planning Principles” have been endorsed by a range of stakeholders in the public and private sector. Since we introduced them in 2007 in draft form, a number of the key deliverables outlined have entered common practice.

WNDC nevertheless remains committed to improving the quality of the area through its activities. Planning Principles will therefore remain a cornerstone of our approach to making planning decisions and will sit alongside other key publications. The service commitments made in this publication will also be used to underpin improvements to our processes so that users of the service are able to experience improving quality of service, alongside the improved outcomes.



Stephen Kelly

**Planning and Development
Director, WNDC**



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WNDC's vision

“By 2021, Northampton will be transformed into a prosperous and dynamic regional city with a growing knowledge based economy. Neighbouring Daventry and Towcester will be successful and distinctive market towns. Together, West Northamptonshire will be better connected to national and international markets - a gateway economy that capitalises on its position at the centre of England”

1 Introduction

Created in December 2004, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation works closely with both the public and private sector to manage development in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester. Our focus on regeneration and transformational housing and jobs growth, together with the areas strategic location at the centre of England, represents one of the most exciting opportunities in the UK.

One of only three Urban Development Corporations and the only one outside the Thames Gateway, WNDC benefits from wide ranging statutory powers geared toward the delivery of sustainable growth and regeneration of the area. Our activity is informed by three clear corporate objectives.

1. To deliver development, and infrastructure that enables regeneration and growth, in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester.
2. To ensure that new development is supported by appropriate jobs, infrastructure and town centre regeneration.
3. To ensure that new development meets the Government's design quality and environmental standards and is integrated into existing communities.

This publication follows the earlier consultation around a set of Planning Principles which inform WNDC's use of its statutory planning powers; the document reaffirms the corporations commitment to lasting quality and sustainable construction in parallel with an approach to infrastructure delivery that, insofar as it can do so, seeks to ensure that the public and private sector jointly support infrastructure delivery.

In line with the comments received during consultation, this latest publication is shorter and more legible; some of the early principles that WNDC sought to establish have also been reflected in mainstream policy and no longer need to be repeated locally. Whilst recognising the current economic challenges that are impacting upon the development sector, the need for high quality homes alongside quality new jobs and the regeneration of the towns remains. It is anticipated that this set of principles, alongside the commitments made by WNDC to quality services, provide the right context to secure robust and enduring places for the future.

2 Planning Principles

Strong, transparent, and innovative spatial planning is the bedrock of sustainable communities. The Secretary of State has transferred statutory planning powers for “strategic” planning decisions to WNDC from the Local Authorities in the Urban Development Areas of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester. Working with the local community, WNDC is here to get the big decisions right for the growing communities of West Northamptonshire.

This responsibility sits side by side with other powers including infrastructure delivery and town centre regeneration. It allows an integrated approach to the growth and regeneration of the area.

While WNDC makes planning decisions, it does not decide the overall level of development. This is already set out in planning policies contained within both the Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands.

Locally, as the plan making authorities, Northamptonshire County, Northampton Borough, Daventry District, and South Northamptonshire Council are working to provide the framework for long term growth in the area. They are supported by WNDC. Through a statutory “joint planning committee” the local authorities have come together to prepare the development plan for West Northamptonshire, which will decide the location of long term growth up to 2021 and beyond. Ahead of the conclusion of that process, WNDC is working with the local authorities to ensure that the planning decisions that it makes realise the shared aspirations for properly managed sustainable growth in the area.

Why do we need Planning Principles?

Existing local planning policies were published in 1997. Since that time, government policy and community aspiration have developed considerably. As a consequence expectations are now much higher. New planning policies at the regional and sub-regional level reflects the national agenda expressed through planning policy statements and guidance. Together however, the wide range of guidance and policy can become confusing for those seeking to understand how the aspirations and expectations translate into practice.

This document therefore aims to provide a more succinct statement based around four key principles that for WNDC define the standards that need to be realised through the planning process; from ourselves and from the development industry.

Four Key Principles

1. Quality Service
2. Quality Places
3. Sustainable Environment
4. Infrastructure Delivery

It is not the intention of Planning Principles to repeat detailed policy advice that is already available in national guidance and policy statements. This is referred to in Appendix 3 and can be easily found elsewhere. Instead, this publication seeks to clarify the policy guidance for this area so that decisions reflect local priorities, and the emphasis placed on efficiency, quality, infrastructure delivery and environmental sustainability.

How were they decided?

This publication follows a 13 week public consultation on ‘Planning Principles 2007: A Consultation Guide’ that took place in late summer 2007.

The principles and comments within this document reflect the thoughts and opinions of those who responded to that consultation process together with the outcomes of further work on specific policy areas such as infrastructure delivery and planning processes.

From the consultation on Planning Principles, it is clear that the community and development sector welcomed the publication of a set of principles which WNDC could use to underpin the delivery of its planning function. This document therefore reflects upon the broad range of responses received to the consultation draft and clarifies how WNDC will undertake its approach to the development control process to realise the vision for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester.

The consultation draft of Planning Principles set out a comprehensive set of planning requirements, in two schedules related to ten key action areas set out in WNDC’s 2005 prospectus. These planning requirements sat alongside 4 key principles; good processes, delivering quality places, supporting infrastructure delivery and addressing climate change.

In the intervening period between publication of the consultation draft and today, the level of recognition given to a number of the planning requirements set out in the schedules has increased significantly. Furthermore, as WNDC has sought to apply these principles to planning applications, the importance of the core principles, and the incorporation of the planning requirements into national, regional and local guidance means that many of these requirements have entered mainstream practice. This final publication, therefore dispenses with these tables and instead focuses on the core principles which received widespread support particularly from the community.

¹An overview of WNDC’s development control thresholds and Urban Development Areas can be found at Appendix 1.

2.1 Quality Service

WNDC's Development control service

- Seeks to apply 'best practice' to all phases of processing.
- Promotes pre application discussions .
- Recognises that no two cases are the same and takes a flexible approach to application requirements depending on impact, complexity and scale.
- Prioritises community engagement and involvement of specialist agencies.
- Works closely with and supports the plan making local authorities to ensure a joined up approach to delivery
- Operates alongside WNDC's regeneration and infrastructure delivery.

Established by government in 2006, WNDC's Planning Service has evolved from a contractual service provided by the Local Authorities to a dedicated "in house" team of specialists. The service strives to deliver high quality, efficient processing alongside high quality outcomes. .

WNDC has authority to make decisions on planning applications which are strategically important to the future of Northampton, Towcester and Daventry. Our development control thresholds vary between Northampton and the towns of Daventry and Towcester. They are set out in full at Appendix 1.

By following clear and transparent processes, we aim to ensure the timely and objective determination of planning applications. There are several key steps in this approach.

- Pre application discussions
- Community engagement
- Effective Processing
- Programme management
- Determination
- Monitoring and enforcement

Pre-application Discussions

Pre application discussions held at an early stage provide applicants with an opportunity to discuss their development proposals and understand WNDC's and the wider communities' expectations for new development. By identifying issues at this early stage, they also minimise the likelihood of difficulties at the formal submission stage.

Prior to the submission of a large or complex application, applicants are encouraged to hold discussions with WNDC officers. The nature of these discussions will depend on the potential impact of the scheme proposed. If the development is likely to raise specialist issues such as traffic impacts or flood risk, then officers from other relevant agencies will also be invited to attend.

From the technical drawings to written proposals, receiving the right information at the right time helps WNDC provides applicants with meaningful advice. The Corporation will confirm what information is necessary at pre application stage on a case by case basis. On larger schemes, there may also be agreements with applicants on a programme for processing planning applications, including the potential introduction of formal process agreements in line with government best practice.

In all cases, WNDC aims to respond to a request for pre-application advice within 21 days of receipt of the request. If a meeting is required, the corporation will seek to arrange this within 21 days of receipt of the request being received.

Community engagement

Effective and early engagement with communities affected by new development is central to good planning. Understanding community aspirations and concerns early, results in more sensitive and appropriate development being promoted through the planning process. . Where schemes have a clear impact on an existing community, WNDC expects applicants to consult with the community and show how they have responded to their views.

Consultation may take a variety of forms from public meetings and exhibitions to surveys, websites, focus groups and interviews. Whatever approach is taken, it should comply as a minimum with the relevant Local Authority's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Applicants should inform WNDC how they propose to consult with the community. Consultation should seek to engage a full cross section of the community, including hard-to-reach groups.

Alongside these non statutory processes, WNDC uses several ways to formally notify the community of new planning applications. This includes letters, site notices, the "weekly list" of registered applications, our website and notices in the local press. We also encourage communities to seek the support of East Midlands Planning Aid to receive free, independent and professional advice when participating in the consultation process.



Sainsbury's

OPEN 6 DAYS A WEEK

Effective Processing

WNDC is committed to ensuring that submitted planning applications are checked and considered promptly. The service will monitor and report upon performance in line with the aspirations set out in the Service Charter (page 8).

Understanding the full impact of a development and how an application has been put together is central to ensuring proper community engagement around new proposals. In recent years, regulations, setting out what is required for planning applications have been introduced to ensure that those making an application and those seeking to assess the proposals are better informed. Recognising the importance of flexibility, different types of application require different levels of supporting information.

During the public consultation on Planning Principles, WNDC consulted on a local validation list. This process preceded government advice and resulted in a number of concerns being expressed around the range and cost of such documents to applicants. Since then, government regulations together with proposals produced by the Local Authorities have been published. WNDC therefore proposes to undertake a further round of consultation on a local list of documents, prior to finalising a scheme. However an indicative list of the documents WNDC may require in support of development proposals can be found at Appendix 2. Pre application discussions will continue to be used to confirm what is expected in each case in order for an application to be considered valid.

If an application is not accompanied by all required documents then it will be deemed invalid until these are received. When an application crosses local planning authority boundaries, the applicant should contact both WNDC and the relevant authority. WNDC will then work with others to ensure that clear guidance can be provided on the information required before a planning application is submitted.

Once submitted, all planning applications are displayed online. Comments in respect of planning applications can be made in writing by post or electronically by e-mail or through WNDC's web site.

Programme Management

To respond to the challenges of large scale strategic planning applications, WNDC has introduced structured "programme management" processes. Specialist project managers, working hand in hand with planning officers and support staff, work within a project management framework to ensure that a clear and structured approach to the consideration of large scale planning applications is followed.

Determination

WNDC works within statutory timescales to determine planning applications. The most common developments we deal with are 'Large-scale Major' and 'Small-scale Major.' Government expects the majority of these types of planning applications to be determined within 16 or 13 weeks from the validation date. The vast majority of 'Minor' and 'Other' developments meanwhile are expected to be determined within 8 weeks from the date of validation.

To ensure prompt and appropriate decision making, reflecting the complexity and/or controversy of the proposal, WNDC has established two ways of making planning decisions. For significant or controversial developments, where there is widespread public interest, the Corporation has established three Area Planning Committees. Membership of the planning committees is drawn from WNDC Board alongside representatives from the Local Authorities. Details of the current committee membership can be found on WNDC web site.

For more straightforward applications, the Board has delegated decision making to senior officers within the Corporation in accordance with an adopted Scheme of Delegation – the latest copy of which may be found on the web site or by calling in to WNDC offices.

WNDC welcomes public participation at our Planning Committees and has adopted standing orders to ensure a fair and consistent approach is followed. Further detail about this process can be found online or by calling in to WNDC offices.

1APP

In 2008, the government introduced the national Standard Planning Application Form, commonly known as 1APP. It is designed to be a single, standardised application form for all online submissions to local planning authorities in England and Wales.

For technical reasons, the 1APP electronic planning application forms cannot be used to submit an application directly to WNDC. Instead, until government introduces technology to allow such submissions, applicants will need to submit a planning application to WNDC by downloading a copy of the relevant form from our website or by requesting forms directly.

Assistance with completing application forms can be given by contacting WNDC offices. At the current time, the minimum requirement for submission is the original plus 3 copies of the application – 4 in total. However, for large applications where a number of consultations are necessary, in order to facilitate improved consultation, WNDC will require the documents to be accompanied by CD-ROMs..

Planning Service Charter	
<p>WNDC aims to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to a request for pre application advice within 21 days of receipt of request. Acknowledge all planning applications and formal submissions in writing within 2 working day of receipt. Publish a list of valid applications registered in the previous week on the first working day after the weekend. <p>Check and validate*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All minor/other applications within 3 working days from the date of receipt. All small scale major applications within 5 working days from the date of receipt and All large scale major applications within 10 working days from the date of receipt. Place copies of all valid applications online within 5 working days from validation. 	<p>Decisions</p> <p>Provide a comprehensive report to accompany all planning decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue a decision notice within 2 working days of a decision being made. Respond to a request for a screening opinion or scoping opinion under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations within 3 weeks or 5 weeks respectively. Determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks 65 per cent of minor applications within 8 weeks 80 per cent of other applications within 8 weeks <p>* If an application is submitted that does not meet the requirements WNDC will declare the application invalid and will provide written advice on the information which is missing. If information requested to render an application valid is not provided within working 15 days of the date of the request being made WNDC reserves the right to return the application in its entirety as invalid.</p>

Monitoring and enforcement of applications

WNDC does not have statutory powers to enforce planning decisions or investigate alleged breaches of planning control pursuant to Part 7 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. That responsibility remains with the local authorities. However, recognising the importance of effective enforcement of planning conditions and obligations, the Board of WNDC has determined that it will, where appropriate, use planning agreements to secure compliance with the planning permissions which it grants. Where it considers it appropriate to achieving and securing the proper regeneration of its area, WNDC may also require planning agreements to contain obligations which might ordinarily be imposed as planning conditions.

2.2 Quality Places

WNDC's aspiration is to help create places that local people can be proud of and others will want to visit, work, and invest in.

From the arrangement of individual streets and buildings to entire towns and settlements, excellent design can improve everyone's quality of life. During public consultation on Planning Principles, the community and local authorities supported the commitment to creating quality places. We therefore remain committed to securing distinctive, attractive and high quality development which respects and complements the special character of our three urban development areas.

This principle is embedded in the process and decision making framework of our organisation.

WNDC supports development that:

- Delivers design excellence for new housing as well as associated community buildings.
- Offers a mix of uses and housing tenures.
- Contributes to a recognisable sense of place and identity.
- Enables integrated, well connected communities.
- Seeks to design out crime and antisocial behaviour
- Encourages healthy, active communities.
- Supports quality, vibrant public spaces and private gardens.

Making it happen

Corporate Documents

All of WNDC's official publications, including the Prospectus, Corporate Plan, and Business Plan highlight the importance of quality design.

Available on our website, these documents describe the policies and procedures by which WNDC aims to promote and secure the regeneration of its designated area. All applicants should familiarise themselves with these documents, as well as any other relevant policies they refer to. Together with the processes and activities set out below, they seek to ensure that the Corporation's processes are aligned in a way that realises this objective.

Community Engagement

Successful developments reflect the needs, concerns and aspirations of their neighbouring communities.

For larger projects, where single phase or multi phase community engagement is required, WNDC expects to see how the people living near to a site have been involved in setting and interpreting design objectives. This should be incorporated into Design and Access Statements as well as Statements of Community Involvement.

Scheme development

Proper consideration of constraints and opportunities at an early stage in the development process is the most effective way of ensuring that new development is able to maximise the opportunity provided on a site to deliver high quality properly integrated places. Alongside the promotion of pre application discussions with officers, WNDC has established procedures for the planning committee to receive early presentations on significant proposals. This opportunity for committee members to pass on their specific knowledge and understanding of particular types of development and the unique characteristics of the locality is recognised as an important part of their role in emerging guidance. WNDC committee standing orders therefore allow for presentations on both emerging (pre-application) and newly submitted planning application proposals.

Design review

WNDC will encourage all new developments of a significant scale or impact to be subject to independent scrutiny through a national or regional “design review” provided by CABE² or OPUN³.

This should take place early in the process and can be undertaken at both the pre-application and post application stage. Responding to, and considering the comments made by the review team helps ensure that robust scrutiny and consideration of the design is undertaken within the development process.

Quality audits

WNDC actively supports ‘Building for Life’ (BFL), the national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Each housing scheme is awarded a score out of 20, based on a series of criteria ranging from architectural character to environmental credentials. Schemes that reach 14 out of 20 are eligible for a silver standard, while developments that meet 16 or more will be considered for a gold standard.

We expect residential planning applications for 10 units or more, to submit a pre-development audit against BFL standards as part of the ‘Design and Access Statement’.

WNDC would expect to see each applicant demonstrate how a proposal achieves BFL Silver Standard as a minimum.

Design codes

Depending on the scale and impact of a proposal, WNDC may require the production of a Design Code prior to the development proceeding. Design codes set out a series of rules for the development to follow, and serve as a means to ensure that what is proposed by an applicant is delivered on the ground. The need for a design code will normally be considered during pre application discussions. WNDC will also require this to be secured by a planning obligation if it is not provided prior to the determination of the application.

Our Manual for Design Codes will assist applicants in this process, supporting solutions that enhance the character, style and identity of existing places.

In some circumstances, a strategic approach to design coding and master planning may be appropriate, covering a whole town or wider locality. Once completed, this may help to accelerate the delivery of new homes across an area.

Creating the right conditions

The creation of high quality developments in some cases may require WNDC to take a role in the development process beyond that of a development control authority.

WNDC has a general remit to perform a wider set of roles, beyond its planning remit, that are consistent with securing the regeneration of its area. Creating the right conditions for investment and securing confidence around the delivery of innovative high quality development solutions may require the use of other statutory powers available to WNDC. These include the ability to undertake development directly, to apply capital funding or expertise to a project, secure services or to assemble or unlock land for development (either by agreement or through the use of its compulsory purchase powers). Where the delivery of high quality sustainable development requires the use of such provisions, WNDC will therefore give consideration to the use of these wider powers on a case by case basis.

Excellence & Innovation

Creating better places for people, requires a flexible and forward looking approach to development. As new building technologies arise, applicants are encouraged to consider alternative, sustainable forms of construction.

WNDC will encourage efforts to ensure design excellence. This includes developments which meet English Partnerships Room Space Standards, and offer the potential for ‘super flexible’ homes, which allow homeowners to adapt their dwellings, instead of moving, as their circumstances change.

We endorse design principles that support crime prevention and encourage active, healthy, well connected communities. A list of the design guides we endorse can be found at Appendix 3.

² CABE = Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. ³ OPUN = Architecture and Built Environment Centre for the East Midlands.

2.3 Sustainable Environment

Safeguarding the natural environment is a local, national, and ultimately global priority. The government believes that climate change is one of the greatest long-term challenges facing the world today. National priorities on climate change have been translated into planning policies at the national and regional level that planning authorities are expected to embrace. WNDC is already engaged in this objective and through planning decisions and the preparation of guidance will continue to ensure that sustainable development, meeting the challenge of climate change is delivered in West Northamptonshire.

Green Infrastructure

The creation of integrated networks of multi function green spaces to support new and existing communities is more commonly referred to as green infrastructure. It is critical to the success of the new and changed places delivered by the planning process¹. WNDC has recognised and promoted through direct funding and through scheme design and appraisal, the delivery of strategic green infrastructure to support existing and future communities. In Daventry, WNDC have undertaken a strategic study into green infrastructure opportunities arising from the growth of that town and is seeking to ensure that appropriate accommodation is made in planning proposals.

WNDC supports development that:

- Mitigates its impact on climate change through lower carbon emissions.
- Adopts sustainable methods of construction and use of materials.
- Ensures efficient and effective use of land.
- Maintains biodiversity and access to green spaces.
- Promotes use of local and renewable energy sources.
- Facilitates sustainable transport movements, including walking and cycling.
- Mitigates against environmental risks, including flooding.

At a local level and within the planning process, we therefore expect new development to contribute towards the creation or enhancement of, high quality managed spaces that enhance local biodiversity, as well as connectivity, recreation, heritage, culture and environmental character. This will be achieved whether within the confines of a site or through financial contributions towards enhancement of green infrastructure nearby.

Sustainability Strategies

Sustainability strategies are an important tool for outlining the social, economic and environmental benefits of a proposed development. Development proposals that consider climate change and sustainable development principles in their inception are more likely to deliver real economic, ecological and environmental benefits to the future users of the development and to the local and global community.

WNDC already seeks information with regard to the sustainability of new developments, including information on waste management. To assist those responsible for promoting new development, WNDC is preparing advice and guidance on compiling sustainability strategies to accompany planning applications. Applicants should also expect emerging requirements to support sustainable growth to be secured by planning agreements.

Environmental Impact Assessments

When developments have the potential to result in environmental impact WNDC is required to give consideration to the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accordance with the appropriate statutory provisions contained within regulations. WNDC would expect to engage with an applicant at an early stage in the development of a particular proposal to consider whether such an assessment was required. Applicants can also request a 'screening opinion' to determine whether a proposed development needs an assessment. Where a formal statement is required, applicants can request a "scoping opinion" to help define the "scope" of the assessment ahead of its preparation and submission. WNDC will work with statutory and non statutory partners to ensure that such requests are considered in line with the established timescales.

Environmental Statements are substantial technical documents. Where appropriate, the corporation will seek expert professional advice to ensure the full and appropriate assessment of the developments impacts. Such technical assessments may also require changes to a development or particular requirements for on and off site compensation to be secured if planning permission is granted. Because of the size and complexity, where an Environmental Statement (ES) is submitted, WNDC will aim to ensure that copies of the assessment are available to view outside of normal office hours as well as electronically via our web site.

¹ = MKSM Environment and Quality of Life sub group (April 2005) "Green infrastructure is a network of multi functional green space that contributes to the high quality natural and built environment required for existing and new sustainable communities in the future. It consists of both public and private assets, with and without public access, and in both urban and rural areas."



CHURCH'S FACTORY
individual business

CHURCH'S FACTORY
individual business

Code for Sustainable Homes

Housing accounts for around 27% of the UK's carbon emissions, a major cause of climate change. Recognising this challenge, the government has decided that all new homes are required to have a rating against the Code for Sustainable Homes.

The code assesses new homes against 9 categories, ranging from energy to health and wellbeing. Homes that meet high standards are more energy and water efficient, produce fewer carbon emissions and are better for the environment.

We acknowledge that an expectation for all housing developments to come forward delivering "carbon zero" development overnight is unrealistic and could have a harmful social impact through the potential affect on housing delivery. In the consultation draft on Planning Principles, a progressive rise in the minimum level of performance against the code was set out – aiming to reach zero carbon (Code level 6) by 2016 in line with governments aspirations identified through ministerial statements and national planning policy. The development community raised a series of concerns around the cost and delivery implications of these standards for new homes.

Despite the recent challenging economic climate affecting the delivery and cost of houses the Government's aspirations and time lines for the introduction of the code remain as follows:

- Any residential units to be delivered 2010-2012 must meet Code level 3 as a minimum
- Any residential units to be delivered 2013-2015 must meet Code level 4 as a minimum
- Post 2016 all units must be "zero carbon" and meet Code level 6 as a minimum.

Date	2010	2013	2016
Energy efficiency improvement of the dwelling compared to 2006 (Part L Building Regulations)	25%	44%	Zero carbon
Equivalent standard within the Code	Code level 3	Code level 4	Code level 6

WNDC, have noted the concerns raised through the consultation and the potential for the timelines to change. From research undertaken nationally there is however considered to be no significant build cost (or delivery implication) from the construction of all new homes to at least code level 3. This would result in a significant improvement on the performance of exiting new housing without affecting development viability or construction costs. The Homes and Community Agency Scheme Development Standards, against which affordable housing grant is applied seek higher standards still (code level 4).

WNDC will therefore use planning obligations to ensure that all new homes receiving planning permission are built at Code level 3 as a minimum and a planning obligation to this effect will ordinarily be required. Recognising however that delivery of new homes beyond code 3 results in potential social and economic implications, WNDC would propose that further steps in code levels remains a matter for government though the Building Regulations.

In addition to securing compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes, WNDC will also seek to ensure that 10% of energy used on a site is delivered from on site renewable energy sources. In some cases, applicants may propose to provide a contribution in lieu of such an obligation. This may be used to secure improvements to the energy performance of existing homes, which will continue to play an important part in the management of carbon emissions and resource usage into the future.

In cases of substantial new developments, WNDC would expect an independent Code assessment to be carried out prior to the occupation of new homes to ensure that commitments within the code are met by a development. These will need to be carried out by a licensed and accredited Code assessor. This ensures the rating is independent and reflects changes in the Code over time as materials and building techniques improve.

Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method

BREEAM is one of the world's longest standing environmental assessment methods for property. It remains the most up to date standard for assessing the environmental performance of non-residential buildings.

New, non-residential buildings will have an important part to play in the achievement of more environmentally sensitive developments. WNDC will seek to secure BREEAM performance standard of not less than "very good" for all new non-residential development over which it has responsibility for delivery. Applicants for such development will therefore be expected to demonstrate how their schemes fare against these baselines when making planning applications. Compliance with minimum standards will usually be secured through S106 planning obligations associated with the grant of planning permission.

2.4 Infrastructure Delivery

Housing alone will not deliver WNDC's vision of sustainability for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester. As the development control authority, it is WNDC's responsibility to consider the impact of planning applications on strategic and local infrastructure requirements. Moreover, as an Urban Development Corporation, WNDC are empowered with various tools that in appropriate circumstances allow the Corporation to deliver the new physical and social infrastructure to support growing communities. Through an annual capital programme, WNDC is already investing in physical and social infrastructure across the area.

Identifying requirements

Research by WNDC and our partners, in both the public and private sector is starting to clarify what, where, and when infrastructure needs to be provided to support new development.

Alongside the development of a standardised charging system WNDC is developing an Infrastructure Delivery Programme (IDP) which will set priorities and timescales for key infrastructure projects in West Northamptonshire. This programme will provide a forward plan for investment on key projects in the area and enable all delivery agents, including the development sector, to see how infrastructure projects will be progressed. Using the IDP WNDC and its partners are developing management arrangements that will enable more effective infrastructure management alongside planning decisions. The IDP and its associated governance arrangements will similarly allow decisions around funding, and the role of the standard charge, to be made more effectively.

Public Funding

WNDC is already helping to capture a number of public funding streams to support new development, including growth area funding, the Community Infrastructure Fund and funding from Europe. Between 2005 and 2008, WNDC have invested nearly £30m of government growth funding to support local infrastructure projects.

Specific programmes such as the Stronger Communities Fund are supporting social and cultural infrastructure development to the tune of £750,000.

WNDC is also working alongside local authorities and other public agencies in the area to secure and allocate mainstream government funding. In addition, the corporation have already secured 3.7m funding from Europe to support a nationally significant project in Daventry.

Planning Obligations

The consultation on Planning Principles, proposed the introduction of a standardised charging system to secure appropriate contributions through the planning process for a much broader scope of infrastructure than had historically been addressed by conventional planning agreements in West Northamptonshire.

Reactions to the proposals for a standardised charge were mixed, and whilst most endorsed the approach in terms of its simplicity, clarity and consistency, many in the development sector expressed concerns around its implementation and impact upon development viability.

Since 2007, at a national level, government has begun promoting a "standardised" approach to infrastructure funding through planning in the form of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Regulations for a CIL may come forward in 2009 although local implementation of this strategy remains some years away.

Accordingly, WNDC has throughout 2008 continued to work on the development of a standardised charging system for S106 contributions on strategic scale residential and mixed use planning applications (those over 50 units). Consultation with a range of agencies around a specific strategy has enabled extended consideration of the benefits and consequences for such an approach. In October 2008, WNDC's Board approved a "Planning Obligation Strategy" (POS). The POS, available for download on WNDC web site, recognises the difficulties presented by the challenging economic circumstances but acknowledges the role that infrastructure and its delivery plays in the creation of sustainable places of quality. The POS is considered to provide structure and a common platform for discussion. It holds firm to WNDC's original principle on infrastructure delivery on strategic developments.

For smaller planning applications, WNDC continues to engage with public sector partners around the development of an interim framework and strike balanced agreements based upon the benefits of the development to the area.

For commercial developments, meanwhile, negotiations take place on a site by site basis with the objective of ensuring appropriate mitigation of impacts and the objective of creating more integrated land uses without stifling economic growth or the areas competitiveness.

Full details of WNDC's standardised charge system for strategic applications are available separately together with a model agreement aimed at speeding up processing and reducing the costs associated with the planning process.

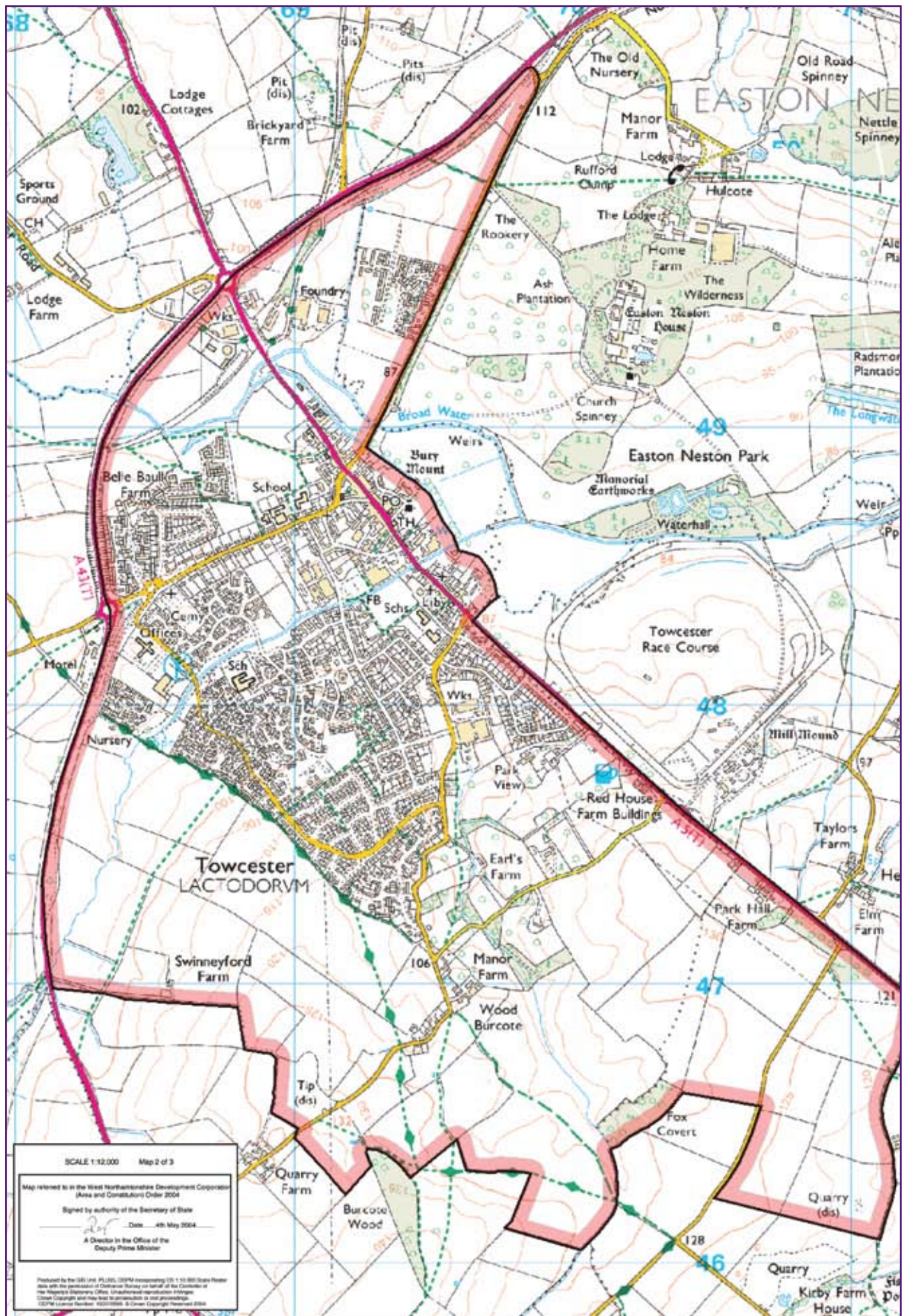


3 Appendix 1

3.1 Development Control Thresholds

Development Type	Northampton Town Centre Action Plan Area	Rest of Development Area
Housing (Class C3)	1 or more new units	50 units; or 1ha site area, whichever is the smaller
Mixed Use (Developments involving more than one land use, e.g. Residential and commercial)	All applications	2500m ² floorspace; or 1ha site area, whichever is the smaller
B1; Office, R&D, Light Industry	All applications	2500m ² floorspace; or 1ha site area, whichever is the smaller
B2, B8 General Industry	All applications	2500m ² floorspace; or 1ha site area, whichever is the smaller
Retail (Class A1, A3-A5)	All applications	2500m ² floorspace
Retail (Class A2)	All applications	None
Leisure, Attractions & Recreational Facilities (Class D2)	All applications	1000m ² floorspace; or 1ha site area, whichever is the smaller
Education, Community Uses (Class C2, D1)	All applications	1000m ²
Hotels (Class C1)	All applications	Where part of mixed use over 2500m ²
Buildings	N/A	Height 15m+
Loss of Development	Any application which results in the loss of development of any of the above types	Any application which results in the loss of development greater than above thresholds
Car Park	All	50 spaces +
Playing Fields	All applications	1ha (loss or prejudice if used as playing field in previous 5 years)
Mining / Minerals Quarries	All applications	2ha
Waste Disposal / Recycling	All applications	Throughput min 20,000 tonnes / annum. To be regarded as strategic
Transport (Roads, aircraft, runway, heliport, air passenger terminal, railway station, bus/coach station, river crossing, river pier, roads)	All applications	All applications

Towcester - West Northamptonshire UDC



Northampton - West Northamptonshire UDC



4 Appendix 2

4.1 Local Validation Requirements

Application for Planning Permission

NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Completed form (3 copies to be supplied unless the application is submitted electronically).
- A plan which identifies the land to which the application relates drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North (3 copies to be supplied unless the application is submitted electronically).
- A copy of other plans and drawings or information necessary to describe the subject of the application (3 copies to be supplied unless the application is submitted electronically) including:
 - Block plan of the site (e.g. at a scale of 1:100 or 1:200) showing any site boundaries
 - Existing and proposed elevations (e.g. at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100)
 - Existing and proposed floor plans (e.g. at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100)
 - Existing and proposed site sections and finished floor and site levels (e.g. at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100)
 - Roof plans (e.g. at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100)
- The completed Ownership Certificate (A, B, C or D – as applicable) as required by Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- Agricultural Holdings Certificate as required by Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- Design and Access Statement, if required.
- The appropriate fee.
- In addition, where Ownership Certificates B, C or D have been completed, notice(s) as required by Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 must be given and/or published in accordance with this Article.

LOCAL REQUIREMENTS⁴ – may include some or all of the following:

- Affordable housing statement
- Air quality assessment
- Biodiversity survey and report
- Daylight/Sunlight assessment
- Economic statement
- Environmental Statement
- Town Centre Uses – Evidence to accompany applications
- Flood risk assessment
- Foul sewage and utilities assessment
- Heritage Statement (including Historical, archaeological features and Scheduled Ancient Monuments)
- Land Contamination assessment
- Landfill statement
- Landscaping details
- Lighting assessment
- Noise impact assessment
- Open Space assessment
- Parking Provision
- Photographs/Photomontages
- Planning obligations – Draft Head(s) of Terms
- Planning Statement
- Site Waste Management Plan
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Structural Survey
- Telecommunication Development – supplementary information
- Transport assessment
- Travel Plan
- Tree survey/Arboricultural implications
- Ventilation/Extraction statement

⁴ See WNDC's Local List for a definitive list of documents required.



Bunty
4 Bedroom
Showhome

5 Appendix 3

5.1 Reference documents

1. National Policy

National Planning Policy Guidance and Statements

All “Planning Policy Guidance Notes” and “Planning Policy Statements” are published by the Department for Communities and Local Government available at www.communities.gov.uk

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Published February 2005)

Planning Policy Statement 1: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (December 2007)

Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts (Published January 1995 Amended March 2001)

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (Published November 2006)

Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms (Published November 1992)

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres (Published March 2005)

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (Published August 2004)

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (Published August 2005)

Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (Published July 2005)

Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies (Published September 2004)

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (Published September 2004)

Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport (Published March 2001)

Planning Policy Guidance 14: Development on Unstable Land (Published July 1990)

Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the historic environment (Published September 1994)

Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and planning (Published November 1990)

Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (Published July 2002)

Planning Policy Guidance 18: Enforcing planning control (Published December 1991)

Planning Policy Guidance 19: Outdoor Advertisement Control (Published March 1992)

Planning Policy Guidance 21: Tourism (Published November 1992)

Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy (Published August 2004)

Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control (Published November 2004)

Planning Policy Guidance 24: Planning and Noise (Published September 1994)

Planning Policy Guidance 25: Development and Flood Risk (Published July 2001)

Other Government Publications

All Communities and Local Government (CLG), Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), Department of Transport Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) documents available at www.communities.gov.uk

Design Documents

Safer Places – the Planning System and Crime Prevention (ODPM, 2004)

Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide (ODPM, 2005)

Better Places to Live By Design: A Companion Guide to PPG3 (DTLR, 2001)

‘By Design’ – Urban Design in the planning system: towards better practice (CABE, May 2000) www.cabe.org.uk

Secured by Design see www.securedbydesign.com

Building for Life Standard see www.buildingforlife.org

Preparing Design Codes – A Practice Manual (CLG, November 2006)

Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them (CABE, 2006)

Lifetime homes standard, see www.lifetimehomes.org.uk
Design at a glance: a quick reference to national design policy (CABE, June 2006)

Manual for Streets (Department for Transport (DfT/CLG), March 2007)

Car Parking: what works where (English Partnerships, May 2006) www.englishpartnerships.co.uk

Transport documents

Using the planning process to secure travel plans: Best practice guidance for local authorities, developers and occupiers (ODPM/DfT, August 2002) www.dft.gov.uk

Making residential travel plans work: Guidelines for new development (DfT, September 2005)

Planning Obligations

Model Planning Obligation Agreement: Planning Obligation by Deed of Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (CLG, August 2006)

Planning Obligations: Practice Guidance (CLG, August 2006)

Sustainable building

BREEAM standards – www.breeam.org

Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a Guide to Good Practice 1991 (P.Littlefair, BRE Report, December 1991) www.brebookshops.org

Code for Sustainable Homes – A step-change in sustainable home building practice (CLG, December 2006)

Code for Sustainable Homes – Technical Guide (CLG, March 2007)
Framework for Biodiversity (Association of Local Government Ecologists, December 2005) www.alge.org.uk

Leisure provision

The Six Acre Standard (National Playing Field Association, 2001) www.npfa.co.uk

Health

Building In Health – A checklist and guide to developing healthy sustainable communities (July 2006) Department of Health, Government Office for the East Midlands, BCA, NHS

2. Regional Policy

All documents available on www.emra.gov.uk
Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands: RSS8 (GOEM, March 2005)

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy (GOEM, GO-East, GOSE, March 2005)

Draft East Midlands Regional Plan (RSS8) (EMRA, September 2006)

3. Local Policy

West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit
www.westnorthamptonshirejpu.org

West Northamptonshire - Joint Core Strategy - Issues and Options Consultation - September 2007

A Local Development Scheme for West Northamptonshire - October 2008

Northampton Borough Council
www.northampton.gov.uk

Northampton Borough Local Plan – Adopted June 1997
Saved Policies September 2007

Northampton Borough Council: Statement Community Involvement (Adopted March 2006)

Daventry District Council

www.daventrydc.gov.uk

Daventry District Council Local Plan (Adopted 1997)
Saved Policies September 2007

Daventry District Council Statement of Community Involvement
(March 2006)

South Northamptonshire Council

www.southnorthants.gov.uk

South Northamptonshire Council Local Plan (October 1997)
Saved Policies September 2007

South Northamptonshire Council Supplementary Planning
Guidance: Developer Contributions (August 2001)

South Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement
- Adopted April 2006

Northamptonshire County Council

www.northamptonshire.gov.uk

Northamptonshire Structure Plan 1996-2016 (March 2001)
Saved Policies September 2007

Northamptonshire Waste Local Plan (March 2006)

Northamptonshire Minerals Local Plan (May 2006)

Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011

Northamptonshire Transport Strategy for Growth –
Transport Prioritisation Framework (December 2006)

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation

www.wndc.co.uk

Standing orders of the Northampton area planning committee
(2006)

Standing orders of the Daventry area planning committee (2006)

Standing Orders of the Towcester Planning Committee (2006)

Northampton Central Area Design, Development and Movement
Framework – Final Report – (published by BDP) (August 2006)

Manual for Design Codes

Planning Obligations Strategy (December 2008)

Daventry Infrastructure Strategy (January 2009)

Useful contacts

East Midlands Planning Aid

15 Wheeler Gate,
Nottingham NG1 2NA
0115 852 4266
www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

GOEM

Government Office for the East Midlands
The Belgrave Centre, Stanley Place, Talbot Street,
Nottingham NG1 5GG
0115 971 9971
www.goem.gov.uk

East Midlands Development Agency

EMDA, Apex Court, City Link,
Nottingham NG2 4LA
0115 988 8300
www.emda.org.uk/main/

West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit

Cliftonville House, Bedford Road,
Northampton NN4 7NR
01604 837838
www.westnorthamptonshirejpu.org

Northamptonshire County Council

County Hall,
Northampton NN1 1DN
01604 236236
www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/

Daventry District Council

Lodge Road,
Daventry NN11 4FP
01327 871100
www.daventrydc.gov.uk/

Northampton Borough Council

The Guildhall, St Giles Square,
Northampton NN1 1DE
01604 837837
www.northampton.gov.uk/site/index.php

South Northamptonshire Council

Springfields, Towcester,
Northants NN12 6AE
0845 2300226
www.southnorthants.gov.uk/

English Heritage

East Midlands Region, 44 Dergate,
Northampton NN1 1UH
01604 735400
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Environment Agency

Midlands Regional Office, Sapphire East,
550 Streetsbrook Road, Solihull,
West Midlands B91 1QT
08708 506506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/

English Nature

Eastern Area Team, East Midlands Region, The Maltings,
Wharf Road, Grantham,
Lincolnshire NG31 6BH
01476 584800
www.english-nature.org.uk/about/teams/intro.asp?id=15

English Partnerships

Corporate Headquarters, 110 Buckingham Palace Road,
London SW1W 9SA
020 7881 1600

Central Milton Keynes Office

Central Business Exchange II, 414-428 Midsummer Boulevard,
Central Milton Keynes MK9 2EA
01908 692692
www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/

Northamptonshire Police

Wootton Hall, Mereway,
Northampton NN4 0JQ
08453 700700
www.northants.police.uk/

Wildlife Trust

Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire,
Northamptonshire, Lings House, Billing Lings
Northampton NN3 8BE
01604 405285
www.wildlifebcnp.org/get_in_touch-north.htm





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