Wellingborough Town Centre

Town Centre Area Action Plan
Baseline Study

Prepared for the
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Borough Council of Wellingborough
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1 Introduction
Figure 1.1: Site context plan - expanding the town core

Figure 1.2: Town Centre Aerial
This report describes the core baseline conditions and context that will inform the Area Action Plan Strategy.

The baseline has been prepared on the basis of published information and strategies, discussions with key stakeholders, bespoke research and site survey.

In preparing this report, we have sought not to replicate all published documentation and data, but to identify and describe key issues and findings that are raised. In considering the overall Baseline Study, reference should be made to the individual documents, strategies and data sources that are identified within this document.

The Baseline Study Area focuses on the expansion of Wellingborough Town Centre. Fig.1.1. The area of study is shown with Fig 1.2.

The document has been prepared by the following consultants.

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2 Policy Context
2.1 Policy Context

About Wellingborough

The Borough of Wellingborough is an area of 163 sq. km situated in the eastern half of Northamptonshire and lies about 65 miles from both London and Birmingham. It is located in the most southern tip of the East Midlands Region.

The population of the Borough is 73,100 (Mid-2003 Population Estimates - OFNS) and approximately 47,000 live within the urban area and the rest in the rural areas of the Borough. The urban area is surrounded by 19 villages that range in size from Earls Barton (population 5353) and Irchester (population 4807) to, Hardwick (population 70) and Strixton (population 32). Much of the Borough remains essentially rural and is primarily comprised of gently undulating farmland.

Wellingborough benefits from good road connections and has a number of key transport corridors. The A45 provides an east-west route and leads directly to junctions 15, 15A and 16 of the M1. The A509 provides a north-south route, which links to the A14 (M1-A1) link providing linkages to the M1 and M6 as well as the East Coast Ports.

Wellingborough’s railway station is on the Midland Mainline linking it to London, Nottingham, Leicester, Derby, Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester. The average journey time to London (St. Pancras) is 50 minutes and the station is served by at least 2 trains per hour.

The LDF is a portfolio of different Local Development Documents (LDDs). These various documents that will be prepared over the next few years for Wellingborough are shown below. The documents for specifically relate to this Town Centre Area Action Plan are highlighted in pink.

The timetable for preparing the various parts of the LDF is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). This is available to view at the Council offices or on the website at www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/LDSSept05.pdf. The Core Spatial Strategy is being prepared jointly for Kettering, Corby, East Northants and Wellingborough by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit. This unit has also prepared a joint Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Details of these documents are also available from the council.

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Site Specific Proposals and Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD’s

The Town Centre Area Action Plan (TC-AAP) sets out the context for the Town Centre whilst the Site Specific Proposals section sets out the issues and options that relate to particular sites or locations across the whole borough. The final document will include the Town Centre, policies for proposals that relate to specific parts of the borough, including both land allocations and site specific development control policies. These specific sites will be identified on the Proposals Map.

The Town Centre Area Action Plan will include policies and proposals to enhance the role of the Town Centre as the focus for the commercial, civic and cultural life of the borough. It will only relate to an area defined as the Town Centre.
2.2 Regional Policy Context

The Government’s national policy, particularly Planning Policy Statement 6 - Planning for Town Centres” (PPS6), identifies the national context for Wellingborough Town Centre. The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) already set the scene for this part of the Country. The amount of development that will take place has been agreed in the RSS and is therefore not open for debate. This says that 52,100 new homes and 43,800 new jobs should be provided in North Northamptonshire between 2001 and 2021 and that 34,100 of these homes should be located in the towns of Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough. A total of 12,800 of the new homes should be located within the Borough of Wellingborough. The RSS also indicates that the area should take account of the prospect of a further 28,000 additional dwellings needing to be provided in the years 2021 to 2031. This is refined to some extent in the Sept 2006 consultation draft that identifies 3425 houses to be built in the period 2021 to 2026. This later phase is subject to further review.

The RSS states that a comprehensive transport network that enhances North Northamptonshire’s sub regional role and links the growth towns, smaller towns, service centres and villages together will support the development strategy. The objective is to move towards greater self-containment for the towns, whilst the rural areas meet locally identified needs.

The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS 8) was issued for public consultation on the 28th September 2006. It is being developed further by the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) undertaken by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit. The Joint Planning Unit initiated its work on the Local Development Framework (LDF) in October 2004. The first key step in this process was the preparation of the Joint Local Development Scheme (LDS), which was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2005. Following revisions to the LDS, it was re-submitted and the Joint Committee LDS, formally agreed in July 2005 and came into effect on 5th August 2005.

The LDS for North Northamptonshire, which incorporates the Joint Committee LDS and the four district/ borough LDSs, sets out the work programme and timetable for the preparation of the North Northamptonshire LDF. As part of the preparation of the Joint Core Spatial Strategy, there was consultation on Issues and Options in June and July 2005. Responses received were analysed and presented to the Joint Planning Committee. These informed the preparation of the CSS Preferred Options Paper which was consulted on between November 2005 and January 2006. The CSS ‘preferred options’ document is available at www.nnjpu.org.uk.

The CSS Preferred Strategy for North Northamptonshire is one that focuses development on the growth towns of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough to benefit the area as a whole and that assists regeneration of these towns and the smaller towns. Consultation on the Preferred Options for the overall Plan (the ‘Core Spatial Strategy’) for North Northamptonshire finished at the end of January 2006. The Joint Planning Unit is currently preparing the Plan to submit to the Secretary of State using responses received to the consultation, various technical studies, and planning guidance. The Submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State has been delayed to await the completion of key technical studies in relation to transport (chiefly the future improvements to the A14). As a result the timetable for producing all of the other plans in North Northamptonshire which is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) has been amended. With the agreement of the Joint Planning Committee the aim is to submit the Plan in February 2007. There will be a six week consultation period followed shortly afterwards by further consultation on strategic sites put forward by objectors.

A comprehensive transport network that enhances North Northamptonshire’s sub regional role and links the growth towns, smaller towns, service centres and villages together will support the development strategy. The objective is to move towards greater self-containment for the towns, whilst the rural areas meet locally identified needs.

The Site Specific and Town Centre DPDs will need to be in accordance with the Core Spatial Strategy. It is important to remember that at this stage the Core Strategy is still in draft form and that any changes to it may have an impact on how the
Site Specific and Town Centre DPD documents develop.


2.3 Core Spatial Strategy

The Site Specific Development Plan Documents and Town Centre AAP will need to be in accordance with the Core Spatial Strategy. It is important to remember that at this stage the Core Strategy is still in draft form and that any changes to it may have an impact on how the Site Specific and Town Centre DPD documents develop. The CSS is currently planned to reach adoption in December 2007, though due to delays on decisions regarding the A14 highway, this is likely to slip.

2.4 Sustainable development

The key component that underpins policy at all levels is the concept of sustainable development. The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life for future generations. The Government’s five guiding principles of sustainable development, set out in ‘Securing the Future – delivering the UK sustainable development strategy’ are:

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

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

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

Promoting Good Governance – actively promoting effective, participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people’s creativity, energy, and diversity.

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

The Government’s short definition of sustainable communities is that they are ‘places where people want to live and work, now and in the future’. Key points for measuring this are that such communities should be ‘active, inclusive and safe, well run, environmentally sensitive, well designed and built, well connected, thriving, well served and fair for everyone’.

2.5 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Sustainability Appraisal is mandatory for Development Plan Documents. When preparing these documents planning authorities must also conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC on the ‘assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment’ (known as the ‘strategic environmental assessment’ or SEA Directive).

The requirement to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal and a Strategic Environmental Assessment are distinct. However, recent government guidance suggests that it is possible to satisfy both through a single appraisal process. Reference to Sustainability Appraisal should therefore be taken to include the requirements of the SEA Directive.

The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of good plan making and should not be seen as a separate activity. It
is an iterative process that identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of the plan and the extent to which implementation of the plan will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined.

The first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal is the preparation of a Scoping Report that sets out the appraisal methodology and programme, presents a characterisation of the area and identifies key sustainability issues. The Scoping report was produced and consulted concurrently with the Town Centre “Issues and Options” paper.

2.6 Town Centre AAP Timetable

This current document describes the Town Centre AAP “Strategic Options”. It is currently intended to consult upon these during January and February 2007. Policy input will also at this time be taken from the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS). Consultation views and these and other inputs will then help produce the “Preferred Option(s)” document that will go back out for consultation in about June/July 2007. The final document will then be submitted to the Government (Secretary for State - DCLG) for comment and approval, before returning to the Council for Adoption in early 2009.

2.7 Community Strategy Objectives

It is not only regional and sub-regional documents that play an important part in identifying policy directions. The Local Development Framework should be a key component in the delivery of the Community Strategy setting out its spatial aspects. The Wellingborough Community Plan sets out to improve the social economic and environmental conditions in the Borough. It brings together the needs, interests and aspirations of local people. It requires local councils, other public sector providers like the police, health organisations and schools and colleges to work together with local businesses and the voluntary and community sectors. This is delivered through the Local Strategic Partnership, known as the Wellingborough Partnership. The vision for Wellingborough is detailed in the main report.

“*The place to be. At the heart of Northamptonshire, where we are proud to be. The place where all have high aspirations, all are encouraged to achieve them and the potential is realised for the whole community. The place where we lead in quality businesses and the environment. The place where communities are sustainable, healthy, safe and prosperous.*”

Wellingborough - an excellent place where:

- everyone respects each other, their moral and ethical values, and all are equal in an active, culturally diverse and cohesive community
- businesses prosper and wealth is generated
- learning and job opportunities meet the needs of all
- the environment, both natural and built, is continually enhanced
- there are open spaces and leisure facilities for all
- good transport links exist throughout the area
- all services are accessible
- the prime location is used to advantage
- life expectancy is high
- local health services serve individual needs
- everyone feels safe

2.8 The Area Action Plan Objectives

To promote and enhance the vitality and viability of a quality, distinctive Town Centre, ensuring its economic sustainability through the improved quality and quantity of retail, leisure/cultural, residential, educational and community uses. This is so as to deliver a significant improvement in the quality of life for the Wellingborough inhabitants and its attractiveness to visitors/investors, whilst retaining the best and most valued aspects of its existing character and diversity.

*Objectives*

a) To enhance the distinctiveness and appeal of the Town Centre (and Town as a whole)

b) To Identify a highly recognisable and attractive civic heart together with substantial improvements in the public realm

c) Within the context of the Growth agenda, to seek a major increase in retail, with enhanced quality and choice.
d) To support more opportunities for safe and attractive Town Centre urban living including through improved quality of recreation opportunities and a vibrant, safe evening economy.

e) To protect and enhance the best heritage in the Town Centre and ensure quality urban design and architecture is delivered.

f) Ensure a high degree of accessibility into and across the Town Centre - by having sufficient and appropriate car parking (free from the members perspective), enhanced quality public transport, and substantially improved connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

g) Ensure a range of services and functions for the Town Centre but accept that the major office accommodation is likely to be near to the station and on edge-of-town sites (due to space limitations and market demands).

h) Bring in more leisure and cultural uses, and enhance the viability of the existing major facilities (Castle Theatre and proposed Museum).

i) Support the retention and enhancement of Tertiary education within the Town Centre

2.9 The Role of the Town Centre

Wellingborough, together with the other growth towns of Kettering and Corby faces competition from a number of higher order centres that encircle North Northamptonshire: Northampton, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Peterborough and Leicester. Within this context, however, the (Roger Tym) North Northamptonshire Town Centres Roles and Relationships Study concludes that at present as a centre for retail and leisure: “Wellingborough is relatively healthy for a town of its size…” but there is “…clear room for improvement in the Town Centre with key deficiencies being a relative lack of high profile retailers, particularly in the clothing sector.”

With the planned growth in North Northamptonshire and in many of the nearby centres referred to above it is inevitable that unless floorspace for retail and other Town Centre uses expands considerably, Wellingborough Town Centre will struggle to retain its role as the focus for shopping and leisure activities in the town. Government policy (Planning Policy Statement 6 Planning for Town Centres) is supportive of the retention of this role, its key objective being to promote Town Centre vitality and viability by:

- Planning for growth and development of existing centres; and

- Promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8, March 2005, recently moved forward in Sept 2006 as a consultation draft) states that “the existing role of Wellingborough Town Centre should be strengthened through the continued provision of a diverse range of quality comparison shopping that meets the needs of both the town and its wider rural hinterland.” Comparison-shopping is for those items that are not obtained on a frequent basis - unlike, for example, food (referred to as convenience shopping) - thus comparison-shopping includes things like clothing, footwear, household and leisure goods.

Clearly the strengthening of Wellingborough Town Centre required by the Regional Strategy still leaves considerable flexibility as to how much more floorspace is required and how this is provided. The North Northamptonshire Town Centres Study referred to earlier put forward a range of options as to how increases in floorspace might be distributed between the three growth towns and the smaller towns of the area. The Study recognised that at present half of the money available in the area to spend on comparison goods goes out of the area to the larger centres; although the draw of these larger centres will continue it was considered realistic to plan to reduce this loss to a little less than the half presently going out of the area.

The Preferred Options Report of the North Northamptonshire Spatial Strategy proposes more self containment for each of the growth towns of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough, reducing the need to travel and ensuring that priority is given to identifying and delivering the quantity of new retail floorspace that will be required as a result of growth. The move towards greater self-containment for North Northamptonshire as a whole, however, will also mean that the three towns must develop on a
complementary basis.

In terms of complementary roles certain existing characteristics need to be recognised: Kettering does occupy a more dominant role in terms of retailing by comparison with either Wellingborough or Corby. Wellingborough on the other hand has a modern theatre and a larger office element. Kettering fulfils the central role in terms of hospital provision. All three towns have higher education provision (Tresham). It is also a matter of debate as to whether these distinctions must realistically or should remain the case over the longer term.

2.10 Floorspace

Although precise floorspace predictions are difficult, the requirement for Wellingborough Town Centre to meet the preferred option of the Spatial Strategy is of the order of an additional 21,000 sq. metres of comparison floorspace between 2004 and 2021. (These figures derive from the Roger Tym and Partners “North Northamptonshire Town Centres Roles and relationships Study - 2005”). This compares to existing Town Centre floorspace of approximately 8,000 sq. metres. Looking to the period 2004 to 2031 the figure rises to between 41,000 and 48,000 sq. metres (i.e. between 20,000-27,000 sq. metres between 2021 and 2031).

The increased floorspace requirement is, however, not merely confined to comparison-shopping. Government policy (PPS6) requires that, in the interests of a sustainable reduction in travel and to encourage vital Town Centres, the preferred location for retailing in general together with leisure, entertainment facilities, more intensive sport and recreation uses, offices, arts, culture and tourism should be the Town Centre. Plans must make provision for all such uses as appropriate for the town. This should include a range of complementary evening and night-time economy uses, theatre, nightclubs, restaurants etc. In addition housing will be an important element in most mixed multi-storey developments, increasing the diversity of housing and providing for increased activity out of business hours. Thus it is not unreasonable to suggest that the total floorspace in the Town Centre will need to at least double between now and 2021 and that this should be viewed in the context of perhaps a similar increase during the subsequent 10 years.

2.11 Existing Plans for the Town Centre Area

Under provisions contained within the existing local plan, which can be viewed at localplan.wellingborough.gov.uk, two backland areas were identified for partial redevelopment – Midland Road and High Street. Some development has taken place to the rear of Midland Road but further proposals should assist in creating greater integration here. A SPD for the High Street area has recently been adopted and the proposals will be fed into the overall conclusions arising from the current consultation, but with some flexibility being considered should this be necessary.

Also earlier in 2005 consultation upon a draft development framework for the Town Centre (written by Atkins consultants for the Council), that can be viewed at www.wellingborough.gov.uk/downloads/Draft_Strategic_Framework.pdf, was carried out to gauge views upon a long term vision for the Town Centre. Some useful pointers were derived from this work that again will be carried forward into the overall conclusions. North Northamptonshire growth proposals have moved on rapidly since that project was initiated and whilst a useful and valid background document the Town Centre Area Action Plan now in preparation will have a more up to date approach to the Town Centre masterplanning.

In the existing Local Plan, the key Town Centre objective is to maintain and enhance the centre as the focus for the commercial, civic and cultural life of the Borough. To do this - albeit in somewhat different circumstances than now – it was sought to provide for diversity of uses, ease of access/parking and potentially attractive market town character. One aspect of this was to sustain a compact Town Centre with most retail uses being located relatively close together to allow ease of comparison and minimise shoppers’ walking distance. Primary Shopping Streets are identified in which there is a presumption in favour of their fullest use for shopping uses at ground floor/ street level. Secondary Shopping Streets should still have shopping as the main activity but be complemented by other uses such as eating places, pubs, estate agents, banks etc. Surrounding these core areas are Commercial Fringe areas in which a greater mix is encouraged: leisure uses, service uses etc as well as some shops and eating places. Some housing is also permissible in all areas but
This approach may be considered still appropriate for the future planning of the Town Centre but must be set in the context of the need for a doubling of the present floorspace to 2021, and potentially tripling it up to 2031 as advised by the Roger Tym Town Centres Study 2005 and subsequently referred to in the draft CSS. The Town Centre Area Action Plan looks at various Strategic Options that takes this into account

2.12 Town Centre Environment

The need to ensure that Wellingborough Town Centre can adapt to changing demands and enhance its attraction in the face of developing competition, is not merely a question of quantitative provision: the quality of the environment is of vital importance.

To quote Government guidance (Planning Policy Statement 6) “It is essential that Town Centres provide a high quality and safe environment if they are to remain attractive and competitive. Well-designed public spaces and buildings, which are fit for purpose, comfortable, safe, attractive, accessible and durable, are key elements which can improve the health, vitality and economic potential of a Town Centre. Policies for the design of development for main Town Centre uses, regardless of location, and for development in Town Centres, should promote high quality and inclusive design, in order to improve the character and quality of the area in which such development is located and the way it functions.”

Clearly an important aspect of future planning policy will be to complement local licensing objectives and in particular to ensure that a coordinated approach is taken to managing the evening and night time economy.

Changes in consumer behaviour already suggest that increasingly people will be demanding high quality environments with ease and safety of usage from their Town Centres and if this is not available many will take their custom elsewhere.

What policies and proposals should be pursued to improve the Town Centre environment in the light of the anticipated growth of the town over the next twenty years and more will involve a very wide range of issues. These will include:

- principles for the design and layout of new development;
- those areas where renewal or redevelopment is a priority (including issues of land assembly);
- landscape both hard and soft;
- the amount and design of car parking;
- design and maintenance of street furniture;
- signage and paving;
- pedestrian linkages between differing parts of the Town Centre;
- access in general to and from the town centre by foot, cycle, bus and car and
- most critically, a detailed implementation programme which is realistic in terms of likely resources and which will enable development to proceed in a logical and effective sequence.

The following specific issues may be most critical to the future environment of the Town Centre (note transport issues are dealt with in more detail below). These questions were asked as part of the Town Centre Issues and Options consultation (winter and spring 2005-06) and the broad summary of the responses have been brought together in the later chapter on consultation responses (see below). For completeness sake the questions are listed here, but it is recognised that much of the detail the questions ask, and answers they have elicited, will be fed into the Preferred Option(s) stage of the Town Centre AAP, rather than the less detailed Strategic Options phase.

- In defining areas for redevelopment (refer to floorspace issues above), where should multiple (but accessible) levels of development be encouraged and should mixed use development / areas be the norm to make the most efficient use of land and engender activity throughout the day and evening? What uses in the Town Centre will be most complementary in this regard?

- What differing design principles (if any) might be appropriate in areas where specialist functions (refer the role of the centre, above) are to be encouraged?

- Is there a sufficient focus for the town (Market Square, Market Place?), how can this be improved
and should alternative/additional squares be considered? What activities should these public squares be designed to accommodate: events, market, activities for children, quiet sitting, outdoor eating?

- How can the various parts of the Town Centre be better integrated? Is the aim of avoiding/offsetting inward looking development, maximising active street level frontages and avoiding blank frontages realistic (Swansgate)? How can the Castle area be better linked to the Town Centre? Are the linkages between the existing Primary Shopping Areas and areas such as Cambridge Street, High Street, Midland Road etc adequate / how can they be improved?

- Are the gateways to the Town Centre (Oxford Street, Broad Green, Cannon Street, Midland Road, London Road) sufficiently welcoming – how can these be improved? Additional Town Centre development/landmark building/public art? In the case of Midland Road, how can the linkages to the railway / WEAST be enhanced?

- What are the critical issues to address as priorities in the public realm: safety, litter, and quality of paving, street furniture, public art? How can the Area Action Plan support these?

- How can the existing green spaces (Croyland Gardens, Tithe Barn Green, Broad Green, All Hallows churchyard, Swanspool Brook / Gardens, Castle Fields, Bassets Close) be made more a key part of the Town Centre? Are there opportunities to increase tree planting in the Town Centre?

- In the design of buildings including shop fronts, how can bland / standard designs be avoided and what aspects of local character should be reflected in better design?

- How should the best of the existing character of the town be conserved? Are there particular areas that should be given priority in this regard?

With regard to the issue of conserving the character of the Town Centre, it should be noted that the core area centred on Market Place is designated a Conservation Area. Designation of a Conservation Area does introduce some additional controls relating, for example, to encouraging the use of traditional materials and quality of design. It is not, however, intended as a way of stifling change but merely to encourage higher design standards that respect the specific character of the designated area. The present designated area is limited in extent and an issue to be addressed in the plan is whether this area should be extended and if so what additional parts of the Town Centre are worthy of designation.

2.13 Transport and Parking

The Government is seeking to reduce the need to travel, to encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling and reduce reliance upon the private car, to facilitate multi purpose journeys and to ensure that everyone has access to a range of facilities. Good access to Town Centres is therefore essential.

Shoppers surveys undertaken as part of the Town Centre masterplan preparation (link as above) showed that 47% travelled to the Town Centre by car, 16% as a passenger in a car or taxi, 11% by bus, 19% on foot, 3% by cycle and 4% “other”. Clearly therefore the private car remains the dominant form of transport – although walking is an important element relative to many other similar Town Centres. It is also clear that, with the planned growth, unless significant progress is made to increase the use of non-car modes of transport, congestion will create a disincentive to use the Town Centre.

The County Council as Highways Authority prepares the Local Transport Plan (LTP) setting out integrated transport strategies of targeted improvements to create more sustainable transport whilst accommodating growth. This document can be viewed at www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Transport/TP/LTP/LTP2006-2011.htm. Its congestion strategy is based upon four key principles of: management of the existing highway network to optimise utilisation of existing capacity; manage demand for travel by private vehicles; high quality alternatives to car travel available to those who wish to use them and; where necessary, provision of high quality roads between and around major settlements to accommodate the remaining traffic. Provisions to be made within the Town Centre plan and the LTP should be complementary. Thus in making provision for development and land use in the Town Centre, the question arises
as to what specific planning policies and proposals are needed to support the LTP strategy.

A further study by the County Council on the targets for sustainable transport (including modal shift) will be available in the new year (early 2007) and will be considered in the Town Centre AAP.

The following questions were considered during the Issues and Options phase:

- Improved facilities for pedestrians (including disabled access) will be an essential prerequisite to a vibrant and healthy Town Centre environment. The Town Centre masterplan concluded that at present ease of walking around the centre is relatively good but could be improved particularly at night. Linkages between parts of the centre have been referred to earlier – in particular the link to the Castle Theatre area and between the open space networks and the Town Centre core. Are these key priorities? Should / can improved street lighting, cctv cameras and the design of development to eliminate unwelcoming areas after dark be used to increase personal safety or are other actions necessary as well?

- The cycleway and network defined in the local plan is discussed in the transport section of the Site Specific Proposals DPD. Having arrived at the Town Centre it will be important that adequate cycle parking facilities are provided in association with development. Should this be a fundamental requirement in lieu of some car parking?

- The Town Centre should continue to be the focus for the town-wide bus system. At present the main stopping point is in Church Street. Will this continue to be the most satisfactory location? The latter should be set in the context of the aspiration to develop a new transport interchange at the railway station and the possibility of new east-west routes linking WEAST, the railway, the Town Centre and the western parts of the town. If new Town Centre facilities for buses are required how will this be funded? To what extent should contributions towards support of the public transport system be sought in preference to additional parking? How can priority for buses be engineered in the context of increasing traffic levels in general?

- Even with significant increases in walking, cycling and the use of buses there will continue to be increases in car and commercial traffic. Plans within the LTP seek to improve the capacity of the present Town Centre one way system. For those unfamiliar

  - With this system is it difficult to negotiate and therefore a disincentive in attracting new shoppers to the town? Would improved signage help?

  - Ease of access to car parking is identified as a key advantage for the town from surveys conducted in support of both the Town Centre masterplan and the North Northamptonshire Town Centres study referred to earlier. The present local plan seeks to limit additional parking to the minimum required and to ensure that all new parking provided is available for public use. Even continuing on this basis additional car parking will be required. As advised in Government Guidance in support of the Government’s Planning Policy Statement on Town Centres (PPS6), “Large amounts of surface car parking are likely to detract from the overall appearance of development and are unlikely to maximise the development potential of available land”. In the context of the need to double the floorspace of the Town Centre over the next twenty years, it is likely to be essential that additional parking is provided over or under development or in multi storey car parks – although this is clearly a more expensive option than surface parking. To what extent should additional parking be required from development and where / how should this be provided?

Other Strategies

In considering all of the issues so far discussed, account must be taken of the strategies being pursued by other stakeholders which, whilst they are not directly concerned with regulating physical development and the use of land, will nevertheless have a direct bearing upon how planning policies should be formulated.
2.14 Potential Priorities

At the Summit organised earlier this year by North Northants Together and Catalyst Corby in 2005 to discuss the North Northamptonshire growth a Town Centre workshop listed those matters which participants saw as being the main priorities for Wellingborough Town Centre. These were, in no order of individual priority, as follows:

- new town square
- swimming pool
- cultural quarter
- office redevelopment / refurbishment
- new further / higher education campus
- improved gateways / public art
- larger retail units, refurbish Swansgate, department store, better range of fashion retailers
- develop Midland Road with a better link to the station
- better designed multi storey car park(s)
- improve one way system
- more street activity
- enhance green environment of town centre
- enhance shopfront design and architectural design in general
- leisure attraction.

These suggestions needs to be seen in the context of the wider consultation already undertaken in the Town Centre AAP (Issues and Options stage). All these issues are summarised within this document’s Chapter 3 “Summary of Consultation and Audit of Socio-economic Factors”.
3 Summary of Previous Consultation & Socio-economic Audit
3.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the outcomes from the consultation already undertaken over the last 12 months in relation to the future of the Town Centre, and abstracts key elements from another study on the roles and relationships of Town Centres in North Northamptonshire (Tym 2005). The main consultations were carried out as part of the Council’s “Site Specific Proposals and Town Centre Area Action Plan - Issues and Options” study, supplemented by additional consultation with stake holder groups regarding the redevelopment potential of the town’s Market Square and Church Street/Tresham sites. The summaries also have abstracted some relevant material from the (UD&M) consultation event held in July 06 that examined the broader future growth of the town. The chapter also brings together the background on relevant socio-economic background data such as population, employment and travel.

As at July 2006 the following consultation events have taken place and have fed into these summary notes:

- Town Centre Area Action Plan March 2006 event
- Town Centre Partnership; Chairman Designate Meeting
- Town Centre Partnership: retail focus group
- Young People April 2006 workshop (Planning Aid)
- Black and Ethic Minorities Workshop, May 2006
- Meetings with NCC Senior Library officers, March & May 2006
- Meetings with NCC, Highways managers (several April - July 2006
- (UD&M at Swansgate) Wider Town Major Consultation event 12th May 2006
- (UD&M at Hind Hotel) Wider Town Workshop (24-26 May with report)
- Town Centre Issues and Options, Consultation written responses.

The Strategic Options documents (not this baseline document) have also been informed by:

- Taxi drivers meeting (Dec 06)
- Various Town Centre Steering Group meetings
- Various Town Centre Advisory Group meetings
- 2 x Strategic Development Advisory Panel Meetings (WBC Members)
- North Northamptonshire Development Company Meetings
- Wider Borough Council of Wellingborough Officers Meetings

3.2 Summary of General Consultation Comments

All agreed that the Town Centre needs to grow significantly, both in size and in activity, with a clear and strong retail element leading this. Most people also wish to see a self-sustaining Town Centre with a wide range of Town Centre uses as well.

The Town Centre needs to be set within a very high quality environment, including a revitalised market square and other open spaces and plenty of good connectivity within the Town Centre and out to the wider town including the station.

The overall Town Centre “offer” needs to strongly improve; in terms of architecture, skills, branding, gateways, distinctiveness and other current or hoped for attributes.

All agree that the Town Centre needs to grow significantly, both in size and in activity, with a clear and strong retail element leading this.

However most people also wish to see a self-sustaining Town Centre with a wide range of Town Centre uses as well, particularly set within a very high quality environment. This could include a revitalised market square and other open spaces and plenty of good connectivity within the Town Centre and out to the wider town including the station.

The overall Town Centre “offer” needs to strongly improve; in terms of architecture, skills, branding, gateways, distinctiveness and other current or
Specific Comments

1. Avoid Ghost town at night (esp. 5-9pm before pubs get busy with rowdies)
2. Improve the night-time economy
3. Expand Town Centre
4. In the Town Centre Vision definition add words “and diversity”
5. Should be more like Banbury / Market Harborough
6. Seek to be a Town Centre with a regional level USP
7. Strengthen role within O2C Arc
8. Strong environmental theme for wider town
9. Future vision priorities seen as including shopping, business and leisure, followed by high-tec industry, tourism and distribution
10. Current important strengths to build on include the station, open space/green space/ country side followed by good access then quality architecture
11. Need to build on current diversity and quality in the green and built environment, heritage and leisure
12. Need to involve the whole, wider community
13. Need to positively attract the right investment
14. Increase local distinctiveness
15. Town Centre disconnected with no heart
16. Town Centre no sense of direction
17. It keeps up, but is ordinary - it just trundles along
18. Lots of untapped potential
19. Improve as a destination
20. Town Centre should be more self-sustaining
21. Don’t go for one Town Centre role, go for all roles
22. More flexibility to allow food/drink/pubs/bars in the primary shopping area
23. Clear distinction should be made between the primary shopping area and the defied town centre
24. Find a strong USP and promote Wellingborough Brand
25. Need to sell Town Centre better to investors as they simply don’t know its strengths Reality much better than perception for investors
26. To attract retail increase footfall first, by increasing Town Centre jobs/offices
27. Need to positively attract the right investment
28. Town is unsafe, especially in the evening, at night, at weekends and for youth
29. Needs to attract higher skilled jobs
30. Needs to harness indigenous talent and be a place to innovate
31. Needs to attract leading national and international businesses
32. Needs to offer a bigger, healthier Town Centre
33. Needs to develop a high quality attractive new urban environment
34. Needs to offer first class further and higher education
35. Forge new opportunities for green living
29. Integrate high quality open spaces and places into the fabric of the development
38. Offering a varied mix of high quality, attractive and sustainable homes
39. Developing the Station as a hub and gateway to the town and the region and a focus for business investment
40. Allowing ease of movement through a high quality environment to the town and to the attractions beyond and incorporate high quality public transport
41. A new comprehensive vision and plan is needed to guide development.
42. Delivery in particular is a major issue that needs to be tackled quickly
43. Redevelopment will require land assembly in order to deliver a comprehensive scheme
44. Expansion of the Town Centre boundaries will also be necessary.
45. An approach based on ‘quarters’ with distinctive identities should be pursued to reinforce a particular character and use mix that assists in the legibility of the centre

3.3 Summary of Comments on Architecture and Design

There is a clear overall desire to see that the quality of the public realm dramatically improves. This will be at the same time as protecting and enhancing the heritage resource (although people are ambivalent about the Conservation Area expansion). A good attention to shop frontages and streetscape generally is needed. There was a particular focus on redeveloped and improved Gateways and local distinctiveness based on heritage assets.

1. Improve gateway to town (e.g. MSCP and Tresham very poor)
2. Need to improve gateways to town (e.g. poor quality buildings at Swansgate, Tresham,
Matalan)
3. No place for people to sit
4. More lighting needed
5. Improve streetscape and landscaping generally
6. Quality environment needed
7. Protect tree lined walks
8. Base on quality heritage basis
9. Retain and protect historic buildings
10. Make more use of heritage features
11. Need improvements across the Town Centre not just the Conservation Area
12. Conservation Area doesn’t work
13. Don’t expand Conservation Area
14. Expand Conservation Area
15. Cambridge St to be in expanded Conservation Area
16. Concentric heart approach to design strongly supported
17. Face lift needed
18. Needs to be more modern
19. Connect areas better e.g. through market square
20. Need to take back-areas and turn into fronts
21. Shop fronts and design very important
22. Shop fronts need improving
23. Design code for shop front
24. Improve shop fronts on Cambridge Street
25. Orient Way, Silver St, Sheep St: go for split level ground floor frontages
26. Redeveloped areas should have sustainable eco-buildings
27. Multi-storey car parks need quality design
28. Protect view of church
29. Improve generate local distinctiveness
30. Widen Church St because of congestion

3.4 Summary of Comments on Public Realm

Design and development opportunities should be considered to create opportunities for a major investment in the public realm and Town Centre environment generally.

These could include:
- A remodelled and significantly improved central market square;
- Locations for an enhance street market and events area(s);
- Significant environmental improvements to the streetscape and shop fronts;
- New and improved main gateways;
- Street furniture, signage etc. (possible in due course with a design code).

As well as spatial issues a wide range of other opportunities should be considered that would add to the vitality and viability and improvement in image and environment of the Town Centre for visitors, shoppers and residents alike.

3.5 Summary of Comments on Culture, Leisure and Entertainment

A wide range of new leisure facilities for young people is needed, as well as community facilities with an important role for an improved library.

An expanded culture offer focused on the Castle Theatre is seen as important, with a possible cinema in the Town Centre. Bars, pubs and café/restaurants need to be more attractive to young people and families and to be of a higher quality.

Specific Comments

General Increase Leisure provision
More for under 14’s

Leisure
Skate Park (new, bigger)
Dirt Track for bikes
Affordable sports club non-membership
Aerobics centre
Pool tables/club
Gym
Swimming pool
Roller-skating
Better safer parks
Community
Improve more community facilities
Youth Centre
Drop-in, safe youth club
Better entertainment venues
Bigger events venue (Gloucester club closed)
Bigger events venue for weddings etc. with parking
More public art
Community centre
Hospital /medical drop in centre
One stop public-info centre

Library (Other technical Library details available)
Library: new, bigger
Library onto the main square
Library alongside other complimentary uses
(Costa Café; bookshop, one-stop-shop)
Library both first and second floor, mezzanine if well designed/impressive

Culture
Town centre Cinema needed
Cinema with latest releases
Quality Cinema (Kettering cinema poor)
New cinema at Castle Theatre
Castle Theatre great asset
Make Castle Theatre bigger
Town museum: strong support
Cultural quarter a good idea
Spread culture throughout not just one place

Pubs/Bars/Restaurants
Pubs/restaurants not family friendly
More Town Centre events
More events on market square
Too many takeaways
Too many pubs
Not enough restaurants
More nice restaurants and cafés
Under 18s bar
Licensing issues
Internet café

3.6 Summary of Comments on Public Transport, Movement and Parking

There is a very clear desire to focus on non-car use (buses, cycles and walking), but recognising that parking also needs to increase. Connectivity is important. Congestion is noted but not seen as very bad, with the possible exception of Church St and certain key junctions. There will be difficulties in attracting those large populations living in the proposed major urban extensions to shop and use the Town Centre if good car access, parking as well as public transport options are not available (they will just as easily drive to Northampton or MK or Riverside where higher order comparison goods and services are available).

Specific Comments

Types of Transport
1. Need to increase Town Centre trips but reduce demand for car use
2. Focus on public transport
3. Need to have very good connectivity of the Town Centre to wider areas
4. Pedestrian access to Town centre is currently relatively high
5. Local people visit Town Centre 2 to 3 times a week
6. Have a park-and-ride
7. Consider hi-tec urban light transport pods to link from station to centre;
8. Tram from station to Town Centre
9. Improve and subsidise buses
10. Buses should stop at heart of Town centre
11. Buses cause congestion on Church Street
12. There is too much congestion
13. Congestion is relatively minor
14. Midland Rd. vital can we have a tram shuttle.

Connectivity
15. More linked routes to secondary shopping
16. Improve connectivity and footfall
17. Open safe attractive routes through Matalan area
18. Safer footways and cycleways
19. Better footways and cycleways on Cambridge Street. Cycle routes should link the town centre and major urban extensions;

Parking
23. More parking
24. Free parking
25. More underground parking
26. Multi-storeys feel unsafe
27. Parking at access gateways, avoid sending round one-way system
28. Have (widened) Queen’s St as new one-way street
29. Church St for buses, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians
30. Sufficient car parking needs to be provided to ensure commercial success
31. Multi-storey car parks integrated into the fabric of the Town Centre with other uses incorporated into the building

Congestion
32. Widen Church St because of congestion
33. Church St congestion causes rat-running e.g. through Gold St and St John’s St
34. Gloucester Place and Canon St are the key junction with issues
35. St John’s St needs roundabout
36. Complexity of getting High St/ Queens St/Salem Lane junction right
37. Consider ‘super-bus-stops’ or spread distribution of bus stops around the town centre to reduce the impact of buses
3.7 Summary of Comments on Retail needs

It is accepted and desired that a major increase in retail should happen, with a strong emphasis on comparison goods (especially clothes) but also independent niche retail, some in smaller shops and some with an ethnic focus. There should be more food retail generally including a Town Centre core supermarket.

More modern/upgraded, bigger and more flexible shop units (i.e. 3-5,000 sq.ft) are needed. Swansgate needs major new investment/rebuild. Competition might help this. Cambridge St consistently seen as having a high potential for independent and niche retail.

The “Retail Group” consultants working for one of the developers suggest overall retail attraction would be helped by:

- More, bigger and better anchor stores: e.g. M&S, Debenhams, Next, Primark.
- More family facilities, including: crèche / soft play area’s, better baby changing facilities, kiddie carts.
- More mid market and aspirational retailers such as: Clarks, Oasis, Gap, ELC, Borders, etc..
- More multiple operators, such as Mothercare, Woolworths, Superdrug and Dixons
- Better shopping environment with more covered areas, more pedestrianisation
- Significantly better catering offer, e.g. Costa Coffee, Café Nero, Pizza Express, Nando’s, Café Rouge, Bella Pasta
- Better leisure facilities, e.g. cinemas (but not commercial in Town Centre?).

Swansgate
4. Knock it down and rebuild.
5. Increase its size.
7. It has taken trade away from centre.
8. Needs competition to improve it.
9. Open up Midland Street side with shop frontages.

Cambridge St
10. Is excellent as place
11. Has huge potential for increased retail
12. Very important in terms of heritage
13. Should have specialist niche shops
14. Is very attractive
15. Feels unsafe

High St
16. Phasing: need High St developed first, before other redevelopment
17. Need a little more retail to add to existing plans

Retail types desired
18. Internet café(s)
19. More shops
20. More different independent shops
21. More variety of shops
22. Asian clothes/materials shops
23. Spread out ethnic shops (not ghetto)
24. Cluster ethnic shops (more competitive with Leicester & Luton)
25. Ethnic food shops in centre
26. More quality shops
27. Specialist Boutiques
28. More men’s clothing
29. More fashion clothes
30. More children’s clothing
31. More clothing generally
32. More cheap children’s clothes
33. River island / Top Shop
34. More sports shops - JJB
35. More food shops / groceries
36. Town centre (core) supermarket
37. Specialist food shops
38. More convenience food shops

General Comments
1. Centre must take on a major shopping role – a greater proportion of spend than that identified in the Core Spatial Strategy might be retained in North Northants (perhaps 60/65% rather than 50%)
2. More intensive use of existing retail buildings but high street retailers’ needs unlikely to be met within smaller and older buildings
3. We don’t yet know the impact of Internet shopping?
3.8 Implications for Floorspace, Retail and Commercial

General comments on floorspace requirements

Although precise floorspace predictions are difficult, the requirement for Wellingborough Town Centre to meet the preferred option of the Spatial Strategy is of the order of an additional 21,000 sq. metres of comparison floorspace between 2004 and 2021. This compares to existing Town Centre floorspace of approximately 8,000 sq. metres. Looking to the period 2004 to 2031 the figure rises to between 41,000 and 48,000 sq. metres (69,000 sq.m to 76,000sqm in total).

The increased floorspace requirement is, however, not merely confined to comparison-shopping. Government policy (PPS6) requires that, in the interests of a sustainable reduction in travel and to encourage vital Town Centres, the preferred location for retailing in general together with leisure, entertainment facilities, more intensive sport and recreation uses, offices, arts, culture and tourism should be the Town Centre.

Plans must make provision for all such uses as appropriate for the town. This should include a range of complementary evening and night-time economy uses, theatre, nightclubs, restaurants etc..

In addition housing will be an important element in most mixed multi-storey developments, increasing the diversity of housing and providing for increased activity out of business hours. Thus it is not unreasonable to suggest that the total floorspace in the Town Centre will need to at least double between now and 2021 and that this should be viewed in the context of perhaps a similar increase during the subsequent 10 years.

### Floorspace by type, 2002 (000’s m²)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Offices</th>
<th>Factories</th>
<th>Warehouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Roger Tym, 2003

3.9 Areas for retail development and buildings sizes

Strong opportunities need to be considered for (re)-development of areas including:

- Cambridge St (refurbishment of shop fronts, new access and significant new at the backs of properties);
- An competitive anchor development to the Swansgate should be considered;
- The Swansgate/ING should be encouraged through competition to reinvest in the Swansgate centre

In terms of buildings size:

- Opportunities that encourage independent and specialist retailers into smaller units should be considered, in some cases this might be an appropriate commercial use of protected / quality heritage buildings, in other cases will need new investment
- New building larger floorspace town centre units for in larger investors will be needed;
- Major refurbishment of properties will also be needed to be able to support larger units.

### Retail Rankings in North Northamptonshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>143rd</td>
<td>180th</td>
<td>187th</td>
<td>171st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>286th</td>
<td>351st</td>
<td>282nd</td>
<td>360th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>359th</td>
<td>323rd</td>
<td>259th</td>
<td>344th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushden</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>644th</td>
<td>502nd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Northamptonshire Centres Project, May 2004, DTZ Pieda Consulting
3.10 Summary Comments and Implications for Commercial and Office Property

Re-investment and or demolition and rebuild of some poor quality/low heritage value properties in the Town Centre would improve the stock. Refurbished older/heritage properties would provide a good option for some types offices (some financial, business and legal services etc.).

It is important though that to be successful office development must be associated with the best quality sites in the best locations. This is in terms of connectivity to and within the Town Centre, accessibility to the main road network and the train station, in good quality environments with a range of support and business services.

3.11 Commercial / Other Leisure

A combination of strong public realm improvements with development opportunities provided in the Town Centre can be considered to attract cafes and restaurants and possibly a cinema.

There is already significant health and fitness provision (e.g. new leisure centre) but specialist commercial facilities may be appropriate.

Public Art and commercial art related gallery and other retail would be worth encouraging. The benefits from the proposed relocating of the heritage centre should be maximised by considering a cultural quarter next to the Castle Theatre possibly with quality leisure facilities.

3.12 Other Social and Economic Background Data

Population and Catchment

There is a good theoretical accessible market for shopping and leisure. 2,608,000 people live within 1 hour’s drive of Wellingborough (1,630,000 being of working age).

Between 1991 and 2001 the population of the Borough increased by 6.98% to 72,700. Latest data give the population as 73,100 (Mid-2003 Population Estimates ONS). This compares with an increase of 4% per cent for the East Midlands region as a whole. It is estimated that the current population is about 73,900 of whom approximately two thirds live within the town of Wellingborough, but only 1,376 live in the Town Centre itself.

In the twenty years between 1982 and 2002 the population of Wellingborough grew by 14.2 per cent compared with an increase of 9.5 per cent for the East Midlands region as a whole. The population density of Wellingborough averaged 453 people per square kilometre, compared with an average of 270 for the region and 380 people per square kilometre for England overall (ONS).

Of the 73,100, approximately 47,000 live within the urban area and the rest in the rural areas of the Borough. 20% of the population are 15 years old or under, 62% are of working age between 16 and 64 years old and 18% are 65 years old or over.

National Neighbourhood Statistics – Mid 2005

Forecasts suggest that the population will increase by a further 28.7% to 93,563 between 2001 and 2021, as indicated in the table below, with a higher proportion of males in 2021 compared with 2001.

Population of the Borough (mid 05 estimates) 73,861
Males 36,720
Females 37,141

In common with national trends, life expectancy is increasing, resulting in a growing elderly population.

Total Population 2001 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>%Male</th>
<th>%Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>72700</td>
<td>49.38</td>
<td>50.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>78269</td>
<td>49.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>82949</td>
<td>50.36</td>
<td>49.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>88313</td>
<td>50.76</td>
<td>49.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>93563</td>
<td>51.08</td>
<td>48.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

North Northamptonshire Demographic V2 (2006)
Key Issues:
- The plan needs to provide for its culturally diverse population
- There have been and will continue to be high levels of population growth
- In common with the UK as a whole there will be an increasing elderly population

Age Structure
Projections indicate an increase in the percentage of elderly people from 14.9% in 2001 to 18.5% by 2021, this showing a need to plan for an ageing population. The proportion of the population aged 50 to 64 is also forecast to grow whilst the percentage of young people below the age of 19 is expected to decrease.

Source: Population Projections for North Northamptonshire 2001-2021, Joint Planning Unit

Source: Neighbourhood Statistics- mid 04 estimates
Ethnicity

Wellingborough has a diverse ethnic composition. About 93% of the population is white, whilst 4.5% is Asian or Asian British and 2.5% is Black or Black British.

A majority of the population is Christian (68.2%) whilst a further 3.4% are Hindus and 0.9% are Muslims.

Key Issues

There is significantly growing population that will need more, new facilities in the Town Centre. Forecasts suggest that the population will increase by a further 28.7% to 93,563 between 2001 and 2021, as indicated in the table below, with a higher proportion of males in 2021 compared with 2001.

The population will both increase in age but also have new young families moving in with the major new housing build being planned.

Wellingborough has an ethnically diverse but balanced population, but is still dominated (93%) by a white population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>% of resident population in each group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>68.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.13 Employment, Economic Activity and Skills

Economic Activity

The traditional economic base of Wellingborough has primarily focused on manufacturing, with strong links to the footwear industry. Although restructuring of the economy has seen a decline in these industries and the service base associated with them, manufacturing still plays an important role in the Borough. The distribution sector is also a major part of Wellingborough’s economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Age Population of the Borough</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people – working age</td>
<td>45,364</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males – working age</td>
<td>23,895</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females – working age</td>
<td>21,469</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst over half of the population is of working age, the number and percentage figures are both higher for the male population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>% Pop. Working Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>37.25</td>
<td>35.91</td>
<td>73.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>38.08</td>
<td>35.69</td>
<td>73.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>38.56</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>73.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>38.57</td>
<td>34.76</td>
<td>73.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of the total population of working age generally increases over the period, however there is projected to be a slight decrease between 2016 and 2021. The projected level of labour force participation continually increases over the period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town Centre Unemployment</th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Town Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of unemployment (% working age pop)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6.20% (Swanspool Ward)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ELMA - Percentage of Working Age Population qualified to NVQ3+ and NVQ4+ Level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>NVQ3+ 1997 (%)</th>
<th>NVQ3+ 2002 (%)</th>
<th>NVQ3+ % point change</th>
<th>NVQ4+ 1997 (%)</th>
<th>NVQ4+ 2002 (%)</th>
<th>NVQ4+ % point change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daventry</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Northamptonshire</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Northamptonshire</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northamptonshire</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Estimates of Population Aged 16-60 with Poor Literacy & Numeracy Skills by District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population Aged 16-60</th>
<th>Poor Literacy %</th>
<th>Poor Numeracy %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>30,540</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daventry</td>
<td>40,552</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Northamptonshire</td>
<td>43,540</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>49,099</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>117,881</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Northamptonshire</td>
<td>47,155</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>40,415</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northamptonshire</td>
<td>369,182</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Averages</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Economic Activity Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All people</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active</td>
<td>37,400</td>
<td>83.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In employment</td>
<td>35,900</td>
<td>80.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active</td>
<td>20,500</td>
<td>90.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In employment</td>
<td>19,900</td>
<td>87.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically active</td>
<td>16,800</td>
<td>76.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In employment</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>73.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nomis - annual population survey (Jan 2005-Dec 2005)

## Number of jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001/02</th>
<th>02/03</th>
<th>03/04</th>
<th>04/05</th>
<th>Change 2001/04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>33,800</td>
<td>32,500</td>
<td>31,700</td>
<td>31,900</td>
<td>-1,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual Business Inquiry (ONS via NOMIS)

## Distribution by sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Offices</th>
<th>Factories</th>
<th>Warehouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1127</td>
<td>493</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Northamptonshire Profile April 2006 (Roger Tym, 2003)

## Wellingborough Wages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>North Northants</th>
<th>East Midlands</th>
<th>UK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross Weekly Pay</td>
<td>348*</td>
<td>339*</td>
<td>344*</td>
<td>387*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time workers</td>
<td>385.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male full-time</td>
<td>465.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female full-time</td>
<td>345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly Pay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time workers</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male full-time</td>
<td>9.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female full-time</td>
<td>8.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New Earnings Survey, ONS

*Source: annual earnings survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis (2005)
3.14 Working Age Type and Type of Occupation

Manufacturing, whilst in decline, continues to perform an important role in the local economy, accounting for approximately 22% of the 33000 jobs in Wellingborough. In contrast, about 12.5% of employment in Great Britain is in manufacturing. Wellingborough has strong transport links with over 75% of the country’s population located within about two hours drive time. One consequence of this accessibility is that the logistics sector has developed into a major part of the local economy. The main source of growth in recent years, however, has taken place in public and local services provision. The knowledge-based sector of the local economy now accounts for nearly 11% of total employment. Whilst this figure grew by over 23% between 1998 and 2003 the percentage of the workforce employed in this sector remains below the national average.

The table above identifies the type of occupation carried out by the working age population of the Borough. There has been a significant change between the percentages in each sector since 2001. With the biggest change within the associate, professional and technical sector rising by 6% and also the process plant and machine operative which has risen by 4.9%. There have also been noticeable falls within some sectors with both the administrative and secretarial and the skilled trade occupations falling by approx 4%.

The mix of numbers between each sector from elementary occupations (these require some
experience based training such as courier) followed by ‘associate professional and technical. Both of these fields are significantly higher than both the East Midlands and Great Britain. Wellingborough falls short in most other sectors such as the Managers and senior officials and the professional occupations sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economically active</td>
<td>36,857</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td>37,400</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All unemployed</td>
<td>1676</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed males</td>
<td>1013</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed females</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table above shows the number and percentage of the economically active population who are unemployed. From January 2005 to December 2005 the level of unemployment in the Borough as a percentage of the economically active averaged 3.9%. Figures from 2001 show a lower level of economically active people and a higher level of unemployment compared with 2005.

**Key Issues**

- The Borough has a relatively low income, low skill (and low aspiration) work force.

- The lack of qualifications is a significant factor that could hamper inward investment. Unlike other comparative locations skills levels are not improving.

- Unemployment levels are relatively low and falling.
3.15 Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre

Wellingborough, together with the other growth towns of Kettering & Corby faces competition from a number of higher order centres that encircle North Northamptonshire: Northampton, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Peterborough & Leicester. Within this context, however, the North Northamptonshire Town Centres Roles & Relationships Study (www.nntogether.co.uk) concludes that at present as a centre for retail & leisure “Wellingborough is relatively healthy for a town of its size…” but there is “clear room for improvement in the Town Centre with key deficiencies being a relative lack of high profile retailers, particularly in the clothing sector.” With the planned growth in North Northamptonshire and in many of the nearby centres referred to above it is inevitable that unless floorspace for retail and other Town Centre uses expands considerably, Wellingborough Town Centre will struggle to retain its role as the focus for shopping and leisure activities in the town.

The need to ensure that Wellingborough Town Centre can adapt to changing demands and enhance its attraction in the face of developing competition, is not merely a question of quantitative provision: the quality of the environment is of vital importance. Well designed public spaces and buildings, which are fit for purpose, comfortable, safe, attractive, accessible and durable, are key elements which can improve the health, vitality and economic potential of a Town Centre.

National policy on retail (Planning Policy Statement – PPS6) focuses on a ‘Town Centre first’ approach, requiring local authorities to adopt a sequential approach when allocating sites for retail development. This means preference is to be given to Town Centre sites, followed by edge of centre sites and finally out of centre sites in locations with access by a choice of means of transport. This will ensure that development plans sustain and enhance the viability and vitality of existing centres.

### Retail rankings in North Northamptonshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>143rd</td>
<td>180th</td>
<td>187th</td>
<td>171st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>286th</td>
<td>351st</td>
<td>282nd</td>
<td>360th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>359th</td>
<td>323rd</td>
<td>259th</td>
<td>344th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushden</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>N/a</td>
<td>644th</td>
<td>502nd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Competing Centres**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>20th</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterborough</td>
<td>36th</td>
<td>33rd</td>
<td>42nd</td>
<td>46th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Keynes</td>
<td>62nd</td>
<td>42nd</td>
<td>55th</td>
<td>29th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>65th</td>
<td>59th</td>
<td>37th</td>
<td>43rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>93rd</td>
<td>98th</td>
<td>87th</td>
<td>118th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Northamptonshire Centres Project, May 2004, DTZ Pieda Consulting
The Town Centre is the main retail focus of the Borough. In addition, however, Wellingborough has two out-of-centre shopping developments at Victoria Park (including a supermarket) and Castlefield together with a further supermarket at the junction of Wilby Way and Northampton Road.

**Key Issues/Problems with Vitality and Viability**

- Floorspace and other Town Centre uses will need to expand if Wellingborough Town Centre is to retain its focus for shopping and retail activities in the Borough.

- The Town Centre must provide a high quality environment.

**3.16 Summary of Implications of Economic and Employment Data**

There is likely to be good opportunities in Town Centre for providing new jobs though retail expansion, public and service industry, and some new offices.

There is a good uptake of jobs indicating and unemployment levels suggest space for growth in jobs. There is a large catchment of potential employees, but local work force has a problematical shortage of skills that may limit investment by many potential incoming firms. Skilled workers may initially have to be imported. Needs to be good support for Further/Higher education in the accessible Town Centre.

Whilst population and employee availability suggest jobs growth is possible, this is likely to be in lower skilled work only (e.g. distribution and some manufacturing, and some retailing) unless there is step change in skills attainment and retention. The overall desire for the Borough to attract higher tech investment and higher skilled jobs will need a significant up-skilling of the population and import of already skilled people. A lower availability of 20 to 30 year olds may also emphasise the need over the next 10 years to import already skilled younger people as well as a strong focus on improving and retaining home grown skilled young people to avoid a worsening in the current shortfall. There will therefore be a need for stronger/new/expanded: schools, Sixth Form, Further Education and High Education. A strengthened Tresham Institute in the Town Centre will help ensure good access to local population and schools for such training.

Business services, health and education and logistics look like solid grounds for commercial investment in Wellingborough. Some business financial and service sector forms might well be poached from London to take advantage of the station and railway access. Although Station Island area offers the best locality and land availability for the above (except logistics) they is likely to be good opportunities in the Town Centre for: some financial and business services, general business services (e.g. printing, design, equipment, stationary etc.; as well as education and some health (e.g. skills training, smaller conference/meeting rooms and complimentary health). However the Town Centre is not seen by employers as an attractive location to invest largely due to access and car parking constraints. (Draft Employment Study Sept 2006 Nortof/LSH).
3.17 Social Deprivation

Deprivation – Indices of Deprivation 2004

The Indices of Deprivation takes into account a range of factors to assess areas of deprivation including employment, education and health that were produced to compare different levels. Wellingborough was ranked 168th out of 354 local authorities (LA’s) in 2004. In 2000 Wellingborough ranked 155th in the indices of deprivation, this showing that it has improved over the last four years.

The Borough has 6 of the 50 most deprived wards in Northamptonshire. These wards are predominantly within the urban area, although smaller pockets of deprivation do exist in the rural area where communities encounter difficulties fully participating in the labour market.

Key Issues

Opportunities should be considered to provide benefits in the Town Centre, in terms of improved environment, access to services, housing, health and educational /skills are very important.

Good accessibility and connectivity to the Swanspool ward should be considered.

Opportunities for healthy lifestyles in terms of walking, cycling, public open space, greenspace and leisure facilities would be appropriate.

There is a perception of Wellingborough Town Centre as having a crime problem and being an unsafe place for young people and in the evenings, which is in part borne out by the statistics.

IMD 2004 Education Domain SOAs in top 20% most deprived nationally by District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOA</th>
<th>WARD SOA is part of</th>
<th>EDUCATION SKILLS &amp; TRAINING SCORE</th>
<th>RANK OF EDUCATION SKILLS &amp; TRAINING SCORE (where 1 = most deprived)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E01027318</td>
<td>Croyland</td>
<td>76.29</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>Top 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027341</td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>75.12</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>Top 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027310</td>
<td>Brickhill</td>
<td>74.76</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>Top 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027334</td>
<td>Hemmingwell</td>
<td>68.12</td>
<td>1044</td>
<td>Top 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027339</td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>62.75</td>
<td>1543</td>
<td>Top 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027340</td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>51.92</td>
<td>2838</td>
<td>Top 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027319</td>
<td>Croyland</td>
<td>46.49</td>
<td>3790</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027320</td>
<td>Croyland</td>
<td>45.58</td>
<td>3987</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027331</td>
<td>Hemmingwell</td>
<td>45.34</td>
<td>4023</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027317</td>
<td>Croyland</td>
<td>43.89</td>
<td>4296</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027328</td>
<td>Finedon</td>
<td>42.51</td>
<td>4579</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027342</td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>42.35</td>
<td>4624</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027330</td>
<td>Hemmingwell</td>
<td>39.34</td>
<td>5329</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E01027351</td>
<td>Swanspool</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>5796</td>
<td>Top 20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.18 Crime and disorder

There is a perception of Wellingborough Town Centre as having a crime problem and being an unsafe place for young people and in the evenings that is in part borne out by the statistics. Since 2001-02 crime rates have risen significantly with violence against the person rising by 15%. There has been quite a significant reduction in burglaries from a dwelling and all other recorded crimes have decreased slightly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Rates</th>
<th>Wellingborough</th>
<th>Kettering</th>
<th>Corby</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recorded Crimes</td>
<td>2001/02 05/06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Against the Person</td>
<td>27% 42% 45% 52%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>5.76% 5% 3% 1.70%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary in a Dwelling</td>
<td>22% 15% 14% 13.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft of a Motor Vehicle</td>
<td>19% 12% 10.80% 12.90%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average there is little difference between the crime rates of neighbouring towns however certain aspects of crime are lower in Wellingborough than in other neighbouring towns.

Key Issue:

“Designing crime out” will continue to be an important core criterion in development briefs.
3.19 Transport and spatial connectivity

Approximately 63% of residents of the Borough live and work within the area. There are, however, strong employment links with Northampton, with over 12% of residents working there, whilst approximately 12% of working residents of East Northamptonshire are employed in Wellingborough. The local unemployment rate is currently low and is similar to the national figure of 2.3%. Average weekly earnings at £348 are slightly above those in North Northamptonshire but are about 10% below the national average.

The town is relatively more self-contained that most towns and opportunities to strengthen this with safe, quality cycle and walking routes should be strongly investigated. Opportunities to improve the facilities and ability for buses to move more freely should be strongly encouraged.

As most new housing development will be on the periphery of the town at distances where walking into town will be more difficult; cycling and bus links will be even more important. The percentage of car use, compared to other non-car use, should be strongly encouraged to be reduced.

The population growth is such that new car parks will be needed to avoid loss of trade and jobs to other competing towns. A full parking strategy will be needed related to an overall transport strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Residence</th>
<th>Place of work</th>
<th>Corby</th>
<th>E Northants.</th>
<th>Kettering</th>
<th>Wellingborough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daventry</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Northants.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td></td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Keynes</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntingdonshire</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harborough</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Kesteven</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Hertfordshire</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenland</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel Mode to the Centre (Tym 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Walk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushden Town Centre</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Residents of the Borough and Place of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daventry</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Northants</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Northants</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Keynes</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedford</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel to work by mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total Working</th>
<th>Work from Home</th>
<th>Train, tram, metro etc.</th>
<th>Bus, coach etc.</th>
<th>Scooter, Moped, etc.</th>
<th>Car / Van Driver</th>
<th>Car / Van Passenger</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>All others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>24,749</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Northants</td>
<td>38,395</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>41,282</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>35,050</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 2001 and DfT 2001. * - Not recorded by DfT in this dataset

Around 50 per cent of respondents at each centre had journeyed by car (including those who travelled by taxi); the figure varied from 48 per cent at Corby to 60 per cent at Rushden. The second most popular means of travel at each centre was by foot. A high degree of variation was recorded with regard to proportion of respondents travelling by bus. In Corby 24 percent had journeyed to the Town Centre by bus, compared to just 7 per cent at Rushden.

Key Issues

- Public Transport at existing levels will not provide sufficient accessibility to essential services and facilities
- Need to locate services and facilities where they are accessible by a range of modes of transport.
- The design of development should ensure that walking, cycling and public transport are easily facilitated
3.20 Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wellingborough Health</th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Town Centre</th>
<th>North N'hants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live birth rate per 1000 population</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.6 (Northants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death rate per 1000 population</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.3 (Northants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy (2004)</td>
<td>Male 75.9</td>
<td>Male 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female 81</td>
<td>Female 80.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of all persons with limiting long-term illness</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% people who describe their health as good</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage pregnancy rates per 1000 female pop 15 – 17 (2001)</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ONS 2006; Wellingborough Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008 www.empho.org.uk

Key Issues

- Overall, the indicators of health for people living in Wellingborough are similar to the average when compared with England, the East Midlands and with other similar Authorities.
- There is a relatively low level of deprivation.
- The community indicators give a mixed picture. There are low rates of violent crime and a higher proportion of older people helped to live at home but there is a relatively high proportion of poor quality housing. GCSE attainment is below the England average and there appear to be inequalities in attainment between ethnic groups at the County level.
- Teenage conception rates are high when compared with England and with similar Authorities.
- Lifestyle indicators show low levels of binge drinking but higher than average obesity rates. It is estimated that over 1 in 4 adults smoke and 1 in 4 are obese.
- Life expectancy and premature death rates from major causes are similar to the England average. However, male life expectancy has not improved in line with the England trend.
- The infant death rate is relatively high compared to similar Authorities.
- Most indicators of ill-health suggest below average levels of illness. The indicator for diabetes shows a lower than average proportion of people with diabetes recorded on primary care registers. The indicator for mental health shows a smaller proportion of people than average is recorded as receiving long-term treatment.
3.21 Housing

In 2003 there were 31,711 dwellings, 81.4% of which were owner occupied, 15.6% owned by the Borough Council, 2.6% owned by Registered Social Landlords and 0.4% owned by other public sector organisations (ONS). According to the 2001 Census the average size of households within the Borough was 2.4 people.

Average property prices for April - June 2006 shows average house prices in Wellingborough (£148,339) to be significantly lower than the national average (£191,430).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Type</th>
<th>Wellingborough Price £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached</td>
<td>209537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Detached</td>
<td>140226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terraced</td>
<td>113235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat/Maisonette</td>
<td>90919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Price</td>
<td>148339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northamptonshire Observatory 2006

Housing that offers elderly, disabled and other needing very easy access to the Town Centre facilities will benefit, as will younger people without families and potentially high quality town houses. With so much new housing build expected in and around the town, housing provision in the Town Centre is likely to be driven more by commercial need to subsidise costs such as public realm improvements (e.g. Market Square) and to provide added Town Centre core vitality (24/7 activity) rather than to provide housing numbers.

Affordable housing is an important issue within Wellingborough with the existence of a significant need for such housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>ALL HHOLDS 4 or more people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northants</td>
<td>53874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>4588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daventry</td>
<td>6303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Northants</td>
<td>6467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>6741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>16275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Northants</td>
<td>7297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>6176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The latest Housing Needs Survey (undertaken in 2001 and updated in 2004) indicated the need for approximately 160 affordable houses within the Borough per year

**Key Issues**

Any new Town Centre housing will have to compete with major volume build housing in Stanton Cross and eventually North-West Wellingborough. Housing that attracts buyers to a Town Centre, rather than a more suburban environment, will be more marketable.
### Affordable Housing %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Town Centre</th>
<th>North Northants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of affordable homes as proportion of total dwellings completed (2003/4)</td>
<td>64 of 280</td>
<td>nyk</td>
<td>113 of 1187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Housing Stock Conditions (2005 data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wellingborough</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>unfit dwellings of particular tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total unfit dwellings</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>2.6 (0.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfit Local Authority dwellings</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfit Registered Social Landlord dwellings</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfit owner occupied and private rented dwellings</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>2.6 (0.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Dwelling Stock in Wellingborough

(Source WBC 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Town Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total 2003</td>
<td>31711</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% owned by LA</td>
<td>15.60%</td>
<td>31.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% owned by RSL</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>15.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% other public sector</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>6.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% owner occupied &amp; private rented</td>
<td>81.40%</td>
<td>47.30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accommodation type in Wellingborough

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Town Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detached House</td>
<td>24 = 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-detached</td>
<td>64 = 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrace</td>
<td>290 = 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat/maisonette/apartment</td>
<td>388 = 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared dwelling</td>
<td>46 = 6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.22 Leisure and Sport Patterns

A survey of households (Tym: Town Centres Roles and Relationships 2005) included a question that asked respondents where they spent the most money on certain types of leisure activity, including the cinema, pubs, restaurants, health and fitness, theatres and concerts, and family entertainment leisure uses such as bowling and bingo.

- Cinemas: Overall 44 per cent of households claimed that they do not visit cinemas. The most popular location for visiting the cinema was Kettering Town Centre with an overall market share of 18 per cent, followed by Kettering Venture Retail Park (14 per cent) and Northampton Town Centre (5 per cent). No other location was cited by more than 5 per cent of respondents.

- Pubs: Some 40 per cent of all households questioned do not visit pubs. Kettering Town Centre achieves the best market share among all residents, and it is the principal destination for pub use for residents of Zones 4, 5 and 6. As expected, the nearest town to residents in each survey zone achieves the highest market share for pub uses. Therefore, the main location for Zone 1 is Uppingham District Centre (24 per cent), for Zone 2 it is Oundle District Centre (41 per cent), for Zone 3 it is Corby District Centre (36 per cent), for Zone 9 it is Wellingborough Town Centre (30 per cent), and for Zone 13 it is Thrapston District Centre (18 per cent).

- Restaurants: Only 30 per cent of all households do not visit restaurants. Kettering Town Centre (15 per cent), followed by Wellingborough Town Centre (8 per cent), is the most popular destination for restaurant use. Kettering is the dominant destination for residents in Zones 4, 5 and 6, whilst Wellingborough is the prime location for residents in Zones 8, 9 and 10. No other centre is the preferred destination for more than one zone.

- Health and Fitness: A high percentage of respondents (71 per cent) stated that they do not use health and fitness facilities. Again, for those that do use such facilities, Kettering Town Centre and Wellingborough Town Centre were the principal destinations, with 7 per cent of respondents indicating that the former was their favoured location, and 5 per cent the latter. Kettering is the dominant destination for residents in Zones 5 and 6, whilst Wellingborough recorded the highest response for residents in Zones 8, 9 and 10.

- Theatres/Concert: Around half of all respondents do not visit theatres or concert halls. The two main destinations for theatre/concert visitors are Northampton Town Centre (15 per cent) and London (10 per cent). The only other destination of note is Wellingborough Town Centre which receives a 5 per cent market share.

- Family Entertainment (Bingo/Bowling): Only 3 per cent of residents engage in family entertainment recreation activities, such as bingo and bowling. The dominant destination for family entertainment activities is Kettering Town Centre, achieving 10 per cent of responses, and serving as the prime location for residents in Zones 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Additionally, Wellingborough Town Centre is also an important provider of such facilities, with 7 per cent of households stating that it is their preferred destination for such activities. Wellingborough is the principal destination for the purpose of family entertainment across Zones 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

- Town/District Centre Where Most Money is Spent on Leisure Activities (Tym 2005)

3.23 Adequacy of Current Commercial Leisure Facilities

Respondents in Corby (53 per cent) and Wellingborough (48 per cent) were most likely to consider that commercial leisure facilities were adequate. More than half in Kettering and Rushden considered the leisure provision to be inadequate.

With regard to specific weaknesses in the commercial leisure offer, at each of the centres the highest proportion of respondents cited the lack of a cinema as being a key deficiency. However, this response varied throughout the centres from a high of 74 per cent at Corby to 27 per cent at Kettering. The second most cited
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Zone</th>
<th>Cinemas</th>
<th>Pubs</th>
<th>Restaurants</th>
<th>Health/ Fitness</th>
<th>Theatres/ Concerts</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Uppingham District Centre</td>
<td>Uppingham District Centre</td>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Peterborough City Centre</td>
<td>Oundle District Centre</td>
<td>Oundle District Centre</td>
<td>Oundle District Centre</td>
<td>Oundle District Centre</td>
<td>Peterborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre/ Rothwell Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Market Harborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre/ Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Rushden Town Centre</td>
<td>Rushden Town Centre</td>
<td>Rushden Town Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Bedford City Centre</td>
<td>Raunds District Centre</td>
<td>Bedford City Centre</td>
<td>Bedford City Centre</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Thrapston District Centre</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Thrapston District Centre</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
weakness was considered to be the current provision of cafes and restaurants at Rushden and Wellingborough (14 per cent and 13 per cent respectively), whilst 40 per cent of respondents at Corby stated that the lack of a ten pin bowling facility was a weakness.

### Key Issues

Provision of leisure facilities particularly for young people is perceived as a problem

With regard to specific weaknesses in the commercial leisure offer the lack of a cinema as being a key deficiency. The second most cited weakness was considered to be the current provision of cafes and restaurants.

### 3.24 Roles and Relationships of Wellingborough to other Town Centres in North Northamptonshire

This section refers to the findings from the “North Northamptonshire Town Centres - Roles and Relationships Study” was produced in the July 2005 by consultants Roger Tym and Partners for North Northamptonshire.

#### Main Purpose of Visit to the Town Centres in North Northamptonshire

In three of the four centres (Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough), the principal purpose of visiting was to purchase non-food items, with between 23 per cent and 27 per cent of those surveyed in each of these centres providing such a response. Rushden had the highest incidence of respondents visiting primarily to purchase food (30 per cent), with a further 23 per cent stating that they were visiting mainly to use the town’s services and 0 per cent indicating that their primary purpose was to purchase non-food items. Kettering was the only centre where work was one of the top three responses, with 17 per cent of respondents providing this reason. This compares to 11 per cent of respondents in Corby stating that work was the primary reason for their visit, 10 per cent in Wellingborough and 8 per cent in Rushden.

#### Aspects Most Liked/Disliked About the Centre and Ways to Improve It

There is a degree of consistency across each of the four centres, with the proximity and convenience of Corby (24 per cent), Kettering (31 per cent), Rushden (28 per cent) and Wellingborough (22 per cent) being the most frequently cited most liked feature. The ease or cheapness of parking also featured strongly in responses, with either one of these considerations being the second most mentioned response in Corby, Rushden and Wellingborough. In Kettering, more than one in five (21 per cent) stated that the selection and choice of independent and specialist shops was their most liked feature.

Similarly, the lack of multiple shops was considered the principal failing of each
Main Purpose of Visit to the Centre (Tym 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 3 Responses - % of Pedestrians Questioned in Each Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To buy non-food goods                                            26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To buy non-food goods                                            23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To buy food items                                                30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To buy non-food goods                                            27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aspects Most Liked/Disliked About the Centre (Tym 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Dislikes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top 2 Responses - % of Pedestrians Questioned in Each Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>Near/convenient</td>
<td>Parking is easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>Near/convenient</td>
<td>Selection/choice of independent/specialist shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushden Town Centre</td>
<td>Near/convenient</td>
<td>Parking is cheap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough Town</td>
<td>Near/convenient</td>
<td>Parking is easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

centre. The frequency of this response varied significantly from 57 per cent in Corby and 49 per cent in Wellingborough, to 21 per cent and 24 per cent in Rushden and Kettering, respectively. At each of the centres, the lack of independent and specialist retailers was the second most frequently cited disliked feature of the centre. This response was particularly prevalent in Corby, with 47 per cent of respondents stating that this was their most disliked feature.

Respondents’ suggested improvements for each Town Centre reflect the perceived weaknesses identified above. At each centre the most frequently suggested improvement was for a
better choice of shops. This response rate ranged from 63 per cent in Corby to 31 per cent in Kettering and Rushden. The need to improve the quality of the shopping offer was the second most cited required improvement across each of the centres.

An assessment of the wider area was carried out in the Spring of 2005 as part of the Roger Tym study. This included current patterns of retail and leisure spending based on a comprehensive telephone survey of 2,000 households resident undertaken in April 2005 by NEMS, encompassing the Overall Catchment Area (OCA) of the North Northants Growth Area (NGA).

3.25 Overall Convenience (Food and Groceries) Shopping Patterns

Main Convenience Stores in the OCA

The most dominant store within the OCA for food and grocery shopping is Asda at the Phoenix Centre, Corby, which is the main spend location for the highest proportion of households residing within the OCA (Table 6.7). The store with the second highest market share is Morrisons at Oxford Street, Wellingborough, which is the main spend location for 12 per cent of OCA households. Additional convenience stores which achieve overall market shares of 5 per cent or more are: Morrisons at Lower Street, Kettering (9 per cent); Tesco at Carina Road, Kettering (8 per cent); Tesco at Victoria Park, Wellingborough (8 per cent); and, Sainsbury's at Rockingham Road, Kettering (6 per cent).

Main Convenience Stores Outside of the OCA

The overwhelming majority of households surveyed undertake convenience shopping at stores located within the OCA. Only one store located outside of the OCA featured in the ten convenience stores with the highest market shares, this being the Tesco store at Weston Favell Centre, Northampton, which had a market share of 2 per cent.

3.26 Comparison Shopping Patterns

Main Comparison Centres in the OCA

Kettering is an important centre for all types of comparison goods spending that is undertaken by households within the OCA. It fails to receive the highest market share for only the clothes and shoes sector, although Kettering still performs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market Share</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>% Market Share</th>
<th>Inside or Outside OCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>Asda, Phoenix Centre, Corby</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Highest</td>
<td>Morrisons, Oxford Street, Wellingborough</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Highest</td>
<td>Morrisons, Lower Street, Kettering</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Highest</td>
<td>Tesco, Carina Road, Kettering</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Highest</td>
<td>Tesco, Victoria Park, Wellingborough</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Highest</td>
<td>Sainsbury’s, Rockingham Road, Kettering</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Highest</td>
<td>Sainsbury’s, Northampton Road, Wellingborough</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Highest</td>
<td>Tesco, Corn Lane, Wellingborough</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Highest</td>
<td>Waitrose, Northampton Road, Rushden</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th Highest</td>
<td>Tesco, Weston Favell Centre, Northampton</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food/Grocery Store Where Respondents Spent Most Money on Convenience Goods (Tym 2005)
well in this sector, achieving 15 per cent of the overall market share, compared to Northampton which receives 18 per cent.

With specific regard to the centres situated within the OCA, Kettering Town Centre is dominant across all sectors, as demonstrated by the following:

Kettering Town Centre is the main location for clothes and shoes shopping for 15 per cent of the households in the OCA, achieving a significantly higher market share than the centres of Wellingborough (9 per cent), Corby (6 per cent) and Rushden (3 per cent);

- for furniture, carpets and soft household furnishings, Kettering Town Centre achieves a 9 per cent market share, which is almost double the market share of Wellingborough (5 per cent);

- in relation to DIY and decorating goods, Kettering Town Centre also achieves the highest market share of centres in the OCA (10 per cent). The B&Q store at Meadow Road, Kettering is also an important destination in this regard, achieving an 8 per cent market share; the dominant centre in the OCA for domestic appliances including white goods and electrical items, is Kettering Town Centre, achieving a market share of 12 per cent; and

Kettering Town Centre is also the prime destination for specialist comparison goods shopping in the OCA, achieving an overall market share of 12 per cent. Again, this is a significantly higher market share than that experienced by Wellingborough (6 per cent), Corby (4 per cent) or Rushden (2 per cent).

It is noteworthy that the non-food parts of certain food superstores within the OCA attract a significant comparison goods market share. Of the OCA’s food superstores, the Asda at Corby Phoenix Retail Park achieves the highest market share in relation to four of the five of the comparison goods sectors listed above (the exception being domestic appliances). The Tesco stores at Kettering Retail Park and Wellingborough Victoria Retail Park, and to a lesser extent the Waitrose store at Rushden Crown Retail Park, also achieve significant market shares in relation to certain non-food categories.

The above analysis indicates the emergence of a clear comparison sector hierarchy of centres within the NNGA, as listed below in descending order of importance/rank (we return to the hierarchy issue in subsequent sections):

- Kettering Town Centre – dominant centre;
- Wellingborough and Corby Town Centres – other significant comparison centres;
- Rushden Town Centre – some comparison sector role, but much less significant than other NNGA centres; and
- all other NNGA town and district centres – no significant comparison sector role.

Main Comparison Centres Outside of the OCA

The significant comparison sector role of the major centres surrounding, but outside of, the OCA is demonstrated by the fact that they achieve the highest comparison goods market shares of centres outside of the OCA. The single most popular destination outside the OCA varies across the different survey zones; below, we highlight the major centres outside of the OCA that achieve a ‘composite’ comparison goods market share of 1.5 per cent or greater:

- Northampton Town Centre: 15.4 per cent;
- Milton Keynes City Centre: 5.8 per cent;
- Peterborough City Centre: 4.1 per cent;
- Northampton Riverside Retail Park: 3.5 per cent;
- Leicester City Centre: 3.0 per cent; and
- Bedford City Centre: 1.6 per cent.

The centres outside the OCA that achieved the highest overall market shares for each individual category of comparison retailing are outlined below:

- Northampton Town Centre is the prime destination outside the OCA for clothes and shoes shopping for 18 per cent of households in the survey area, ahead of Milton Keynes City Centre and Peterborough City Centre which have market shares of 9 per cent and 5 per cent respectively;

- Northampton Town Centre also achieves the
highest market share of centres outside the OCA for furniture, carpets and soft household furnishings (6 per cent);

- few destinations outside the OCA secured a high percentage of the comparison spend for DIY and decorating goods. Of note are Northampton Town Centre, Wellingborough Castlefields Retail Park and Wellingborough Victoria Retail Park, with market shares of 4 per cent, 3 per cent and 3 per cent respectively;

- Northampton Town Centre is also the main spend location outside the OCA for households shopping for domestic appliances, achieving an overall market share of 12 per cent; and

- Northampton Town Centre is the principal location for specialist comparison goods shopping for 7 per cent of households in the OCA, ahead of purchases made via the internet (4 per cent) and at Milton Keynes City Centre (3 per cent).

### 3.27 Overall Key Issues Emerging from all Consultation and Socio-Economic Studies

There is a clear desire to see the Town Centre change significantly, keeping the best of the old, but leaving behind much of the worst in 1960s-70’s architecture, and bringing in significant new retail as well as community and leisure facilities.

The issue of quality is a key issue, with major investment seen needed to bring a step change in the Town Centre, along with an enhanced sense of place, identity built in local distinctiveness, in part generated by a considerably improved quality of public realm, particularly the market square and gateways to the town and Town Centre. The increase in retail quality and quantity covers both comparison goods and specialist shops, which a clear desire for and market for niche retailing perhaps adding to the USP for the town as a market town of some quality.

There is a clear desire to see an increase and improvement in community facilities including: commercial leisure, youth facilities, a new library, a cinema and other sport and recreation opportunities. Having a family and youth friendly 24/7 economy was also seen as attractive. The development of the new leisure centre on Canon Street will though go some way to address the sports facility needs.

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Highest</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Kettering Town Centre</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Northampton Town Centre</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Highest</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>B&amp;Q, Meadow Road, Kettering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Highest</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Milton Keynes City Centre</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Corby Town Centre</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Wellingborough Town Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The issues of safety, good transport, traffic reduction, improved access and adequate parking were prevalent. A ring of car parks on the access alignments would be needed.

Several major sites were seen by most as appropriate for redevelopment, and generally as long as the core historic buildings, fabric and related road structure was protected, there was good flexibility for significant improvement. Key development areas were seen as being: parts of the Market Square, the Tresham Site, the garage site (off St John’s Street); backs of Cambridge St; Midland Road and its backland; High Street and the Swansgate.

In terms of work force although the catchment generates sufficient numbers for expansion, there is a very significant problem with a shortage of skills and the role of the Tresham Further Education facility is seen as critical, long with its retention ion the Town Centre (although not necessarily right in the core).

There are significant pockets of social deprivation and related health issues with the opportunity for the regeneration of the Town Centre to address these being seen as high priority for the Council (e.g. Swanspool ward).

There is a very positive level of support for considered, but major, change, which is as well because the physical and transport challenges of increasing the retail offer by the suggested 21,000sqm up to 2021 and then by a further 20,000+ sq.m up to 2031 will be significant.