



West Northamptonshire Development Corporation People and Places Strategy

New homes, new jobs, new investment



Revision Schedule

People & Places Strategy October 2008

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Executive summary

Introduction

In February 2008, CACI and Scott Wilson were commissioned by West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) to produce a People and Places Strategy for West Northamptonshire.

The Strategy is intended to help WNDC attract the target markets necessary to achieve the following vision:

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

The Strategy enables WNDC to identify:

- The socio-demographic groups that West Northamptonshire needs to attract and retain to achieve WNDC’s vision;
- Where these groups will come from;
- The type of market housing that will attract them and their infrastructure requirements; and,
- The subsequent actions that WNDC and its partners need to take.

The brief for the Strategy asked CACI and Scott Wilson to focus on market housing, as other non-market housing has been dealt with in other studies. CACI’s research follows a ‘market model’ for delivering housing growth. Hence it focuses on the delivery of market housing in the first instance, which in turn can also help deliver affordable housing through Section 106 agreements.

Ambitions for Growth

West Northamptonshire forms part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area and is to experience significant growth over the next two decades. It is proposed that 62,125 new homes will be delivered in West Northamptonshire between 2001 and 2026, with 37,200 new jobs to be provided up to 2021. However, recent evidence, provided through the Strategic Northamptonshire Economic Action Plan (SNEAP) suggests that this employment target could increase to 53,000.

In delivering this growth, WNSDC faces a number of challenges if it is to achieve its vision for the area:

- Meeting the numeric housing and employment targets, as well as creating balanced, mixed communities.
- Revitalising town centres: raising the profile of Northampton, and improving and expanding the centres of Daventry and Towcester to support future growth.
- Linking growth with quality, sustainability and infrastructure: ensuring that future development is attractive and sustainable over the long term.

Achieving the vision: population forecasting

We have established future socio-demographic profiles for each urban area through a process of comparing existing household profiles against those of selected benchmark towns across the UK. This has allowed us to map future profiles onto projected net increases in population, including adjustments to take into account the ageing population, related to the projected growth in households based upon the current applications held by WNSDC.

Achieving the vision: attracting target groups

The research follows the 'market model' for delivering housing growth and therefore focuses on the more affluent household groups. Market housing can help to deliver affordable housing through Section 106 agreements and also provide a means to attract the future employees that will help to increase the skills profile of the area.

The Strategy sets out in detail the housing and neighbourhood characteristics sought by the selected target groups, which range from older and more family-oriented groups to younger people who are just starting out in their careers. Key issues addressed in the research include preferred housing locations and types; attitudes to new build; travel; facilities and services; and the local environment.

The research highlighted the varying lifestyles sought by different target groups: whilst younger groups seek urban living lifestyles, with an emphasis on nearby employment opportunities and a vibrant mix of activities, older and more family oriented groups tend to seek more suburban and rural locations, with a greater emphasis on local neighbourhood level services.

The range of development opportunities available in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester offers significant opportunities to meet these varying preferences. However, this research has underlined a number of areas where intervention will be required to ensure that the future growth of the area also delivers the characteristics of place sought by the target groups. These include:

- A strategic overview of growth delivery is needed in order to ensure that infrastructure and appropriate land uses can be delivered at the right times to attract particular target groups;

- Delivering a range of housing types to meet varying preferences;
- Delivering employment opportunities alongside homes, a key priority for many target groups;
- Neighbourhood-level characteristics that are essential to prospective target groups, include safety, community facilities, parks and open spaces, town centre improvements and culture, and strategic transport links;
- Housing characteristics: key issues include an overwhelming demand for gardens amongst most target groups; concerns about the quality of new build, including space and sound insulation standards.

The successful implementation and enforcement of the required standards is essential in order to give people confidence in the quality of build being produced.

The Strategy also sets out a number of area-specific interventions that are required for each of the three urban areas:

- To turn Northampton into a more vibrant urban area that attracts investment and jobs, as well as attracting a range of target groups to live, work and for leisure;
- To continue to attract more family-oriented groups to Daventry, to address social polarisation issues, and to deliver appropriate services, facilities and infrastructure to support an increased population; and,
- To help Towcester develop as its population nearly doubles, ensuring that it retains its attractiveness, including its appeal to older and more prosperous target groups.

Framework for delivering growth and Action Plan

The Strategy provides a framework of potential areas where WNDC's activities could help to address the issues raised in the research, and introduces a range of related actions. These are brought together in the form of an Action Plan, structured by area of activity. The Strategy sets out a rationale for each action, responsible partners, dependencies, monitoring arrangements and timescales for delivery.

Delivery of Growth

Three overarching Actions are provided to influence the strategic approach taken to growth delivery by WNDC as a whole. They address the 'big picture' in terms of how development could be managed to ensure the early delivery of growth (and early attraction of family-oriented target groups) where viable, and how early infrastructure provision would enable the attraction of younger target groups in town centre locations further into the future. These actions are:

- Early delivery of major urban extensions in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester;
- Continued early delivery of town centre public realm improvements; and,

- Early delivery of town centre/ employment uses (office space, retail, leisure, cultural and other civic uses) in all three urban areas.

Development Control Recommendations

The Development Control recommendations provide WNSDC's Development Control planners with immediate information to inform their approach to development proposals and negotiations with developers. These actions could also be incorporated into the planning policy framework for West Northamptonshire, in order to ensure the consistent delivery of appropriate development standards.

Development Control Recommendations for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

The Development Control recommendations for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester relate to those housing and neighbourhood qualities that were sought by all target groups, and would add value to all developments across West Northamptonshire.

- Continue to require Building for Life minimum silver standard for all new developments, and ensure that non-residential buildings (particularly local centre and town centre buildings) also achieve high urban design standards.
- Implement English Partnerships minimum room space standards for new developments, and high Code for Sustainable Homes sound insulation standards.
- Design in gardens for all housing.
- Limit flat developments to 4-storeys where possible.
- Deliver sufficient open spaces to meet needs in all new developments, in accordance with standards set out in local open space studies.
- Implement Building for Life public realm questions (10 and 12), and implement Secured by Design standards for all new developments.
- Require provision of cycle routes and appropriate, secure cycle storage within all new developments.
- Seek to limit parking to set maximum standards.
- In carrying out development control functions for involving the loss of employment land, assess the need to retain an employment use in the area.
- Seek incorporation of wireless broadband, space for home working and a (where appropriate) postal receipt services and flexible work space as part of community hubs.

Development Control Recommendations for Northampton

The Development Control Recommendations for Northampton relate to those area specific development standards and other development control implementation measures that would

contribute to attracting the appropriate target groups to the town. The standards relate both to the approach to specific developments, and to the improvement of the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre, a crucial element to attracting younger target groups.

- Northampton Housing Mix: detached and semi detached houses (2-5 bedrooms), in particular in urban extensions; and terraced houses and flats, particularly in existing urban areas.
- Deliver employment uses in central Northampton.
- Implement proposals for town centre regeneration proposals, including for Northampton Cultural Quarter and Waterfront, as set out in the Northampton Central Area Design, Development and Movement Framework and the Retail Strategy for Northampton Town Centre.
- Incorporate vertical mixed uses into developments in central Northampton.

Development Control Recommendations for Daventry

The Development Control Recommendations for Daventry relate to the approach to the housing mix in Daventry, and the implementation of existing proposals for facilities and services in the town.

- Housing Mix: detached and semi detached houses (2-4 bedrooms), in particular in urban extensions; and terraced houses and flats, particularly in existing urban areas.
- Take forward existing proposals for: education/ college facilities; sustainable construction centre; and a new central library/ cultural facility.

Development Control Recommendations for Towcester

These Development Control Recommendations address the approach to developments within Towcester, given the particular target groups being sought in the town, in particular the need to create a village feel to new development in the town.

- Deliver a range of housing types, including detached and semi detached houses of 4 bedrooms+, along with smaller properties including flats and terraces.
- Towcester urban extension: create a village character through masterplanning, deliver village related facilities (e.g. village hall, village pub), and ensure that the development is well integrated with the existing settlement.
- Deliver high quality mixed use development at Moat Lane, according to the principles set out in the South Northamptonshire Moat Lane SPD.

Development Control Recommendations: Implementation and Enforcement across Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

The Implementation and Enforcement of Development Control Recommendations relate specifically to the need to ensure that development proposals are properly implemented. This is

likely to require cross-working between WNDC development control officers and enforcement officers in Northampton Borough and Daventry and South Northamptonshire District Councils.

- Ensure that planning standards and conditions are enforced post-completion of developments.
- Ensure community assets (e.g. public spaces and roads) are properly maintained and ownership and responsibilities clearly set out.

Infrastructure Delivery Recommendations

The Infrastructure Delivery Recommendations are intended to inform the approach by WNDC and its partners in the delivery of infrastructure for the area.

- Integrate best practice guidance on public realm into future public realm investment schemes (and design coding document), continue to deliver public realm improvements already proposed for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester, and examine opportunities to deliver additional public realm improvements, including through Public Realm Phase 2.
- Improve bus services: deliver bus services (minimum 15-20 minute service) between the centres of all three urban areas and investigate opportunities to improve bus services including through considering 10-minute frequency routes; ensure the delivery of high quality frequent bus services (10 minute service) linking new urban extensions with town centres and Northampton train station.
- Deliver improvements to strategic cycle routes, ensure excellent public transport and cycle links from urban extensions to secondary schools, and deliver improved pedestrian and cycle links to the countryside, through infrastructure funding and as an integral part of masterplanning for new developments.
- Continue to engage partners to deliver improvements to Northampton Station and to strategic (London, Midlands) and local rail links.
- Investigate, as a priority, opportunities to provide leisure uses and swimming pools in the three urban areas, and ensure adequate provision of health facilities in consultation with the relevant PCTs.

Image and Marketing Recommendations

The Image and Marketing Actions are intended to inform the WNDC approach to their marketing and inward investment function, with regard to the 'people and places' theme of this report.

- Establish two distinct customer marketing functions; Customer Acquisition & Customer Loyalty.
- Strengthen Inward Investment function, to co-ordinate with customer marketing.
- Prioritise direct customer marketing activity to affluent groups.

- Explore opportunities to attract back customers with previous connection with West Northamptonshire.
- Build image and brand to instil a sense of pride for West Northamptonshire amongst all residents.
- Develop a customer communications strategy that targets customers by both their socio-demographic grouping and the target residential location (i.e. Northampton, Daventry, Towcester), through image building and place making activity.
- Co-ordinate the physical development/ infrastructure activity in Northampton Town Centre with marketing activity, through an understanding of the customer types who will most benefit/ appreciate each relevant physical improvement and new use. This should include involvement in the organisation of events hosted in the centre.

Partnership Working Recommendations

Partnership Working Recommendations are intended to inform the work of a range of WNDC areas of activity: most notably, town planning, transport and infrastructure planning and delivery. Policy development and partnership working form a crucial umbrella for the implementation of WNDC activities.

A key finding of this Strategy relates to the importance of working with partnership authorities to ensure the delivery of services and infrastructure needed to support growth and to ensure that WNDC objectives and proposals are integrated into the wider policy framework for the area. Key Actions include:

- Produce an educational and childcare needs study in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council;
- Work with the relevant local authorities to ensure the provision of adequate employment land allocations, to accommodate the employment uses needed to attract target groups;
- Work with partners to ensure a strategic focus on delivery of employment uses in central Northampton in future planning policy production;
- Formalise development proposals in a number of areas, including producing a mixed use brief for Northampton Waterfront, a strategy linking Northampton University with future growth of the area and formalising proposals for an Education Quarter in Daventry;
- Work with partners in Northampton to produce a Safer Streets Strategy, and to deliver renewal of existing housing stock;
- Integrate proposed Development Control and Infrastructure Delivery Actions into WNDC's Design Coding, Planning Standards and Infrastructure Delivery Framework documents;

- To work with partners to integrate WNDC Planning Standards, Design Coding and Infrastructure Delivery Framework proposals into the West Northamptonshire Local Development Framework and into any future Northamptonshire County Council Local Transport Plan;
- To work with Daventry District Council to develop a strong town centre growth strategy for Daventry; and,
- To work with South Northamptonshire District Council to develop a stronger cultural and tourist offer in Towcester.

Moving Forward

This Strategy has set out a range of indicative timescales for the delivery of these actions. These actions relate to WNDC's functions as a development control authority, as a key mechanism for infrastructure delivery (including as a source of funding), and as a focus for partnership working, a key factor in the delivery of growth.

It is hoped that these Actions will enable the Development Corporation to deliver housing, regeneration and infrastructure that reflects the preferences of the target groups needed to fulfil its vision, and that will reflect the principles of the sustainable communities agenda.

First Steps for Delivery Key Actions	Timescale			
	0-2	2-5	5-10	10-15
Action DG1: Early delivery of major urban extensions				
Action DG2: Continue early delivery of town centre public realm improvements				
Action DG3: Early delivery of town centre uses (retail, commercial and civic uses) in all three urban areas				
Actions PP1-PP9*: Strategy development work with key partners				
*Includes Action PP3: Work with the relevant local authorities to ensure the provision of adequate employment and retail land allocations to accommodate the employment uses needed to attract target groups				
PP10. Integrate proposed Development Control and Infrastructure Delivery Actions into WNDC's Design Coding, Planning Standards and Infrastructure Delivery Framework documents				
PP11. Integrate WNDC Planning Standards, Design Coding and Infrastructure Delivery Framework proposals into the West Northamptonshire Local Development Framework				
Action PP12: Work with Northamptonshire County Council to integrate infrastructure proposals into Local Transport Plan				

The Policy Influencing and Partnership Working Actions set out in Section 6.2 (and in more detail Annex 1) suggest the production of a range of new studies that could contribute to creating places that attract target groups and inform the future growth of the study area.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Introduction

In February 2008, CACI and Scott Wilson were commissioned by West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) to produce a People and Places Strategy for West Northamptonshire.

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The Strategy enables WNDC to identify:

- The socio-demographic groups that West Northamptonshire needs to attract and retain to achieve WNDC’s vision;
- Where these groups will come from;
- The type of market housing that will attract them and the type of infrastructure needed; and,
- The subsequent actions that WNDC and its partners need to take.

The brief for the Strategy asked CACI and Scott Wilson to focus on market housing, as other non-market housing has been dealt with in other studies. CACI’s research follows a ‘market model’ for delivering housing growth. Hence it focuses on the delivery of market housing in the first instance, which in turn can also help deliver affordable housing through Section 106 agreements.

1.2 Policy Context

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation was set up in 2005 in order to lead growth and regeneration in the three urban development areas of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester.

The Development Corporation has been given the following powers to enable it to deliver growth and its vision for the area:

- Development control powers, including all applications for new homes within Northampton, Daventry and Towcester;
- Land assembly powers;
- Funding available to deliver infrastructure; and,
- Capacity building and partnership working to help stakeholders in the delivery of growth.

In June 2007 the WNSDC, together with North Northants Development Company (NNDC), East Midlands Development Agency (emda), NEL, and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), commissioned the Strategic Northamptonshire Economic Action Plan (SNEAP)

SNEAP sets out a jobs trajectory for North and West Northamptonshire and identifies the necessary interventions, infrastructure and other resources required to meet the trajectory. The Housing & Population Strategy is aligned to the delivery of this economic vision.

There is also a range of other existing and planned research material and policy work that forms the context for the strategy, including:

- National Planning Policy
- The Milton Keynes South Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy;
- The West Northamptonshire Local Development Framework;
- Evidence base work in support of the local development framework, including, for example, the West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the recently adopted Retail Strategy for Northampton Town Centre; and,
- Other research and policy work, including transport infrastructure delivery.

This People and Places Strategy builds on this existing evidence base to provide housing delivery recommendations and actions needed to attract target demographic groups to the area. These target groups are intended to contribute to WNSDC's vision for the area and the objectives of SNEAP. It also takes into account wider sustainable communities objectives, which are needed to create vibrant and successful places.

This Strategy sits as an umbrella above WNSDC's Planning Principles & Design Codes documents. It forms part of an evidence base that WNSDC will be able to use in influencing developers as well as local authorities, service providers and strategies of plan-making bodies, such as the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit,

1.3 Delivering the Strategy

The study has been carried out in four key stages:

1. POPULATION MAPPING

This stage involved:

- An analysis of existing plans and policies;
- Mapping of the current housing profile in Northampton Daventry and Towcester; and,
- Projection of the future population of the three growth towns.

2. DELIVERING THE VISION

The findings from Stage 1 then allowed the team to assess the additional people and skills needed to achieve the vision for the area, which target demographic groups could be attracted to redress this, and the areas where WNDC activities could begin to attract these groups. This stage therefore involved:

- Defining target groups and advising on policy intervention;
- Market research to inform the housing and lifestyle-related factors that would attract the market groups to move into and stay in West Northamptonshire; and,
- A comparison of trend based data against WNDC objectives and existing plans and policies.

3. ANALYSIS

The analysis of the research carried out in stages 1 and 2 of the study enabled the team to analyse the housing related factors that would enable WNDC to pursue its long term vision for West Northamptonshire:

- Image and marketing related issues involved in attracting target groups;
- Types of housing needed to support WNDC projected population; and,
- General place making issues, including housing quality, mix and infrastructure needed to attract 'target markets' to support the delivery of the WNDC vision.

4. PRODUCTION OF FINAL REPORT

1.4 The Structure of this report

This Strategy is divided into the following sections:

- Section 2 Socio Economic and Spatial Context: sets out the regional, sub regional context in terms of current demographic trends and proposals for growth.
- Section 3 Ambitions for Growth: builds on Section 2 by assessing the aspirations for the development of West Northamptonshire. It sets out the known challenges faced in achieving the vision for the area in terms of housing and employment delivery, revitalising town centres and linking growth with quality, sustainability and infrastructure.
- Section 4 Achieving the Vision: sets out information regarding the target groups that should be attracted to West Northamptonshire in order to achieve the WNDC vision, and economic objectives for the area. This Section also sets out the key housing and neighbourhood preferences of those target groups.
- Section 5 Framework for Delivering Growth: sets out a framework for the achievement of these housing and neighbourhood characteristics, as well as image and marketing activities to attract these groups.
- Section 6 Action Plan: summarises the proposed WNDC Actions, structured by area of activity, based on the framework of activities set out in the previous section. A full Action Plan is provided in Annex 1, which provides more detailed information for each action, including partners involved, dependencies, and timescales for delivery.

Annexes

The Strategy contains eight Annexes, which set out detailed information in support of the contents of the chapters themselves (please see the Contents page for a list of Annexes provided as part of the Strategy).

Technical Appendices

The following Technical Appendices, which are free standing (separate from the Strategy itself) provide additional information collated during the research:

- Technical Appendix 1 Baseline - Population Mapping
- Technical Appendix 2 Forecasts - Target Groups
- Technical Appendix 3 Consumer Research - Needs Analysis

2 Population and Housing Characteristics of West Northamptonshire

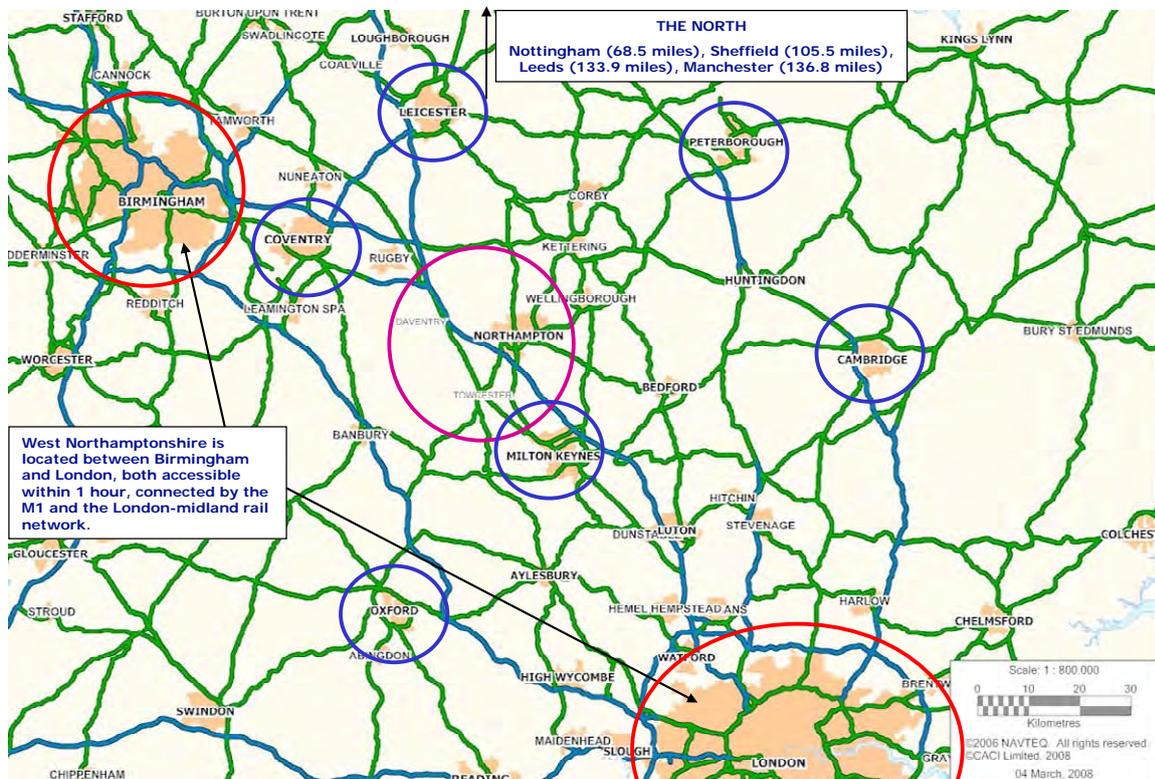
2.1 Introducing West Northamptonshire

This section addresses the context of West Northamptonshire in terms of location, and key current demographic and housing-related characteristics. More detailed analyses of the existing housing and population context are provided in Annex 2 of this Strategy.

Regional Context

West Northamptonshire forms part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area, and is formed by Daventry District, Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire. It is situated in the centre of England, just north of Milton Keynes, with Oxford located to the south-west, London to the south-east, Cambridge to the east, Birmingham to the west and Leicester and Nottingham to the north. Main rail access is from Northampton, providing direct links between Birmingham and London. The area is also served by the M1 motorway, providing particularly strong links between Birmingham, Leicester, Milton Keynes and London.

Figure 2.1 Location Map of West Northamptonshire – Regional Context



Scope of Analysis

The study area for the purposes of this Strategy includes the urban areas of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester. The report establishes key housing and population characteristics for each of the towns, including population, housing types; access to employment and strategic transport; migration patterns; and profiling against the ACORN lifestyle classifications, which are used in the Strategy to assess the likely household groups that WNDC will need to attract to the area in order to achieve its Vision.

Population and Housing

West Northamptonshire comprises Northampton Borough and Daventry and South Northamptonshire districts. There are four main urban settlements in the area: Daventry, Northampton, Towcester and Brackley. With the exception of Brackley these urban settlements are the focus of WNDC activity for delivering growth.

Northampton is by far the largest in population terms, with 195,448 residents: 54 per cent of West Northamptonshire's total population of 364,729. It should be noted that the defined urban area of Northampton is larger than the defined borough boundary, spreading into neighbouring Daventry and South Northamptonshire.

Daventry Borough has a population of 79,266, of which 25,210 (32%) reside in the Daventry Urban Area. South Northamptonshire is by far the most rural in nature, with only 9,030 (10%) of its 90,015 residents living in the urban area of Towcester. Brackley is in fact larger than Towcester, with 14,538 residents.

Table 2.1 Summary Population Data for West Northamptonshire

Area Name	Total population	Total Households	Worker population	Detach-ed	Semi-detached	Terr-aced	Flats and maisonettes
Daventry (district)	79,226	32,796	31,233	43.0%	31.8%	19.0%	5.7%
Northampton (borough)	195,448	85,761	111,238	22.5%	29.2%	34.4%	13.6%
South Northampton shire (district)	90,015	36,581	28,385	43.0%	36.4%	15.1%	4.9%
Northampton urban area	198,345	86,958	110,303	22.6%	29.5%	34.1%	13.5%
Daventry urban area	25,210	10,720	12,086	27.3%	30.4%	32.2%	9.8%
Towcester urban area	9,039	3,636	2,999	34.9%	37.0%	18.2%	9.6%

Source – CACI's Population and Household estimates for 2007

Northampton has the highest density housing profile in the study area, with a relatively low proportion of detached homes (22.6%) and a greater proportion of terraces (34.1%) and flats and maisonettes (13.5%). Daventry's housing stock profile is similar to Northampton, but with more detached homes and less flats (27.3% and 9.8% respectively). Towcester has the lowest density profile, the highest proportion of detached homes 34.9%, and fewer terraced homes (18.2%) and flats and maisonettes (9.6%).

In terms of employment, Northampton Borough is the focus for economic activity in the area, containing 111,238 (65%) of West Northamptonshire's 170,856 working population. However, its proximity to Milton Keynes means that residents in West Northamptonshire enjoy access to this important employment hub. The area also enjoys accessibility to employment at Daventry, Rugby, Coventry, Wellingborough and Kettering.

Access to Employment

Accessibility to employment varies across West Northamptonshire, with the highest level of accessibility available in Towcester: its location between Northampton and Milton Keynes enables accessibility to both within 30 minutes, as well as to Daventry within 30 minutes.

Northampton has the next best accessibility to employment, within 30 minutes of, Daventry and Wellingborough, as well as job opportunities within Northampton itself. Rugby, Kettering and Milton Keynes are accessible within 45 minutes. Daventry is third place in terms of accessibility to employment. Rugby and Northampton are within 30 minutes, and its location on the western side of the M1 allows travel to Coventry and Leamington Spa within 45 minutes.

There are only two rail stations in West Northamptonshire; at Long Buckby and the main station in Northampton, the only station in the area to provide direct services to London (1 hour). This creates an emphasis on greater long-distance commuting opportunities to London from Northampton. With no rail station, Daventry relies on road-based transport for short and long distance commuting.

Inward Migration (from within the UK)

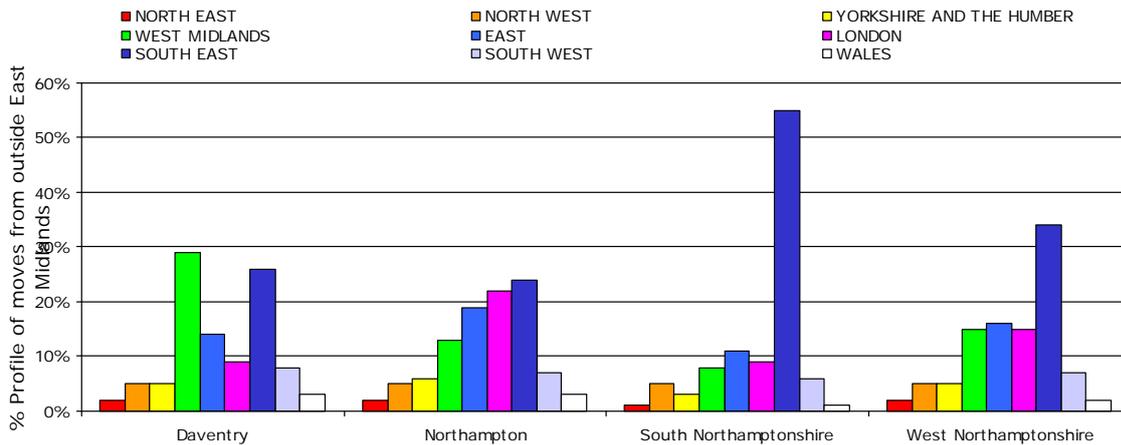
Compared with the current profile of West Northamptonshire, in-migrants are biased towards younger groups; with the age group 25-44 dominating (41% of migrant population). Of the three growth areas, Northampton's migrant profile is the youngest – with 27.5% of migrants aged 16-24.

This means that the focus for attracting new people to West Northamptonshire should accordingly be biased towards attracting younger demographic groupings. These people are at a life stage where they are most mobile, and can be retained in the area provided that they are able to settle, with the right job and housing opportunities.

Table 2.2 demonstrates that migrants moving into Northampton and South Northamptonshire are the most likely to have come from outside the East Midlands. Overall, most migrants to Northampton are moving from the South East, followed by London, the East of England, and the

West Midlands. It is important to note the strong link between Northampton and London, due in part to the rail connection, and to higher levels of employment opportunities in the capital.

Table 2.2 Inward Migrations from outside the East Midlands



Due to its location and historical links with Birmingham, Daventry has a predominance of migration from the West Midlands. Daventry and Northampton therefore look in different slightly different directions for economic growth, although both equally look towards the South East region.

This means that if equivalent strong economic growth occurs in Northampton in the future, the links with South East can expect to become stronger. However, considering the increases in migration from the West Midlands (and its stronger connection with Daventry) and the stronger links Northampton has to the East of England, Northampton also has a strong opportunity to attract talent from the east and the west, forming an economic bridge between Birmingham and Cambridge. It also has the potential to forge a stronger east-west linkage between Daventry and Northampton, removing the perceived barrier of the M1 for east-west interchange.

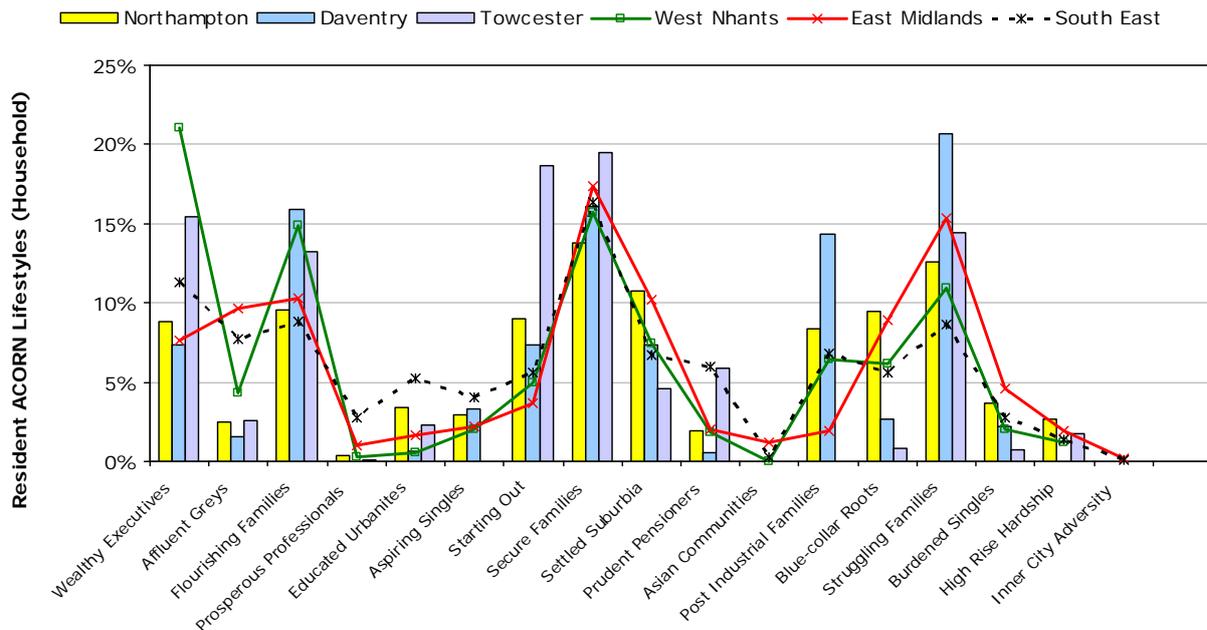
2.2 Demographic Profiling

A combination of accessibility to jobs, nature of location (i.e. rural, semi-rural, town, city, suburbs etc), current social-mix and availability of housing stock all influence the demand for housing from different socio-demographic groups for a given area.

Through understanding the socio-demographic behind the demand for housing, we are able to provide an insight into a whole range of related aspects of needs/ demands. This includes demand for new housing and services, and, particularly useful for maximising values on market housing, what will attract groups to a market area. Analysis of socio-demographic profiles also provides a basis for understanding what it means to have a balanced community for any particular market area.

By employing our ACORN lifestyle classification tool, we have been able to assess the socio-demographic mix within West Northamptonshire, and in particular the differences in profile between the three urban areas targeted for growth.

Table 2.3 Socio-Demographic Mix of West Northamptonshire



West Northamptonshire has a comparatively high level of Wealthy Executives and Flourishing Families, but a lower level of Prosperous Professionals and Educated Urbanites. There are lower levels of Post-Industrial Families, and higher levels of Struggling Families.

Comparisons with benchmark towns (Swindon, Basingstoke, The Medway towns, Ipswich, Gloucester and Telford) indicate that Northampton has a healthy demand for family housing, with above average demand from Wealthy Executives when compared against current benchmark data, and a good market for Flourishing Families. However, in the middle ground, the area has less Secure Families and more Settled Suburbia, an older grouping compared with Secure Families, with fewer children. This reflects the lower levels of localised employment opportunities in Northampton, meaning the market for mass-market family housing is currently weaker.

Daventry has the highest proportion of families, with higher levels in the Flourishing Families, Post Industrial and Struggling Families groups. Compared to current benchmark data (Witham, Sudbury, Stowmarket, Evesham, and Higham Ferrers/ Rushden), Daventry also has a high level of Wealthy Executives, associated with good access to the strategic road network. The results therefore highlight strong demand from both the most affluent and most deprived families, whilst being weak in the middle-market.

Towcester’s current size of 3,600 homes means that its existing profile is narrower than larger urban areas, and that its future demographic make-up will be most heavily influenced by the type

of new housing stock developed there. The town has a comparatively high proportion of Wealthy Executives, Flourishing Families and Starting Out groups. The higher level of Wealthy Executives in Towcester reflects its rural setting, where larger properties in convivial locations can be sought. However, compared to current benchmark towns (Wootton Bassett, Newport (Telford and Wrekin), Mountsorrel, Alcester, Wallingford and Paddock Wood), Towcester has very high levels of Starting Out groups, linked to the high level of accessibility to employment in both Northampton and Milton Keynes.

3 Ambitions for Growth

3.1 Purpose and overview

This Section summarises the existing policy context for West Northamptonshire, in particular addressing the growth agenda for the area, and the issues and challenges that arise from large-scale future development. It is important that this Strategy takes account of the wider policy context, but it is also hoped that it can be used to inform future policy development in West Northamptonshire, in order to enable WNDC and its partners to achieve the sustainable growth and regeneration sought.

3.2 Growth Targets

The Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM, 2003) introduced the Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) Growth Area as one of five areas capable of providing major housing growth to address pressing housing needs. It stated that the MKSM Growth Area has the potential deliver up to 300,000 jobs and 370,000 homes by 2031, and proposed to concentrate this growth in five major urban areas: Milton Keynes; Luton/ Dunstable/ Houghton Regis; Bedford; Northampton; and Wellingborough/ Kettering/ Corby.

The draft East Midlands Regional Plan Panel Report (East Midlands Plan Examination Panel November 2007) allocates significant growth to Northamptonshire, proposing that 128,200 new homes will be delivered in the county from 2001 to 2026. In order to drive forward this considerable growth, Development Corporations have been set up for both West Northamptonshire, and for North Northamptonshire.

The Panel Report proposes that 62,125 new homes will be delivered in West Northamptonshire between 2001 and 2026. Of these:

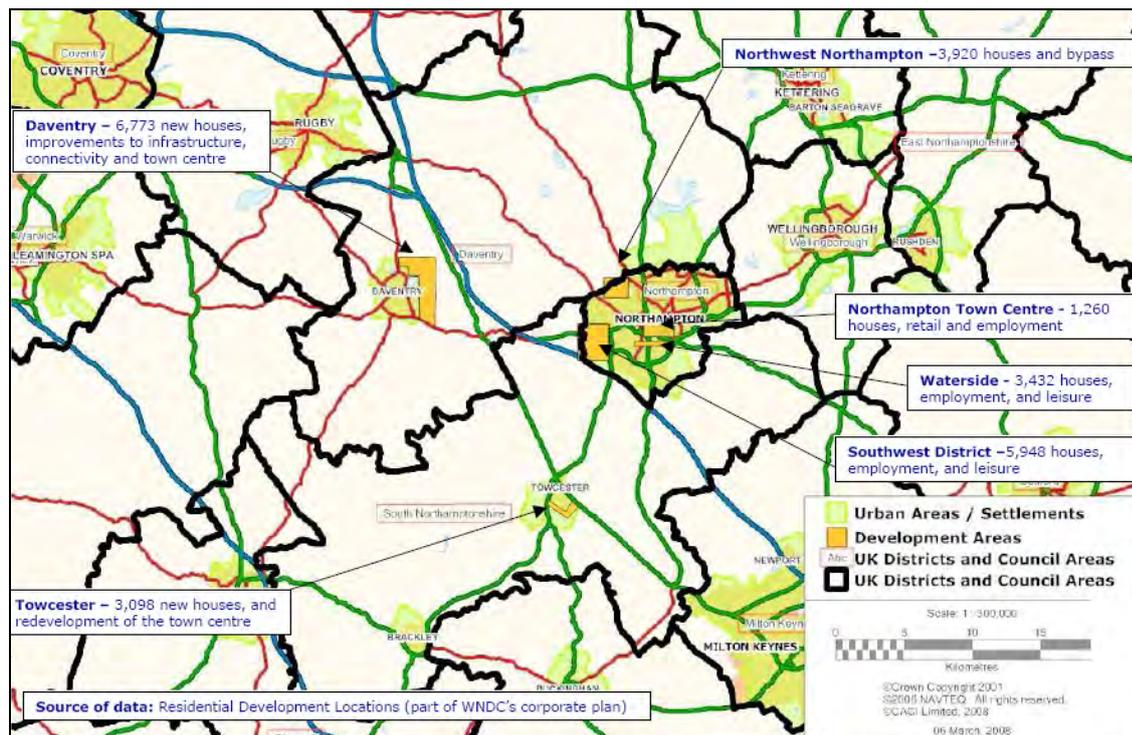
- 40,375 will be provided in the Northampton Implementation Area (NIA);
- 13,500 will be provided in Daventry; and
- 8,250 will be provided in South Northamptonshire.

In total, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation is responsible for the delivery of 47,000 new homes between 2001 and 2021 (WNDC, February 2008). The key locations that are anticipated to accommodate much of the growth are indicated in Figure 3.1.

The Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy also proposes that 37,200 new jobs should be provided in West Northamptonshire up to 2021. However, given the potential opportunities in the area, the draft Strategic Northamptonshire Economic Action Plan (SNEAP) (NEL, WNDC, NNDC, 2008) recommends that this figure could be increased to 53,000, provided there is sufficient economic development interventions from local partners. Whilst the relevant local authorities will be responsible for producing planning policies to implement these growth

targets, WNDC will be responsible for the delivery of growth using its wide-ranging development control powers and infrastructure delivery funds. Northampton Borough and Daventry and South Northamptonshire District Councils have together formed a Joint Planning Unit that will prepare key local development framework documents that will guide the delivery of this growth. This will allow a joined-up approach to be taken to the future planning of growth in the area.

Figure 3.1 Key growth locations in West Northamptonshire



3.3 The Vision for West Northamptonshire

WNDC's Corporate Plan 2008-2011 sets out the following vision for West Northamptonshire:

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

This is supported by the following objectives, which provide a focus for the activities for the Development Corporation in delivering the vision:

- Deliver housing growth and infrastructure that enables new development, in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester;

- Ensure that new development is supported by appropriate jobs, infrastructure and town centre regeneration; and,
- Ensure that new development meets the Government's design quality and environmental standards and is integrated into existing communities.

These aspirations broadly reflect those of the constituent local authorities in West Northamptonshire, whose joint vision for the area also places an emphasis on a more dynamic and vibrant economy, with revitalised town centres, improved transport links and high quality new development (West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit, 2007).

3.4 The Challenge

There are a number of key challenges facing the Corporation in delivering housing growth, whilst achieving its Vision and objectives. They are discussed below.

Delivering housing and mixed communities

Housing completion figures indicate that the Northampton Implementation Area is underperforming against its regional target, with 29,269 new homes still to be delivered between 2006 and 2026. Although this points towards a need to step up housing delivery in the NIA, Table 3.1 indicates that applications currently being considered by the Corporation could make a substantial contribution to this target.

Table 3.1 Housing Figures for West Northamptonshire 2001-2026

	Total Housing Requirement	Completions 2001-2008	Remaining Housing Requirement	Applications being considered by WNDC
Northampton Implementation Area	40,375	9,473	26,346	11,150
Daventry	13,500	2,338	9,866	12,650
South Northamptonshire	8,250	2,048	5,518	3,000
TOTALS	62,125	13,859	41,730	26,800

Source: West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit, September 2007 and WNDC (information provided to Scott Wilson September 2008)

On the other hand, Daventry presents strong potential to over perform in terms of future housing provision: the total housing potential of applications currently being considered by the Corporation could outstrip current targets.

Whilst it is still vital to ensure that the step up in housing delivery is continued, the scale of housing proposals currently being considered by WNDC means that it is important to ensure that new developments contribute to the long term vision for the area. The current applications under review by the WNDC alone will increase the size of the urban areas of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester by 17%, 64% and 85% respectively. This has substantial implications for supporting infrastructure and services for each of these locations.

The West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (DTZ June 2007) underlines the role that the quality and type of housing delivered in addressing the future demographic profile of the area, and in creating more mixed, balanced communities.

“Changes in the structure of in-migration to the market area would over time have some impact on its social structure. Policy makers in the market area should also appreciate that the type of market housing developed and the balance between market and affordable housing is one of the mechanisms by which they can influence the social make up of particular neighbourhoods, and hence reduce concentrations of disadvantage” (DTZ June 2003, paragraph 10.38).

The SHMA promotes flexibility in relation to future housing types and sizes, in line with Planning Policy Statement 3. Section 4 of this strategy indicates in broad terms the mix of housing types sought by key target demographic groups.

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (CLG November 2006) emphasises the need to create mixed, balanced communities and for new developments to address housing need, as well as demand. This is highly relevant for West Northamptonshire, where it is calculated that 2,240 new affordable homes a year will be required to meet needs across Northampton, Daventry and South Northamptonshire (DTZ, June 2007). The West Northamptonshire SHMA (DTZ, June 2007) recommends a continuation of the current affordable housing target for the area, which is set at 35 per cent for new development in the main urban areas, comprising 25 per cent social rented and 10 per cent intermediate housing.

Employment delivery

Table 3.2 shows strong performance in the delivery of new jobs. Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal has had a significant influence on the increased employment forecast for the area provided by the SNEAP of 53,000 new jobs by 2021.

Table 3.2 Jobs Growth 2001-2021

Borough/District	Additional Jobs 2001-2021	Actual Job Growth 2001- 2005	Remaining Job Growth
Northampton	27,600	6,000	21,600
Daventry District	6,000	8,000	- 2,000
South Northamptonshire	3,600	2,000	1,600
Total	37,200	16,000	21,200

Source: West Northamptonshire JPU (September 2007)

The SNEAP underlines the potentially transformational roles of the University of Northampton, the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal and town centre redevelopments for the West Northamptonshire economy.

However, the SNEAP also emphasises the need to raise current skills levels in the area in order to improve productivity, and to achieve the aspiration of creating a thriving, vibrant economy for Northampton. It also underlines the crucial future role of housing growth attracting the required resident population to achieve this aim.

Revitalising town centres

Large scale growth in West Northamptonshire provides the potential to consolidate the status of Northampton as a regional centre. The regeneration of central Northampton is a sub regional priority (see Government Offices for the South East, East of England and East Midlands 2005), and WNDC has indicated an intention to improve the vibrancy and mix of uses in Northampton town centre (WNDC 2007a). The growth of Daventry should not undermine these aspirations.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for West Northamptonshire highlights the potential for improvements to central Northampton to attract people and pursue economic development:

“If Northampton is to improve its economic performance DTZ would suggest that it has to compete more in terms of its quality of life offer, and try to redress its relative underrepresentation of higher level skills. Development of good quality new housing could help to change the image of Northampton and enhance the perceived quality of life of the entire market area. It is also possible that provision of suitable new housing could help foster the in-migration of more skilled people into Northampton itself” (DTZ, June 2007, paragraph 10.37).

WNDC (WNDC, 2007a) and the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (West Northamptonshire JPU, 2007) also propose to regenerate central Daventry, and to make central Towcester more vibrant, with increased activity and investment.

Linking growth with quality, sustainability and infrastructure

The Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM 2003) describes sustainable communities as “*places where people want to live and will continue to want to live*” (ODPM 2003, p5). It emphasises the importance of issues beyond simple housing delivery, and links issues such as the local economy, creating balanced communities, quality of local environment, sense of place and transport links as well as housing delivery in the creation of successful and attractive places. These principles are also enshrined in national planning policy, for example in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM 2005).

It is therefore crucial that, in creating places where people want to live now, and into the future, linkages are made between housing delivery, the WNDC vision, and wider sustainable communities objectives.

3.5 The Remainder of this Report

The remainder of this report addresses in detail the demographic groups that should be attracted to the area in order to achieve the strategic vision of a more dynamic and prosperous West Northamptonshire, and the actions required to attract those groups, in terms of image and marketing and place making.

4 Achieving the Vision

4.1 Purpose and overview

This Section sets out the types of households that will need to be attracted to West Northamptonshire in order to contribute towards the vision for the area. It then addresses the housing and neighbourhood qualities and characteristics sought by these target groups. Further information in support of this section is provided in Annex 3, 4 and 7.

4.2 Population Forecasting

Economic Assumptions

The SNEAP report calls for West Northamptonshire's employment profile to significantly change, with high growth in the number of jobs at managerial and professional levels as well as strong growth in jobs in the personal service, sales and customer service occupations. Levels of jobs in administrative, secretarial and skilled trades and machine operatives are expected to remain static, reflecting the national trend for growth away from these types of jobs to more sales and service jobs. It is also important to note that the projections are for a net decrease in elementary occupations, linked to a general rise in the availability of more highly skilled jobs and a reduction in unemployment. The highest level of growth in any particular sector will be in the finance sector.

We have selected aspirational benchmarks for each urban area based upon the projected increases in total and working population, changes in the employment profile of these residents and the change in the role and function each urban area will undergo. Whilst for Daventry and Towcester this change will be driven by housing growth, for Northampton it will be driven by the revitalisation and development of Northampton Town Centre.

Through a process of comparing the strengths and weaknesses of each urban area's current ACORN profile against its current benchmarks, and comparing the differences in ACORN profile between the current benchmarks and the future benchmarks, we have established future socio-demographic profiles for each urban area. From these future profiles it has been possible to map this onto projected net increases in population (including adjustments to take into account the ageing population of the UK), within each ACORN group, related to the projected growth in households based upon the current applications held by the WNDC.

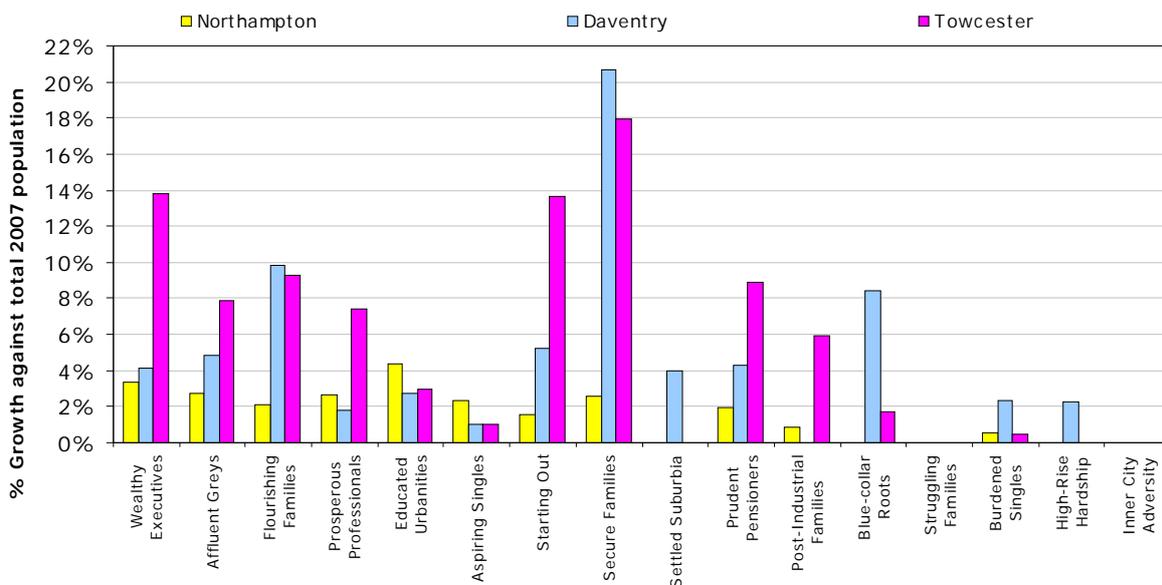
Annex 3 sets out more detailed information regarding future household projections for the area that will be required to achieve the WNDC vision. A brief summary of key characteristics of the target ACORN groups is provided in Annex 7.

This study focuses on the housing markets of the 3 Urban Areas in West Northamptonshire that WNDC has influence over. For the purposes of this section of the research, the growth related to these 3 Urban Areas from derived from growth related to current applications plus an underlying natural population growth estimate provided by CACI's projection figures. This means the growth

used in this study is below the full growth target indicated in the draft Regional Plan for the East Midlands, which is only provided at District level. It has been a deliberate decision to analyse the consequences for a more conservative growth target – so that the results will be immediately relevant and not overly reliant on as yet unknown development proposals needed to fulfil the full target. This is also considered to be a more robust and credible approach by private sector partners. Market Conditions will naturally fluctuate which will have an impact on delivery timescales. Therefore no exact timescale has been applied to these projections although they are designed to be in advance of the 2021 growth targets.

CACI’s Population and Household Statistics are approved by the Joint Industry Committee for Population Standards (JICPOPS) as the definitive current year statistics for postcode sectors. CACI are one of just two demographic specialists to produce these industry standard updates.

Table 4.1 Projected growth in households, by ACORN group and Urban Area



The chart above shows, for each urban area, the relative growth in each ACORN group against the current (2007) population of that Urban Area. This provides a view on where the greatest pressures on demand for market housing will come from. This analysis has provided a market demand baseline, from which we have been able to assess which groups will be a priority with respect to the WNDC for targeting with new housing. When selecting priority targets for new housing, we have considered the role of existing housing stock, and the relative importance of providing new jobs rather than new homes to successfully attract some groups.

Compared with Northampton, the relative scale of growth in both Daventry and Towcester will be much more significant. Therefore, the role of new housing in these areas will be much more pertinent, since the role that existing housing stock can play in accommodating the growth agenda will be more limited. Furthermore, whilst many of the market opportunities in the urban

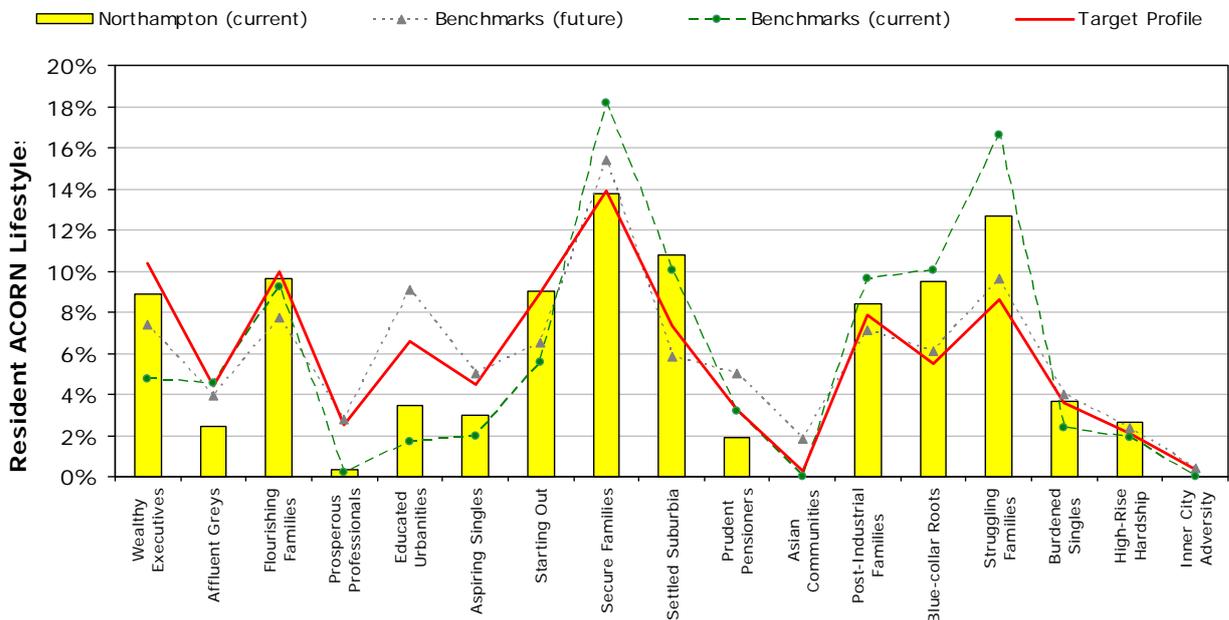
core of Northampton will be dependent upon growth in jobs in the central area, growth in Daventry and Towcester is less constrained in this way – depending more on economic growth of the region in general.

Whilst the section below addresses the more economically active and highly skilled target groups selected to achieve the vision for West Northamptonshire and address the issues raised in the SNEAP, it should be noted that the above projections also indicate an increase in less well-off groups, for which housing actions- particularly in relation to delivery of affordable housing- will be required. The West Northamptonshire SHMA suggests the continuation of a 35% affordable housing target as part of new development in urban areas. The delivery of market housing will therefore play the key role in the delivery of the affordable housing required to meet future affordable housing needs.

Target Groups for Northampton

A new socio-demographic profile and subsequent estimates of growth within differing ACORN groups were based on the economic assumptions described above, using future benchmark data from Leicester, Cambridge, Oxford, Reading, Southampton, Brighton and Crawley.

Table 4.2 Target Profile for Northampton



Northampton’s current strengths, which will remain relevant in for the future, are the market for Wealthy Executives, Flourishing Families, Starting Out and Post-Industrial Families. Northampton’s current weaknesses, which will need to be addressed in the future, are for Affluent Greys, Prosperous Professionals and Educated Urbanites.

The highest rises will be amongst the Educated Urbanites (from a low base), followed by Wealthy Executives (where there is already currently a high index). Another significant group for new demand, with very little current presence in Northampton is the Prosperous Professionals. Growth in Flourishing Families will also be significant and will be a very important group for Northampton to retain to support the growing economy. The current strength in demand from the Starting Out group also needs to be retained, as these are important 'seed' groups for starting communities. The current weakness in the market for Secure Families is also a concern, which should be improved with improved economic prospects. The relative increase in proportions of Affluent Greys and Prudent Pensioners will also be significant, due to an ageing population. Other groups with net increases that will have implications for demand for affordable homes include a large increase in Aspiring Singles, and more moderate increases in Post-Industrial Families and Burdened Singles.

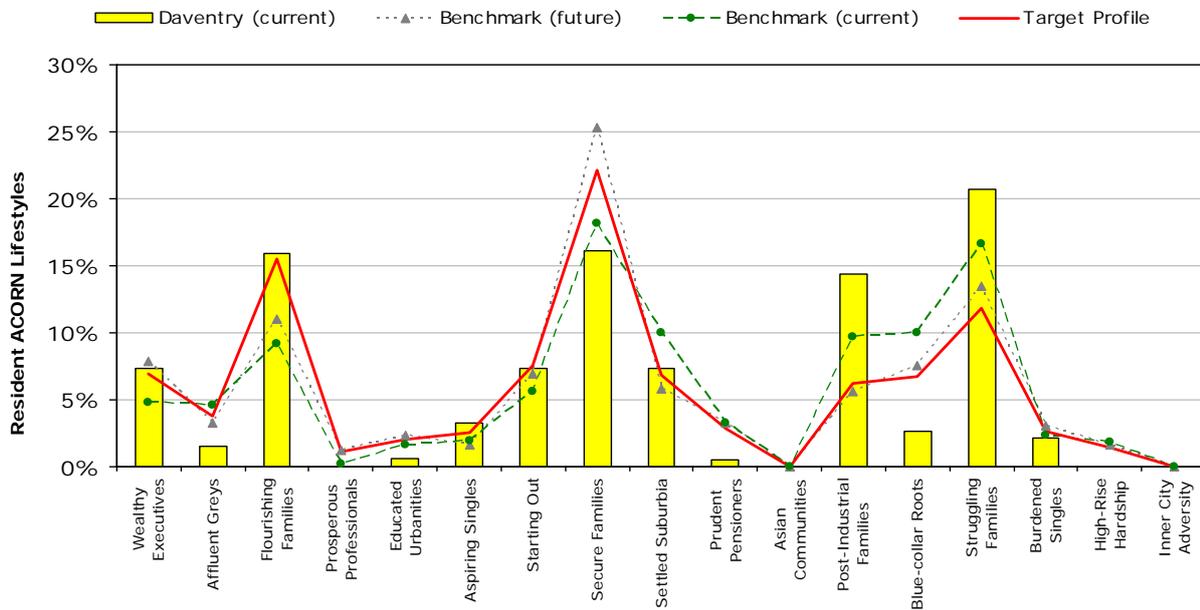
In terms of phasing, this means that there is a strong demand now, with further demand into the future for housing Flourishing Families and Starting Out, which should be a priority for WNDC to retain and attract with new housing. There is also an opportunity to strengthen the Secure Families market by attracting more of these groups to Northampton with new housing. Whilst there will be a strong demand in the future for Educated Urbanites and Aspiring Singles, the greater priority with respect to attracting and retaining these groups will be providing a step-change growth in employment opportunities and growth in the capacity of the University Facilities in Northampton.

Target Groups for Daventry

A new socio-demographic profile and subsequent estimates of growth within differing ACORN groups were based on the economic assumptions described above, using future benchmark data from Kettering, Witney, Leighton Buzzard, Letchworth Garden City and Braintree.

Based on current applications (March 2008), Daventry's population will increase by 64%, with net increases dominated by demand from Secure Families. There will also be significant new demand from Flourishing Families (a particular strength of Daventry) and Blue-collar Roots, with implications for new affordable housing.

Table 4.3 Target Profile for Daventry



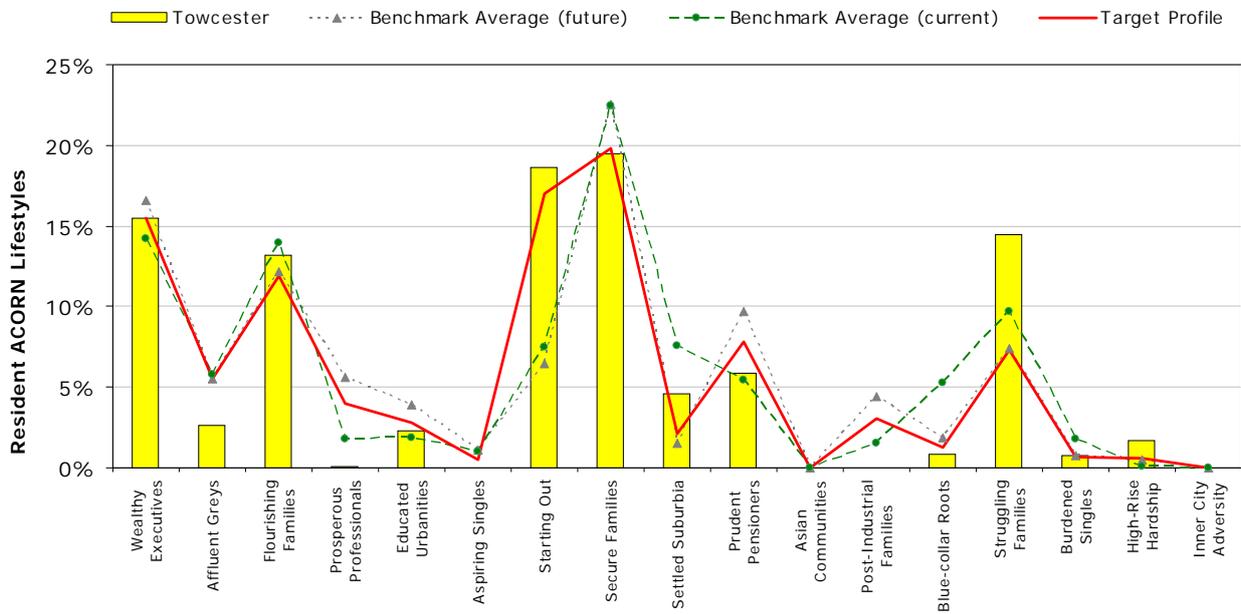
In terms of phasing, there is a stronger current demand from Flourishing Families, but in terms of the opportunity to fill in a current gap in the market, and provide for future demand, there is an exceptional opportunity in Daventry for more mass-market housing for Secure Families.

Target Groups for Towcester

A new socio-demographic profile and subsequent estimates of growth within differing ACORN groups were based on the economic assumptions described above, using future benchmark data from Buckingham, Saffron Walden, Thame, Godalming and East Grinstead.

Based on current applications (March 2008), Towcester will increase in size by 85%, with the most significant net increases in demand coming from the Wealthy Executives, Starting Out and Secure Families groups; all of which are already the most dominant groups in the town. Niche opportunities for significantly increasing the current representation in Towcester include greater increases in Affluent Greys and the Prosperous Professionals groupings.

Table 4.4 Target Profile for Towcester



Amongst groups needing affordable housing, the most important group will be an increased demand from Post-Industrial Families, who in many cases are expected to replace Struggling Families as employment opportunities increase for all. There will also be significant growth in Prudent Pensioners, linked to an ageing population.

To support the need to deliver affordable homes in Towcester, we would recommend a focus on delivering market housing for the most affluent of the identified target groups; namely Wealthy Executives, Affluent Greys and Prosperous Professionals.

4.3 Attracting target groups

Introduction

So far, this report has mapped the current population by socio-demographics, looked at current patterns of inward migration, understood the ambitions for growth in West Northamptonshire and subsequently forecasted the growth in population, by socio-demographic grouping. Based upon this analysis we have identified which groups will be particularly important to attract for market housing, providing differentiated advice between Northampton, Daventry and Towcester.

We have used the ACORN classification tool to access a vast array of existing data relating to each target group, including income levels, consumer lifestyles, housing and location preferences and media use. This evidence base has been supplemented by a survey of 1,655 economically active residents located in the three urban areas of West Northamptonshire and their future benchmark areas. This is in order to better understand the housing and location preferences of the groups identified either as a primary priority for new market housing, and/or highly relevant to

the agenda of economic growth, We have focused our attention on the following most affluent 8 ACORN groups:

- Wealthy Executives;
- Affluent Greys;
- Flourishing Families;
- Prosperous Professionals;
- Educated Urbanites;
- Aspiring Singles;
- Starting Out; and
- Secure Families.

These groups have been identified to be most important to attract with respect to new *market housing*. A generic description of the key characteristics of these target groups is provided in Annex 7. This focus on the more economically active groups is not intended to undermine the need to address the housing and other needs of less affluent lifestyle groupings. However, the purpose of this report is to deliver market housing, with a view to achieving the economic objectives for the area by introducing a more skilled employee base.

The Strategy follows the ‘market model’ for delivering housing growth. Hence it focuses on the delivery of market housing in the first instance, which in turn can also help deliver affordable housing through Section 106 agreements.

Table 4.5 below indicates the priority that should be afforded to attracting each of these eight target groups, bearing in mind the discussion of future target groups for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester provided in Section 4.2 above, including existing demand in each area.

Table 4.5 Selected targets and priority

ACORN Groups	Northampton	Daventry	Towcester
Wealthy Executives	2nd		1st
Affluent Greys	2nd		1st
Flourishing Families	1st	1st	
Prosperous Professionals	1st		1st
Educated Urbanites	2nd		
Aspiring Singles	2nd		
Starting Out	1st		2nd
Secure Families	1st	1st	2nd

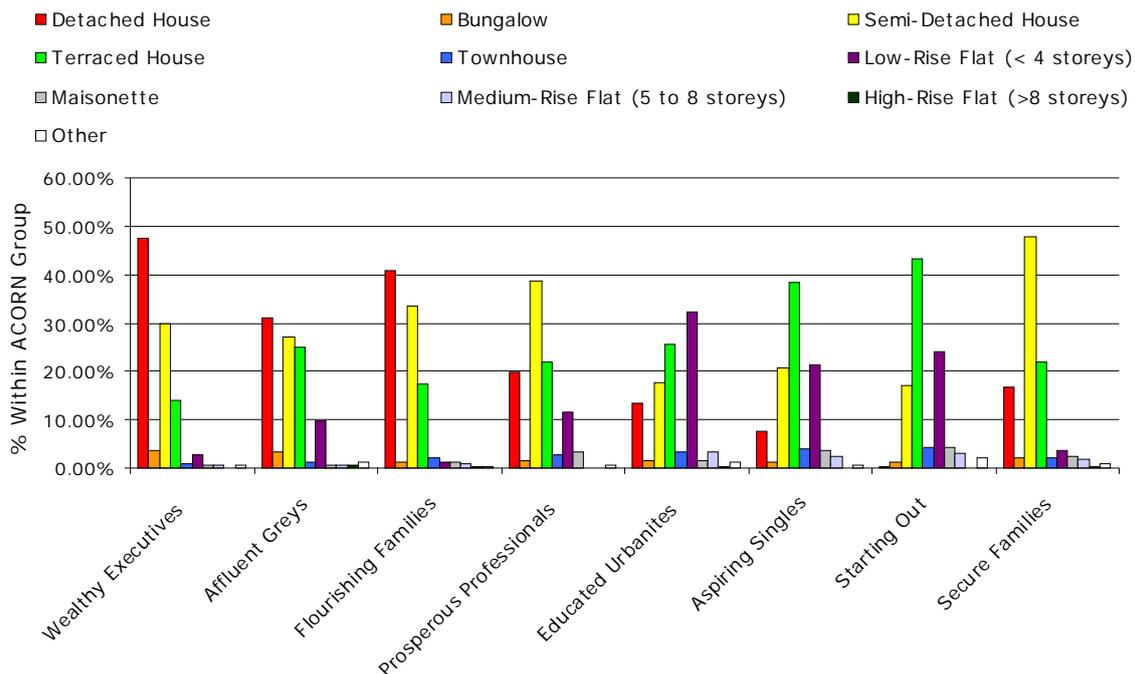
This section aims to provide a greater understanding of what will attract these groups to West Northamptonshire, with a particularly strong emphasis on the role that new housing and infrastructure can play. It provides a summary of the detailed findings of the research carried out by CACI.

Housing and Location Preferences

Wealthy Executives, Affluent Greys and Flourishing Families have the highest affinity with Detached Houses. Prosperous Professionals and Secure Families have the highest affinity with Semi-Detached houses.

Aspiring Singles and Starting out have the highest affinity with terraced houses, and both also have a relatively high number of low-rise flat dwellers (4-storeys or below). Educated Urbanites have the highest affinity with low-rise flats, but generally live across the broadest range of property types.

Table 4.6 Building Type Preferences



Other key points to note in terms of housing preferences include:

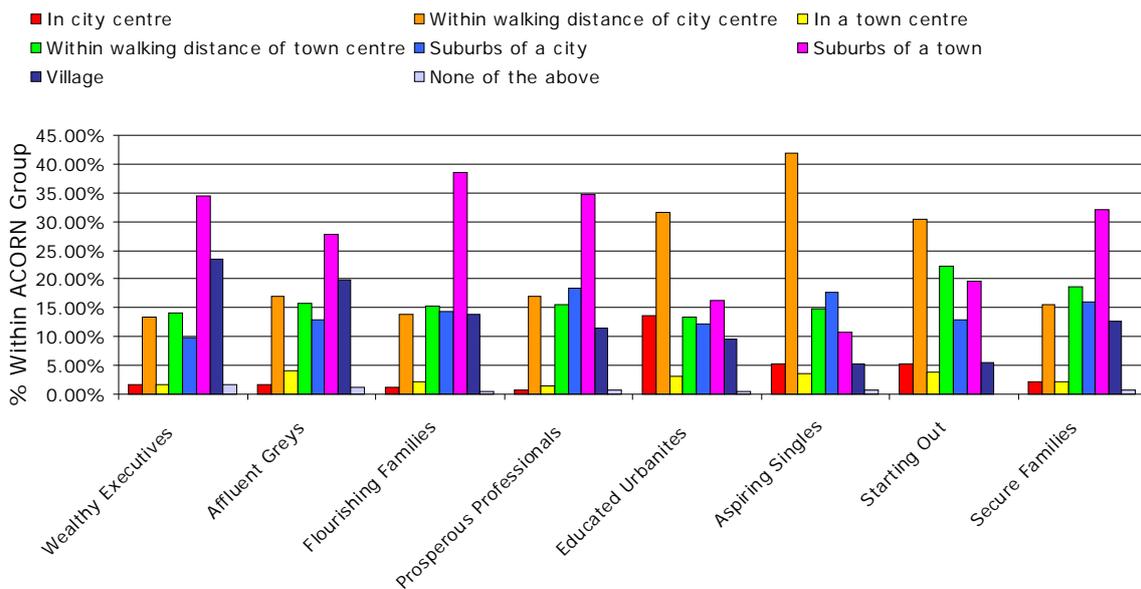
- Prosperous Professionals have the highest affinity with New Build, whilst Affluent Greys and Flourishing Families have the highest affinity with relatively new (1975-1995) housing.
- Aspiring Singles and Starting Out have the highest affinity with Victorian housing stock, linked with their affinity to terraced housing.

- Educated Urbanites, Aspiring Singles and Starting Out have the least access to private gardens, due to a greater affinity with low-rise flats.

It is important to note that noise insulation, design and build quality and space standards were key concerns for those who expressed an aversion towards newly built developments. This provides some indication of the issues that must be addressed if target groups are to be attracted to new housing developments.

In terms of development locations, the most popular locations amongst the respondents were areas within walking distance of a city centre (highest affinity with Educated Urbanites, Aspiring Singles and Starting Out) and the suburbs of a town (highest affinity with all other groups). Starting Out and Secure Families are most responsive to living within walking distance of a town centre, whilst Wealthy Executives and Affluent Greys are most responsive to living in a village.

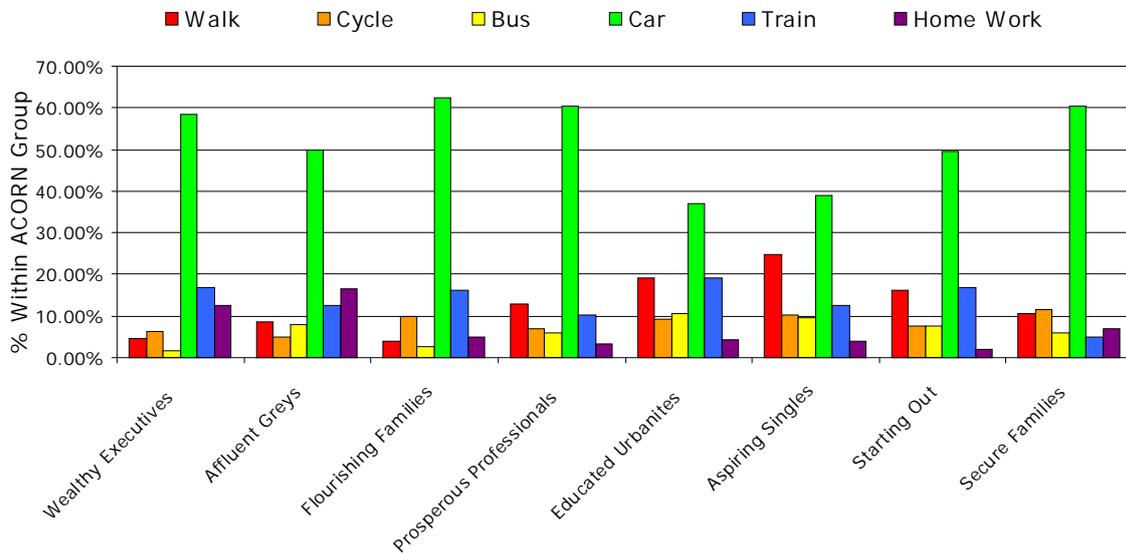
Table 4.7 Location Preferences



It should be noted that there is significant variation in the use of different modes of transport. Whilst the younger target groups (e.g. Educated Urbanites) walk and cycle, more affluent and family-based groups are the highest users of the private car.

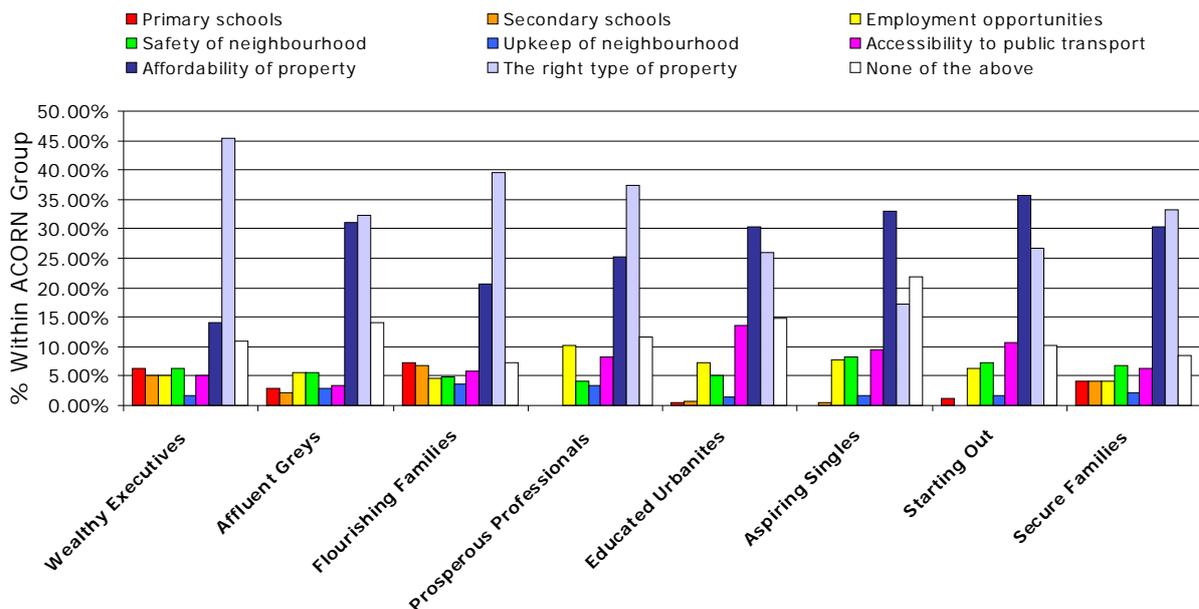
The train is equally popular with most groups, except for Secure Families and Prosperous Professionals (who in general use trains less than other groups). Educated Urbanites have the highest patronage of public transport (buses and trains).

Table 4.8 Journey to Work – Mode of Transport



When interviewees were prompted for the one most assailing factor that they took into account when they chose to live in their current area, affordability of property and the right type of property were the most commonly cited factors. This underlines the importance of developing the right market housing product to maximise demand, and the need for effective place making to deliver the kinds of homes and neighbourhoods sought by these groups.

Table 4.9 Most influential factors when choosing a place to live

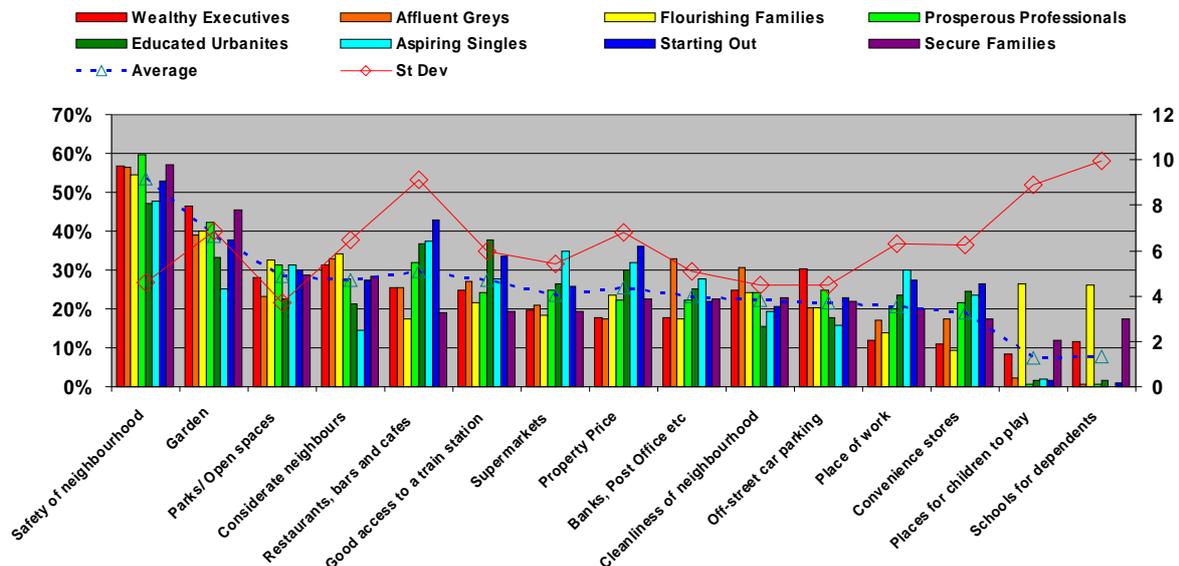


Motivating Factors – Place Making

Interviewees were presented with a list of factors that they had marked as important to them, and asked which were *essential* for them, when considering where they would consider living. Safety of neighbourhood and the need for a garden are not only the most important, but are essential for a large proportion of the target population. Other commonly cited characteristics in making a good place (which are set out in more detail in Annex 5) include:

- Parks and green spaces;
- Low levels of noise;
- A clean environment;
- Good quality housing;
- Good size of rooms; and
- Good use of space.

Table 4.10 What is most important?



Educated Urbanites and Starting Out were particularly responsive to good public transport links. Good access to a train station is also essential for many in the Educated Urbanites and Starting Out groups, whilst good access to place of work is more essential for Aspiring Singles, Starting Out and Educated Urbanites groups.

Variation in opinion across ACORN groups is greatest over access to services and facilities. Places for children to play and schools for dependents were just as important as other factors to the Flourishing Families group, and quite important to Secure Families and Wealthy Executives.

A good sense of community spirit was most important to Flourishing Families and Affluent Greys, who also consider health facilities to be highly important. Prosperous Professionals, Educated Urbanites and Aspiring Singles were most receptive to cultural facilities.

Panellists most commonly cited a need for restaurants and a strong appreciation of the local swimming pool. Other well-appreciated facilities were Health facilities, Health Club/Gyms, venues for local events, schools and strong employment opportunities.

4.4 Interventions required to achieve the vision

The range of development opportunities available in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester offers significant opportunities to meet the varying preferences of the target groups discussed above, whilst delivering the required housing growth in West Northamptonshire. However, this research has underlined a number of areas where intervention will be required to ensure that the future growth of the area also delivers the characteristics of place sought by the target groups.

Delivery of growth

There is a need to ensure a strategic approach is taken to the planning of future growth in West Northamptonshire. Section 4.3 has highlighted the need to address a range of issues, from the varying development locations, housing types and lifestyles sought by different target groups, to demand for different services and services, and other factors such as travel to work. For example, whilst younger target groups tend to seek urban living lifestyles and the associated employment and leisure opportunities, older target groups are in general more concerned about more local-level services. A strategic overview to the delivery of growth is therefore needed in order to ensure that the right land uses and infrastructure are delivered in the right locations to address these varying preferences and challenges. This will require strong strategic planning, in partnership with the appropriate plan making authorities.

Housing types

At a strategic level, it is of course essential that the appropriate types of housing are delivered in the right locations to reflect the preferences of the different target groups.

Creating a sense of place

The research has highlighted a range of issues where WNSDC intervention will be needed to deliver the kinds of homes, neighbourhoods, other mixed uses and infrastructure needed to attract the target groups.

It is essential that employment opportunities are provided alongside jobs: the research has indicated the importance of accessibility to work for a number of the target groups, in particular Prosperous Professionals, Educated Urbanites, Aspiring Singles and Starting Out groups. It is therefore crucial that housing growth is balanced by appropriate jobs growth, with provision made for central employment opportunities to reflect the urban living lifestyles sought.

The research has underlined a number of neighbourhood-level characteristics that are essential to prospective target groups. Interventions in the form of development standards and investment would be required to address the following issues:

- Safe neighbourhoods for all;
- Community facilities for family and affluent groups;
- Cultural offer, including restaurants, bars and cafes for younger groups;
- Town centre improvements in order to improve sense of place and quality of life and attract key target groups seeking a city living lifestyle;
- Strategic transport links: including improvements to public transport and enabling access to work for all; and,
- High quality open spaces, considered to be important to all groups.

Intervention will also be required at a development level in order to ensure that new homes reflect the priorities of target groups:

- The overwhelming demand for gardens amongst most target groups;
- Address the hesitancy of many groups towards new build, including quality and space;
- Provision of new parks and open spaces as part of new development; and,
- Minimising noise transmission.

In order to achieve the vision for the area as a whole, a number of area-specific interventions are required for each of the three urban areas:

- To turn Northampton into a more vibrant urban area, that attracts investment and jobs, as well as attracting a range of target groups, including (Flourishing Families, Prosperous Professionals, Starting Out and Secure Families)
- To continue to attract more family-oriented groups to Daventry, to address social polarisation issues, and to deliver appropriate services, facilities and infrastructure to support an increased population; and,
- To help Towcester develop as its population nearly doubles, ensuring that it retains its attractiveness, including its appeal to Wealthy Executive, Affluent Greys and Prosperous Professional target groups.

Implementation and Enforcement

It will be necessary to ensure that any proposals and development standards put forward by WDC can be properly implemented and enforced in order to ensure delivery, and to give target groups confidence that the qualities and standards that they seek will be provided on the ground.

Image and marketing

Along with any physical improvements to the area, significant efforts must be made to improve the image of the area, including marketing efforts to communicate to a wider audience what the new planned developments will be like.

5 Framework for Delivering Growth

5.1 Purpose and overview

The previous section addressed the issues that need to be addressed in order to attract the desired target groups into West Northamptonshire. This section builds on this by providing a framework of potential areas where WNDC's activities and actions could help to address these issues, thus delivering the image and kinds of places needed to achieve the vision. This range of areas and activities links directly to the Action Plan provided in Section 6 of this Strategy.

The proposed framework of activities and actions in this section are structured in terms of themes raised in the previous chapter, and are intended to provide an integrated framework for addressing issues. The framework is set out under the following theme-based headings:

- Delivery of growth
- Housing types
- Creating a sense of place
- Implementation and enforcement
- Image and marketing

5.2 Delivery of Growth

It is important that development is phased in such a way as to reflect deliverability issues and to ensure that the correct facilities, services and infrastructure are in place to support development and to attract the relevant target groups.

Subject to market conditions, the early delivery of major urban extensions could be a priority in planning terms, given the relatively low constraints faced by greenfield sites compared to urban areas/ brownfield developments. These major developments would also be able to provide significant developer funding to unlock infrastructure (such as public transport, education provision and health facilities) early on. Finally, these more family-oriented suburban extensions (with families moving in over the next 5 years), would provide the younger target groups (Aspiring singles, Starting Out) of the next 10 years.

At the same time, Government guidance places a strong emphasis on directing development towards existing urban areas, and on brownfield land, wherever possible. This research has highlighted the importance of town/ city centre living, and the availability of employment, shopping and cultural/ leisure uses to attract target groups (particularly Aspiring singles, Starting Out, Educated Urbanites, and Prosperous Professionals). Furthermore, every town/city centre is the "shop window" for an area, and the success of the centre is dependent upon engaging not

only with its local population but its wider catchment – including important target groups such as Wealthy Executives, Affluent Greys, Flourishing Families and Secure Families.

It is therefore suggested that improvements to the public realm in central areas, and the delivery of mixed town centre/ employment uses are also prioritized in order to deliver places that would attract younger target groups to the centre in the next 5-10 years. This would ensure the early delivery of a range of commercial uses on brownfield land in urban locations, whilst facilitating a greater focus on housing development in such locations to meet the preferences of these younger target groups over the longer term.

ACTION DG1: EARLY DELIVERY OF MAJOR URBAN EXTENSIONS IN NORTHAMPTON, DAVENTRY AND TOWCESTER

ACTION DG2: CONTINUE DELIVERY OF TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

ACTION DG3: EARLY DELIVERY OF TOWN CENTRE/ EMPLOYMENT USES (OFFICE SPACE, RETAIL, LEISURE, CULTURAL AND OTHER CIVIC USES) IN ALL THREE URBAN AREAS

5.3 Housing types

The research has demonstrated demand for a range of housing types and locations from the different target groups. Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing states that “Developers should bring forward proposals for market housing which reflect demand and the profile of households requiring market housing, in order to sustain mixed communities” (CLG November 2006, paragraph 23).

Whilst more family-oriented and wealthier target groups tend to express a preference for detached and semi detached homes (with some terraced housing) in more suburban locations, younger target groups (in particular Educated Urbanites and Aspiring Singles) indicate a preference for higher density housing forms, including low rise flats and terraced housing, in more urban locations. This mix of preferences complements the development opportunities available in the study area, with the potential for more suburban urban extensions to the three main urban areas, as well as more high density housing opportunities in town centres, especially in Northampton. Indicative, broad mixes of housing types are suggested for new developments in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester in Section 5.5 below.

Whilst this study has focused on the housing preferences of key market housing target groups, it is essential that regard is had to the preferences of those seeking affordable housing. National planning guidance is clear that “[T]he Government is committed to providing high quality housing for people who are unable to access or afford market housing” (CLG November 2006, paragraph 27). Research into the experience of residents in a new settlement at Cambourne (Inspire East, 2007) indicates that, to be successful, affordable housing should be designed, managed and maintained to make it indistinguishable from market housing (to avoid stigmatization), and provided in clusters of between 10 and 25 homes to ensure that homes are integrated and deliver mixed communities.

5.4 Creating a sense of place

Section 4.3 of this Strategy set out the factors that people take into account when moving home. These factors relate to a number of areas, from the design of homes and the character of neighbourhoods to the mix of uses available and the availability of transport infrastructure. Annex 5 provides a place making 'crib sheet' for each town, addressing some of the key housing and neighbourhood characteristics sought by each target group, for each location.

This section builds on this initial crib sheet by providing a thematically structured framework for creating a sense of place in the study area, bringing together those issues that are common for each town, as well as addressing location-specific place making issues, where appropriate. The following themes are addressed:

- Housing standards, layout and design in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester
- Open spaces and public realm in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester
- Facilities, services and infrastructure for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester
- Place making for Northampton
- Place making for Daventry
- Place making for Towcester

Under each of these headings, a framework for activities to deliver the Vision for the area is provided, which highlights actions for each of the main areas of activity of the Development Corporation: Development Control (DC), Policy influence and Partnership Working (PP), Infrastructure Delivery (ID) and Phasing of Development (PD). The summary of Actions provided in Section 6 (and set out in full in Annex 1) then provides a schedule of actions, structured by area of activity.

Housing standards, layout and design in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

Planning Policy Statement 1 (ODPM 2005) underlines the importance of high quality design in new developments. Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing) comments that “[G]ood design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities”. This premise is also reflected in WNDC's corporate vision and objectives. The delivery of high quality design is essential to meeting the aspirations of target groups, and the delivering the right image to attract these groups.

The Development Corporation's current requirement for new housing developments to achieve a minimum Silver Building or Life grade, and current work on Design Coding, are essential in delivering new developments that create sustainable communities where people want to live, now and into the future. It should also be ensured that other forms of developments (in particular local centres and town centre uses) also achieve high urban design standards: recent research (Inspire East, 2007) found that poor design standards of community buildings and facilities in a

new settlement were of detriment to the quality of the development, with negative implications for the image of place.

ACTION DC1: CONTINUE TO REQUIRE BUILDING FOR LIFE MINIMUM SILVER STANDARD FOR ALL NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

ACTION DC2: ENSURE THAT NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS (PARTICULARLY LOCAL CENTRE AND TOWN CENTRE BUILDINGS) ALSO ACHIEVE HIGH URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS

A key theme in terms of housing design that emerges from the research is the importance of space, with many respondents commenting that adequate room space is absolutely essential in new housing. It is therefore suggested that the Development Corporation implements English Partnerships' space standards (see English Partnerships November 2007, p16) for all new developments.

ACTION DC3: IMPLEMENT ENGLISH PARTNERSHIPS ROOM SPACE STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

It is also suggested that the Development Corporation investigates opportunities to promote 'super flexible housing' as part of new developments, which would allow families to adapt, change and expand their homes to meet future needs. The Milton Keynes Partnership states that:

"Super-flexible housing would allow homeowners to adapt their dwellings, instead of moving, as their circumstances change. In a house designed on super flexible principles, space can be arranged and then potentially re-arranged to meet future requirements without the need for expensive retrofitting" (Milton Keynes Partnership 2006, p3).

Examples of super flexible homes include 'courtyard' houses, open-shell buildings and homes capable of accommodating mezzanine space (see Milton Keynes Partnership 2006).

ACTION PP1: INVESTIGATE POTENTIAL FOR THE INTEGRATION OF SUPER-FLEXIBLE HOMES INTO NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE DESIGN CODING DOCUMENT

An additional key concern of target groups in terms of new development relates to poor noise insulation standards. In order to satisfactorily address this, and give new homes a market advantage for these groups, it is suggested that improved noise insulation standards (above and beyond building Regulations Part E minimum standards) are sought through the achievement of a high Code for Sustainable Homes score (for example 3 or 4 out of a possible 4 points) in relation to sound insulation. This would fit in with an existing, well-used assessment mechanism for new developments (all homes are required to be rated against Code standards from May 2008: see CLG, February 2008).

ACTION DC4: IMPLEMENT HIGH CODE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES SOUND INSULATION STANDARDS

The provision of gardens in new developments was also seen as essential to the majority of target groups. In carrying out pre-application discussions with developers, and in taking forward Design Coding proposals, maximum use should be made of the opportunity to integrate garden space into new developments. In particular, new housing developments (as opposed to new flatted developments) should look to provide private garden space. The Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships September 2007) promotes 10-metre back-to back gardens (i.e. a space of 20 metres between the backs of properties) as a means to protect privacy. Where garden space is not possible for flatted developments, the provision of additional compensatory open space suitable to meet consequent needs (or appropriate Section 106 contributions) should be required (see PPG17, paragraph 33).

ACTION DC5: DESIGN IN GARDENS FOR ALL HOUSING

In relation to higher density flatted developments directed towards younger target groups, regard should be had to the desire for these groups for more low-rise schemes of up to 4-storeys. This scale of development is supported by the Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships 2000), which states:

“In many urban situations, medium-rise, high density buildings (3-4 storeys) in general provide an optimum form that maximises density whilst minimising perceived intensity or overcrowding” (p48).

ACTION DC6: LIMIT FLAT DEVELOPMENTS TO 4 STOREYS WHERE POSSIBLE

All of the above proposed requirements relating to development quality, including space standards and garden provision have implications in terms of development costs. However, if designed-in to developments from the outset, it is considered that these could be accommodated and built into predicted build costs. WNSDC's current Design Coding exercise should seek to work towards a balance of cost issues and the added value to be achieved through higher development standards.

Seen positively, these standards (if delivered across the board) would deliver significant added value that could be recouped through premium values for property. Research indicates that development built to high urban design standards can increase sales values by between 10 and 15 per cent (see English Partnerships November, 2007).

Increased standards should be sought at the earliest possible stage in the planning process, preferably through the Design Coding process and, over the longer term, relevant development plan document policies.

Open spaces and public realm in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

CACI's research has clearly shown that the provision of open spaces is highly important to the target groups. Paragraph 1 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (ODPM May 2002) states:

“To ensure effective planning for open space, sport and recreation it is essential that the needs of local communities are known. Local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities”.

Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire District Councils have both completed PPG17 Open Space studies, which assess current open space and set out recommendations regarding future provision, taking into account the adequacy of existing provision and likely future need (see ODPM 2002). Daventry is also currently producing a study. It is essential that, in considering proposals for development in West Northamptonshire, the Development Corporation fully implements the recommendations contained within these PPG17 studies in order to ensure appropriate provision of open spaces with new developments, reflecting the preferences of most target groups.

ACTION DC7: DELIVER SUFFICIENT OPEN SPACES TO MEET NEEDS IN ALL NEW DEVELOPMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PPG17 OPEN SPACE STUDIES CARRIED OUT FOR NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH AND DAVENTRY AND SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS

It is also important that public spaces (existing and new) are of a high standard: this will add to the image and attractiveness of the area. Government guidance, including Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) emphasises the importance of high quality spaces in promoting quality of life and creating places where people want to live. Building for Life guidance (CABE 2005) highlights the importance of a clear purpose, high quality design and careful detailing in creating *“places which are lively, pleasant to use and develop a sense of wellbeing among users”* (p12). This is essential in attracting target groups to the area.

In implementing the WNDC Building for Life (CABE 2005) Silver standard for new developments, careful consideration should be given to those questions that relate to the quality and safety of public spaces, including Question 10: *“Are Public Spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?”* and Question 12: *“Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place”*. The upkeep and maintenance of all public spaces (existing and new), possibly through development trusts or a dedicated management company funded by new developments, has been demonstrated to be highly important to target groups. This will be essential for the continued attractiveness of the area and the quality of life of all residents.

ACTION DC8: IMPLEMENT BUILDING FOR LIFE PUBLIC REALM QUESTIONS (10 AND 12)

By ensuring careful attention to the design and layout of the public realm, new developments can increase the sense of safety of new developments by ensuring that an appropriate level of natural surveillance: English Partnerships (2007) promote continuous building lines with doors

and windows facing onto streets and open spaces as a means to increase the vitality of the public realm, as well as increasing informal surveillance of these spaces.

Secured by Design (UK Police, November 2007) provides detailed guidance for new homes in relation to crime reduction, both in terms of the design and layout of public spaces and buildings, and physical security measures. It is therefore suggested that the Development Corporation requires new developments to address the designing out crime principles set out in Secured by Design in order to demonstrate how public spaces and buildings are to be delivered in a means that reduces both opportunities for crime, and the fear of crime.

ACTION DC9: IMPLEMENT SECURED BY DESIGN STANDARDS FOR ALL NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Current work on design coding and design and access statements should take into account guidance on the quality and safety of open space to ensure that future developments fully address these issues (as well as accommodating the car). Relevant documents that should be full taken into account include Building for Life guidance (CABE, 2005), Secured by Design (UK Police, November 2007), the Manual for Streets (DfT, 2007) and The art of making places - liveable public space (Beer, 2003).

ACTION ID1: INTEGRATE BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE ON PUBLIC REALM INTO DESIGN CODING DOCUMENT AND FUTURE PUBLIC REALM INVESTMENT SCHEMES

At a more Strategic level, WNDC has the ability, through infrastructure funding (including use of S106 funds), to continue to deliver significant improvements to the existing public realm, particularly in urban centres (see also paragraphs 5.5.57 to 5.5.59 regarding improvements to central Northampton). Excellent pedestrian linkages are essential in the central areas both to improve the image and attractiveness of these areas overall, and to address the city living aspiration of younger target groups (such as Educated Urbanites) by improving accessibility across central areas, linking town centre homes, jobs and leisure. English Partnerships (2000; September 2007) provide detailed and useful guidance in relation to creating a thriving and safe public realm, including activities, street furniture, lighting, legibility, quality of materials and natural surveillance.

ACTION ID2: CONTINUE TO DELIVER PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS ALREADY PROPOSED FOR NORTHAMPTON, DAVENTRY AND TOWCESTER

ACTION ID3: EXAMINE OPPORTUNITIES TO DELIVER ADDITIONAL PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS IN NORTHAMPTON, DAVENTRY AND TOWCESTER, INCLUDING THROUGH PUBLIC REALM PHASE 2

Facilities, services and infrastructure for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

The Initial Policy Review in support of this Strategy underlined the importance of improving sustainable transport links between three urban areas. Investment in improved linkages,

particularly east-west bus links between Northampton and Daventry, would improve accessibility to jobs, educational facilities, services and amenities between the towns, as well as providing improved access to the countryside.

Government guidance states that planning authorities should “[R]educe the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development” (ODPM 2005, paragraph 27vii). Northamptonshire County Council (2007) already proposes new bus services from Northampton to Daventry and Towcester, with a frequency of 20 minutes. However, given the need for improved emphasis on improved linkages within the study area, and this wider policy emphasis on sustainable transport, it is suggested that WNDC secure high quality, high frequency bus services linking the centres of the three urban areas, with a minimum service frequency of 15-20 minutes.

It is suggested that WNDC and its partners seek Quality Bus Partnerships to deliver improved, more convenient services, including investigating more frequent services (for example every 10 minutes). Bus services at this frequency would be highly beneficial in making bus services an attractive, convenient transport alternative, and should be sought, where viable. It is essential that bus links are reliable from the start, as experience suggests that, otherwise, residents may resort to the car (see Inspire East 2007). This would have negative implications in terms of congestion in key areas of economic growth, including central Northampton, as well as wider sustainability and climate change objectives.

Bus services should be integrated with Park & Ride schemes and long-distance services to Birmingham, Oxford, Cambridge and Milton Keynes. It is also important that these services are given the necessary priority to allow them to be rapid, in order to represent a positive alternative to the car.

At a development scale, it is essential that new developments provide excellent bus links between the three urban areas, in particular linking existing and new communities with central Northampton, and Northampton train station. Transport Policy for Growth Policy PT3 states that *“large urban extensions, will be linked by the most direct route to the town centre by a fast, reliable and high-frequency (at least every 10 minute) service with bus priority, real time information and smart card integrated ticketing”*. This should be implemented by WNDC for new urban extensions.

Linkages to more strategic educational facilities (such as colleges and the University) should also be ensured, given the importance of access to educational facilities for the more family-oriented groups (e.g. Secure Families, Flourishing Families).

ACTION ID4: DELIVER FREQUENT BUS SERVICE (MINIMUM 15-20 MINUTE SERVICE) BETWEEN THE CENTRES OF ALL THREE URBAN AREAS

ACTION ID5: INVESTIGATE OPPORUTNIITES TO IMPROVE BUS SERVICES BETWEEN URBAN AREAS THROUGH SEEKING QUALITY BUS SERVICES AND INVESTIGATING THE FEASIBILITY OF 10-MINUTE FREQUENCY BUS ROUTES

ACTION ID6: IMPLEMENT TRANSPORT POLICY FOR GROWTH POLICY PT3 BY ENSURING THE DELIVERY OF FREQUENT BUS SERVICE (10 MINUTE SERVICE) LINKING NEW URBAN EXTENSIONS WITH (I) TOWN CENTRES; AND (II) NORTHAMPTON TRAIN STATION, SUPPORTED BY BUS PRIORITY, REAL TIME INFORMATION AND SMART CARD INTEGRATED TICKETING

ACTION ID7: ENSURE EXCELLENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CYCLE LINKS FROM URBAN EXTENSIONS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS (WHERE THEY ARE NOT PROVIDED ON-SITE)

The importance of access to a train station to most target groups underlines the need to continue to invest in improved train services, and improved transport interchanges, at Northampton. It is understood that WNDC is currently working with partners (including Network Rail and London Midland) on proposals to redevelop Northampton Castle station, creating a bigger and better facility, and that there are plans to introduce a new high speed, high frequency express service to London in around 2014. The delivery of these proposals would be of significant benefit to the attractiveness of Northampton area to the target groups.

Timetables for bus services to Northampton train station should align with current and future key service timetables (e.g. to London) wherever possible. This would reflect Transport Strategy for Growth Policy PT5, which emphasizes the role of Northampton train station as a high quality interchange facility (Northamptonshire County Council, 2007).

ACTION ID8: CONTINUE TO ENGAGE PARTNERS TO DELIVER IMPROVEMENTS TO NORTHAMPTON STATION AND ITS STRATEGIC (TO LONDON/ THE MIDLANDS) AND LOCAL RAIL LINKS

The research has also highlighted the attraction of cycling to some interviewees within the target groups (in particular younger target groups). WNDC should ensure the provision of high quality, attractive and safe cycle routes within developments and, where appropriate, developers make financial contributions to strategic cycle links. In particular, cycle links from existing and new communities to schools and other educational facilities (such as the university), and the town centres should be provided through developer funding, and any other funds available to WNDC.

Actions DC10 and ID9 below promote the provision of cycle routes both at a development scale and at a more strategic level, reflecting the following proposals set out in the Transport Strategy for Growth (Northamptonshire County Council, 2007):

“Policy CY1 - Cycle master plans will be developed after consultation with each local planning authority and local cyclists. These prioritised maps will reflect the results of cycle reviews and cycle counts and will be used to develop the improvement programme.”

“Policy CY2 - Future opportunities for routes in new developments will be identified by reference to cycle master plans, and safeguarded through the planning process”.

Improved provision of cycle routes should be supplemented by the provision of secure cycle storage space in new home and places of work.

ACTION DC10: REQUIRE PROVISION OF CYCLE ROUTES WITHIN DEVELOPMENTS

ACTION ID9: DELIVER IMPROVEMENTS TO STRATEGIC CYCLE ROUTES

ACTION DC11: REQUIRE ALL NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE, SECURE CYCLE STORAGE

Links to the countryside have been found to be important to all target groups: this is supported by research of resident and stakeholder attitudes in Cambourne new settlement in Cambridgeshire (Inspire East, 2007), which highlights the need to ensure that appropriate links are made to existing footpaths and cycle ways.

At the masterplanning stages for new developments, WNDC should therefore seek to require developers to ensure that appropriate links are made with the wider rural pedestrian and cycle network. These principles should be incorporated into the Design Coding document and, over the longer term, relevant Development Plan Document policies. This would be supported by Northamptonshire Transport Strategy for Growth Policy RA2, which states that “*urban cycle networks will be extended into the surrounding rural areas either by the upgrading of roadside/verge footpaths or by the use of lightly-trafficked minor roads*” (Northampton County Council, 2007).

ACTION ID10: DELIVER IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE, THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING AND AS AN INTEGRAL PART TO THE MASTERPLANNING FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Adequate road links should be provided from new development to the wider network, given car use of many target groups. However, this should be provided in the context of a national planning policy emphasis on sustainable transport (see ODPM, 2005), and the County Council’s objective of achieving a 20 per cent modal shift away from the car in new developments (Northamptonshire County Council, 2007).

Whilst target groups tend to express a preference for generous parking provision, national planning guidance promotes the restricted provision of parking in new developments as a means to address growing car use. Taking these factors into account, it is recommended that WNDC implements a set of maximum parking standards, but does not pursue prohibitively stringent controls. Annex 6 sets out the maximum standards provided in PPG13, along with an example set of indicative maximum parking standards for housing. These standards allow for slightly greater provision for larger houses, whilst smaller units such as flats are given lower provision. This creates a synergy between those family-oriented groups that prefer larger houses, and seek more generous parking provision, and those younger groups who seek more high density development types, and express less need for parking.

Case studies show that lower parking provision enables higher densities in terms of both number of units achievable and the number of net habitable rooms per hectare, boosting profitability (see English Partnerships, 2000). Thus, in relation to the discussion of the additional costs of increased development standards (see paragraphs 5.5.11 and 5.5.13 above), maximum parking standards could enable to recoup profits by allowing additional units. Such measures would, of course, need to be supported by high quality, frequent public transport links from new developments, as discussed above.

English Partnerships (2000; September 2007) promotes the provision on-street of parking, with any off street parking provided in rear (well-overlooked) courtyards, or on the building plot behind the existing building line. Garage space that forms part of the frontage of a building, and cars parked in front of a building reduce opportunities for natural surveillance of the street from inside properties, contradicting the importance of safe neighbourhoods to target groups. This also detracts from the overall quality of street scene, and thus the attractiveness of an area. The Manual for Streets (DfT, 2007) and English Partnerships (2000) provide useful advice in relation to how to accommodate the car into a high quality urban environment.

ACTION DC12: ENSURE ADEQUATE ROAD LINKAGES ARE PROVIDED FROM NEW DEVELOPMENTS WITH THE WIDER NETWORK

ACTION DC13: SEEK TO LIMIT PARKING TO THE MAXIMUM STANDARDS SET OUT IN PPG13, AND THOSE STANDARDS SET OUT IN ANNEX 6 TO THIS DOCUMENT

ACTION DC14: ENCOURAGE DEVELOPERS TO AVOID PROVISION OF INTERNAL GARAGES, INSTEAD PROVIDING ANY OFF-STREET PARKING VIA WELL-OVERLOOKED PARKING COURTYARDS

In terms of community facilities, all target groups expressed a preference for leisure uses and swimming pools. WNDC should investigate opportunities for, and the viability of, these facilities as part of growth in the three urban areas. This would include assessment of suitable sites (that could then be allocated as part of the LDF process), and the collection of Section 106 funds from developers to help funding.

ACTION ID11: INVESTIGATE AS A PRIORITY OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE LEISURE USES AND SWIMMING POOLS IN THE THREE URBAN AREAS

Urban extensions will have a crucial role in attracting older, wealthier and more family-oriented target groups (Wealthy Executives, Affluent Greys, Flourishing Families, Secure Families and Prudent Pensioners), reflecting the suburban (and rural) lifestyles sought by these groups. It is essential that the planning of these extensions also addresses common infrastructure needs arising from these particular target groups.

Schools have been found to be highly important to Flourishing Families and Secure Families, target groups which have a significant role to play in achieving the vision for each of the main urban areas. Research into resident preferences (Inspire East, 2007) has found that the quality of nearby secondary schools is a major attractor for future residents. Given the broad preference of

these groups for more suburban locations, it is essential that proper provision is made for development of new high quality schools as part of urban extensions to meet additional needs, in order attract these groups. Consultation with the County Council should be carried out to inform WNDC's approach, which could be formalised by a robust investigation into future education needs resulting from housing growth in the study area. Proposals for future education provision should in the long term be formalized through integration into WNDC planning standards and, eventually, relevant LDF documents. This would provide certainty for developers and the public sector, and enable the marketing for these areas to promote educational opportunities offered in the area.

It essential that there is excellent accessibility for new housing developments (again, focusing on extensions) to existing secondary schools, where the provision of a new school on-site is not required (see paragraph 5.5.27 and Action ID6 above).

ACTION PP2: PRODUCE EDUCATIONAL AND CHILDCARE NEEDS STUDY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

This research has highlighted the importance of other community uses such as doctors' surgeries and childcare facilities for family oriented target groups (chiefly Flourishing Families and Secure Families). It has also highlighted the importance of community spirit to Flourishing Families and Affluent Greys. Research into the views of residents and stakeholders of new development (Inspire East, 2007) demonstrates the importance of both formal and informal facilities to new communities, and of ensuring that these uses are provided from the outset of a development to meet people's needs and to enable community building. Such uses are "key meeting places and providers of the social framework that helps knit the community together" (Inspire East, 2007, page 6). It is essential, therefore, that WNDC ensures that early provision is tied into development phasing for major new urban extensions via Section 106 agreements.

Scott Wilson's experience of delivering a new community at Sherford new community has highlighted the role of new schools as community hubs as schemes are built out. In the initial phases of development, as the school is under-utilised, spare rooms can accommodate other uses (such as a GP's surgery). As development phases continue and more students arrive, these others can move into dedicated accommodation.

ACTION ID12: ENSURE ADEQUATE PROVISION OF HEALTH FACILITIES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE RELEVANT PCTS

ACTION DC15: ENSURE ON-SITE COMMUNITY FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED FROM THE OUTSET IN URBAN EXTENSIONS. THESE SHOULD BE PROVIDED AS PART OF A COMMUNITY HUB.

This research has highlighted the importance of employment opportunities in attracting target groups to the area (in particular Starting Out, Aspiring Singles and Educated Urbanites). The retention of existing and provision of new employment uses in the study area is therefore essential. The loss of employment uses should only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is no need for such as use in the area. Furthermore, the significant predicted growth of

Daventry and Towcester, and the aspiration to make Northampton a thriving regional town mean that it is essential that appropriate retail uses are also delivered to support and drive forward growth in the three urban areas.

ACTION DC16: IN CARRYING OUT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FUNCTIONS INVOLVING THE LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND, ASSESS THE NEED TO RETAIN AN EMPLOYMENT USE IN THE AREA

ACTION PP3: WORK WITH THE RELEVANT LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE EMPLOYMENT AND RETAIL LAND ALLOCATIONS TO ACCOMMODATE THE COMMERCIAL USES NEEDED TO ATTRACT TARGET GROUPS (I.E. THOSE SET OUT IN THE SNEAP)

The research has demonstrated that a significant proportion of residents of new developments will be working professionals. In order to respond to the likely activities of these groups, it is suggested that the Development Corporation encourages developers to provide wireless broadband and space for home offices into new development (see comments regarding flexible housing in paragraph 5.5.7 above). There is also the opportunity to provide a service that accepts postal packages that are delivered to people whilst at work: this service could be integrated into 'community hubs' along with flexible working space, where feasible and appropriate. These would add value to the developments and reflect the lifestyles of target groups.

ACTION DC17: SEEK INCORPORATION OF WIRELESS BROADBAND, SPACE FOR HOME WORKING AND A (WHERE APPROPRIATE) POSTAL RECEIPT SERVICES AND FLEXIBLE WORK SPACE AS PART OF COMMUNITY HUBS DURING THE MASTERPLANNING AND DESIGN CODING PROCESS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

This Section has set out a range of off-site, strategic services and infrastructure needed to deliver growth and attract target groups where contributions should be sought from developers in order to facilitate delivery. These funds could be sought via Section 106 agreements, or through a roof-tax, which Scott Wilson understands is currently being considered by WNDC. In brief, this Section has indicated in calculating contributions through these means, regard should be had to the need for the following;

- Strategic transport infrastructure, including improved train and bus services;
- Town centre public realm improvements in town centres;
- Education provision (secondary and further education);
- Health services
- Leisure and Open Space provision

Place making for Northampton

The broad spread of target groups for Northampton (ranging from Aspiring Singles through to Wealthy Executives) means that a range of housing types should be provided in a range of

locations. Whilst higher density flats and terraced houses should be sought in more central locations to meet the aspirations of younger target groups (e.g. Aspiring Singles, educated Urbanites and Prosperous Professionals), the more suburban urban extensions should aim to provide detached and semi detached homes of between 2 and 5 bedrooms as part of the housing mix.

ACTION DC18: NORTHAMPTON HOUSING MIX:

- **DETACHED AND SEMI DETACHED HOUSES (2-5 BEDROOMS), IN PARTICULAR IN URBAN EXTENSIONS**
- **TERRACED HOUSES AND FLATS, PARTICULARLY IN EXISTING URBAN AREAS**

As set out in Section 3 of this Strategy, central Northampton is to be at the centre of large scale growth in West Northamptonshire. The policy emphasis being placed on the regeneration of the town is reflected in the Development Corporation's vision for West Northamptonshire: "*Northampton will be transformed into a prosperous and dynamic regional city with a growing knowledge based economy*". These policy aspirations fit well with the urban living aspirations of the most significant young target groups for the town: Educated Urbanites, Aspiring Singles and Starting Out.

There is a large number of potential significant redevelopment sites in Central Northampton: Paragraph 3.21 of the Northampton Central Area, Design, Development and Movement Framework states: "*The impression gained from the plan is that there is vast potential for development in the town centre, despite the extent of the surviving historic fabric*" (BDP, November 2006). This provides the potential to improve the image of the town, and to deliver the mix of new uses needed to attract target groups.

Planning Policy Statement 6 (Planning for Town Centres) promotes mixed use development in town centres in order to secure their vibrancy, and states: "*[I]n order to deliver the Government's objective of promoting vital and viable town centres, development should be focused in existing centres in order to strengthen and, where appropriate, regenerate them*" (ODPM 2005b, paragraph 2.1).

This Strategy has underlined the significant link between housing growth and economic development in the town, and the importance of employment opportunities to a number of target groups. Forecast employment growth needs to be planned for spatially in order to achieve the appropriate balance between new jobs and homes, and to meet the aspirations of target groups. In particular, unless major new employment space is developed in the central core of Northampton, there will be less opportunity for attracting the urban-living lifestyle aspirations of Educated Urbanites, Aspiring Singles and Starting Out groups. WDC needs to start prioritising sites in the city for building a stronger agglomeration of businesses and strong city centre office market. Existing proposals for a major communications and business hub in the Rail Station area, and possibly a Business Quarter along Northampton Waterfront must be investigated in greater detail as a priority. This would reflect planning policy emphasis on directing office

development towards town centre locations, and would reflect and reinforce aims for the growth and regional status of Northampton as a town.

ACTION PP4: WORK WITH PARTNERS TO ENSURE A STRATEGIC FOCUS ON DELIVERY OF EMPLOYMENT USES IN CENTRAL NORTHAMPTON IN FUTURE PLANNING POLICY PRODUCTION

ACTION DC19: DELIVERY OF EMPLOYMENT USES IN CENTRAL NORTHAMPTON

It is essential that a vibrant mix of uses is achieved in central Northampton in order to meet the city living lifestyle and cultural aspirations of key target groups (namely Prosperous Professionals, Educated Urbanites and Aspiring Singles). It is important that existing proposals for a new Cultural Quarter in the Angel Street/ St Johns area south of the town centre should be taken forward in order to deliver this.

ACTION DC20: IMPLEMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE NORTHAMPTON CULTURAL QUARTER

There is also the opportunity to ensure a vibrant mix of uses at the individual building level. The Oxo Tower, on London's South Bank, provides an example of a 7-storey building that contains shops, cafes, restaurants, workshops/ retail as well as housing association housing (see English Partnerships, September 2007). These principles should be sought from new development in creating a vibrant, dynamic centre for Northampton.

ACTION DC21: INCORPORATE VERTICAL MIXED USES DEVELOPMENTS IN CENTRAL NORTHAMPTON

The Northampton Central Area Design, Development and Movement Framework (BDC November 2006) proposes a number of potential redevelopment sites that could contribute to the regeneration of central Northampton and to the delivery of a vibrant mix of uses to attract target groups:

- Redevelopment north west of the centre, with possible retail development and expansion of college uses;
- Northampton Waterfront, which currently has a poor relationship with the river, provides a potentially valuable resource. Proposals for 2,000 new homes along Waterfront provide the potential to change image and attract target markets. Hammarby Sjostad, Stockholm (Sweden) provides a popular example of the kind of high quality, high density (average 5 storeys) riverside development that could be sought in this location (see English Partnerships September 2007).

The Retail Strategy for Northampton Town Centre (CACI, 2008) also sets out a range of recommendations intended to make central Northampton a more attractive, vibrant and successful place. Key proposals in the Retail Strategy include:

- Public realm improvements and stronger shopper circulation between Abingdon Street and St Giles Street;
- Improved retailing and catering in Market Square and All Saints Square; and
- A stronger retail anchor in the All Saints Church area.

ACTION DC22: TAKE FORWARD EXISTING PROPOSALS FOR TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AS SET OUT IN THE NORTHAMPTON CENTRAL AREA DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK AND THE RETAIL STRATEGY FOR NORTHAMPTON TOWN CENTRE

ACTION PP5: PRODUCE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR MIXED USES AT NORTHAMPTON WATERFRONT

ACTION DC23: DELIVER HIGH QUALITY MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT AT NORTHAMPTON WATERFRONT

National planning guidance highlights the importance of high quality, vibrant public spaces (see ODPM, 2005). Improvements to the public realm are, of course, essential to the creation of a vibrant and successful town centre. Current projects include substantial improvements to Black Lion Hill, Marefair and to Gold Street as part of the Northampton Public Realm Project. In addition, the Northampton Central Area, Design, Development and Movement Framework (BDC, November 2006) and the Waterside Northampton Development Framework and Masterplan (Halcrow 2005) propose the following improvements:

- Proposals to redevelop car parks between town centre and waterfront area provide the opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the public realm in the currently under-utilised areas.
- Improvements to the Market square in order to create a “new focus and identity for the town centre” (BDC November 2006, p57);
- The Cross, linking the east-west streets of Marefair, Gold Street, and St Giles Street, and the north-south streets of Bridge Street and The Drapery- a strong route lining key areas of central Northampton (including station to the west and the, Waterfront to the south) with central Northampton. The Cultural Mile- roughly north-south, linking cultural destinations across the town centre;
- Integrating the Waterfront with the rest of the town, with improved landscaping and public realm, riverside walks. Setting for vibrant uses, taking advantage of key asset. This would include improved pedestrian links to the Waterfront through changes to Bridge Street, replacing the car dominated gyratory with simple a two way system, and active uses spreading south to the Waterfront.

Actions ID1, ID2 and ID3 address how WNDC-led Actions can continue to deliver appropriate public realm improvements.

The Development Corporation could also help to create safer streets in existing areas by working with partners (for example Northampton Borough Council), towards effective management and policing of central areas, in particular relating to the night time economy. As the town seeks to increase the vibrancy, level of activity and number of people living in central areas, this would help to make central areas more attractive to younger target groups.

ACTION PP6: WORK WITH PARTNERS TO PRODUCE A SAFER STREETS STRATEGY FOR CENTRAL NORTHAMPTON

It is essential that maximum use is made of the University as a means to attract younger target groups and to create a successful and vibrant town centre. Linkages should be made to the University both spatially and in broader partnership terms in order to make the most of this valuable asset and maximise the economic development opportunities it creates. As a priority, a focused study should address how detailed future development proposals and partnership working with the university could help to foster linkages between it and the wider town.

ACTION PP7: PRODUCTION OF A STRATEGY LINKING NORTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY WITH FUTURE GROWTH IN WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

There is the opportunity to take advantage to the synergy between the housing preferences and characteristics of younger target groups, and the need to increase the vibrancy of central Northampton by promoting the re-use of existing housing stock. This would reflect government emphasis on “making effective use of existing housing stock” (see November ODPM, 2006, paragraph 31). First, there is the potential to promote living over shops in central Northampton. This would reduce the number of vacant units above shops, increase activity in central areas. This has the potential to synergise with the large proportions of renters within the Aspiring Singles, and also Educated Urbanite and Starting Out groups.

As part of wider regeneration strategies, the Development Corporation could also work with partners to promote the renewal of any currently under-used housing stock, including Victorian terracing: this would strongly link with the housing preferences of young prosperous groups (Educated Urbanites and Aspiring Singles). The Development Corporation should investigate opportunities to link this with any plans (for example within the Borough Council) in relation to area improvements relating to decent homes, or to housing renewal of areas that currently suffer from poor perception issues (e.g. Kings Heath, Spring Borough).

A key action for the Development Corporation is therefore to work in partnership with other groups to deliver improvements to housing stock that would both respond to the city living and lifestyle preferences of younger target groups, and add to the attractiveness and vibrancy of central Northampton.

ACTION PP8: WORK WITH PARTNERS TO DELIVER RENEWAL AND RE-USE OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK IN CENTRAL NORTHAMPTON

Place making for Daventry

The future population projection for Daventry provides a clear emphasis on the attraction of family groups (including Secure Families, Flourishing Families) in order to deliver the vision for West Northamptonshire. The major urban extensions planned for the town provide the opportunity to accommodate these groups. New development in Daventry should therefore place an emphasis on the delivery of homes of between 2-4 bedrooms, reflecting the preferences of the target groups. A smaller number of housing units could also be provided as part of town centre regeneration schemes.

ACTION DC24: DAVENTRY HOUSING MIX:

- **DETACHED AND SEMI DETACHED HOUSES (2-4 BEDROOMS), IN PARTICULAR IN URBAN EXTENSIONS**
- **TERRACED HOUSES AND FLATS, PARTICULARLY IN EXISTING URBAN AREAS**

It is also essential that appropriate services are put in place alongside these developments both to support growth and the vision of reinforcing the family-friendly nature of Daventry. A strong emphasis must be placed on the provision of schools and childcare facilities in order to meet likely demand and to allow marketing of the area as a family-friendly location (please also see Actions PP2 and DC15 in relation to provision of schools).

At a strategic level, appropriate infrastructure should be put in place in order to address the potential for polarisation highlighted in this study. The provision of higher level education facilities (such as a new college) as well as major employment and learning facilities (such as the planned sustainable construction skills centre and a new central library/ exhibition centre) provide the potential both to meet the sustainable communities agenda by delivering improved opportunities for all, and to create new opportunities that would add the attractiveness of the area for all segments of the population, including target family groups. The formalisation of existing proposals for an Education Quarter adjacent to Daventry Town Centre would provide an excellent opportunity to increase the attractiveness of the area to target groups, as well as addressing issues of social polarisation issues.

ACTION DC25: TAKE FORWARD EXISTING PROPOSALS FOR EDUCATION, SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND LIBRARY/ CULTURAL FACILITIES

ACTION PP9: FORMALISE EDUCATION QUARTER PROPOSALS AT DAVENTRY TO GUIDE AND DELIVER DEVELOPMENT AND FOR USE IN MARKETING

It should be ensured that excellent links (in particular public transport links) should be provided between the new urban extensions, central Daventry (including higher level education and employment facilities) and wider West Northamptonshire. Without a major train station, it is essential that new developments contribute towards the improvement of strategic bus links between Daventry and Northampton and Towcester in order for new residents to be able to

access wider employment and leisure opportunities (please also see Action ID4 in relation to strategic transport infrastructure).

Given the level of growth anticipated for Daventry, it should be ensured that sufficient new facilities are provided in the centre of the town to support an increased population, and to reflect the change in stature of the town from rural centre to market town. WNDC should work with Daventry District Council to ensure that the Daventry Town DPD delivers appropriate facilities and services to achieve this (see Action PP3).

Place making for Towcester

It is clear that Towcester has the potential to attract wealthier target groups (Wealthy Executives and Prosperous Professionals) early on due to its existing attractiveness to these groups, compared to Northampton and Daventry. In particular, Towcester Vale provides an important opportunity to make provision for these groups. Reflecting the housing preferences of these key target groups, as well as other groups, such as Secure Families and Starting Out, new development should provide larger houses of 4+ bedrooms, as well as smaller detached, semi detached and terraced houses and flats.

ACTION DC26: DELIVER A RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES, INCLUDING DETACHED AND SEMI DETACHED HOUSES OF 4 BEDROOMS+, ALONG WITH SMALLER PROPERTIES INCLUDING FLATS AND TERRACES

The rural setting and high quality of housing already in Towcester provides a particularly strong opportunity for the town to build exceptionally attractive accommodation for those Wealthy Executives and Prosperous Professionals seeking a more village-based lifestyle over urban or suburban living. The other key opportunity is to build the right product for Starting Out groups, an important younger demographic that West Northamptonshire needs to attract and retain for its economic growth agenda. In terms of phasing, Towcester presents an excellent opportunity to attract all these groups from the outset, taking advantage of the accessibility to jobs in Milton Keynes and, in the future, Northampton.

Linked to proposals for Towcester town centre (see Action 30 below), it is essential that new communities have good links to the existing and potential new facilities in Towcester, in order to ensure accessibility to facilities and services, and to reinforce the village feel sought by target groups by allowing access to the centre.

ACTION DC27: CREATE VILLAGE CHARACTER IN TOWCESTER VALE URBAN EXTENSION THROUGH MASTERPLANNING

ACTION DC28: DELIVER VILLAGE RELATED FACILITIES (E.G. VILLAGE HALL, VILLAGE PUB) IN TOWCESTER VALE URBAN EXTENSION

ACTION DC29: ENSURE THAT TOWCESTER VALE IS WELL INTEGRATED WITH THE EXISTING SETTLEMENT OF TOWCESTER

The proposed housing growth of Towcester could significantly change the character of the settlement. New urban extensions will nearly double its population and will create the need for an expanded and more vibrant town centre. This provides the potential to build on the popularity of Towcester as a place to visit, whilst retaining the ‘village feel of what will become a small town. South Northamptonshire District Council (November 2007) has produced a supplementary planning document that provides a framework for development at Moat Lane, behind the high street. The proposals offer the potential to increase the attractiveness and tourist offer of Towcester by improving the built environment, and by delivering new high quality mixed uses to the area, including a boutique hotel, cultural uses and incubator offices.

ACTION DC30: DELIVER HIGH QUALITY MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT AT MOAT LANE, ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN THE SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE MOAT LANE SPD

5.5 Implementation and enforcement

Integration into the Policy Framework for West Northamptonshire

WNDC is currently producing a number of documents that set out its future approach to development in the study area (including Design Coding, Planning Standards and Infrastructure Delivery Framework documents). These interim documents enable the Development Corporation to ensure a consistent approach to development and infrastructure delivery, and it is recommended that the actions set out in this People and Places Strategy are integrated into those documents, as appropriate.

However, WNDC’s approach to new proposals must be integrated into the statutory development plan process in order for them to be given proper weight in the development control process. Planning Policy statement 1 (paragraphs 7 and 8) states:

“National policies and regional and local development plans (regional spatial strategies and local development frameworks) provide the framework for planning for sustainable development and for that development to be managed effectively. Plans should be drawn up with community involvement and present a shared vision and strategy of how the area should develop to achieve more sustainable patterns of development... This plan-led system, and the certainty and predictability it aims to provide, is central to planning and plays the key role in integrating sustainable development objectives”.

Given that the Development Corporation does not have plan-making powers, it is essential that WNDC works with the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and local planning authorities in the preparation of the local development framework for the area in order to:

- Enable the Development Corporation to require developers to achieve the Development Control standards sought using adopted planning policy;
- Provide input into the allocation and delivery of sites, in particular strategic sites, in order to ensure the delivery of growth in a properly planned manner;

- Ensure the delivery of necessary supporting facilities, services, infrastructure and mixed uses needed to ensure that development reflects the aspirations of the target groups, and to deliver sustainable growth;
- Ensure consistency between the objectives and activities of WNDC and those of its partners (in particular the constituent local authorities in the area); and
- Enable the community to participate fully in producing a framework for growth in the area.

Planning Policy Statement 12 emphasises the need for local authorities to work with partners to ensure that the infrastructure required to support growth can be delivered, stating that “[K]ey infrastructure stakeholders are encouraged to engage in such discussions (on infrastructure provision) and to reflect the core strategy within their own future planning” (CLG June 2008, paragraph 4.10). As a key mechanism for both funding and facilitating infrastructure provision, it is vital that WNDC informs and is informed by, the infrastructure planning process involved in local development framework production for West Northamptonshire.

ACTION PP10: INTEGRATE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL STANDARDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY ACTIONS INTO WNDC’S DESIGN CODING, PLANNING STANDARDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

ACTION PP11: INTEGRATE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL STANDARDS, DESIGN CODING AND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PROPOSALS INTO THE WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

ACTION PP12: WORK WITH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL TO INTEGRATE TRANSPORT-RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PROPOSALS INTO THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Implementation and enforcement of planning standards

The enforcement of the standards proposed in planning applications, and planning conditions related to those standards, is essential to the delivery of high quality developments that will attract target groups. Consumer concerns regarding the quality of new development relate in part to the actual standards of construction achieved. Whilst WNDC is currently responsible for enforcing compliance with the terms of planning agreements, it does not have responsibility for enforcing planning decisions or investigating breaches of planning control. It is therefore essential that WNDC develops strong working relationships with the enforcement departments of the relevant local planning authorities to ensure that the standards sought are achieved. This could involve additional funding from WNDC to these departments to ensure that they have sufficient resources to monitor the significant scale of development proposed over the next few years.

Without adequate enforcement, the potential place making benefits promoted in this Action Plan could be lost.

ACTION DC31: ENSURE THAT PLANNING STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS ARE ENFORCED POST-COMPLETION OF DEVELOPMENTS

It is also essential that ownership, management and maintenance responsibilities are clearly established for new developments, in order to ensure that community assets are properly cared for and quality of life maintained. Linking in with the desire of target groups for a safe and clean neighbourhood, it must be ensured that an appropriate mechanism for maintaining the public realm, and the funds available to support this, are clearly delineated as part of Section 106 agreements. Adoption of roads by the relevant highways authority should be achieved as soon as possible upon completion of the scheme to enable proper enforcement of parking and speed controls, to support quality of life (see Inspire East 2007). Without these controls, the aspirations of target groups for high quality, safe and clean neighbourhoods may not be achieved.

ACTION DC32: ENSURE COMMUNITY ASSETS (E.G. PUBLIC SPACES AND ROADS) ARE PROPERLY MAINTAINED AND OWNERSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CLEARLY SET OUT

5.6 Image and marketing

Communication of an image of a place plays a powerful part in the place-making process. Whilst the built environment can play a strong role in how a place is perceived, people's attitudes and perceptions are the final measure of place. Therefore, marketing can help shape those attitudes and perceptions directly.

General Approach

When considering the marketing function of the WNDC, it is helpful to consider two approaches to helping build demand for new housing: Attracting New Customers (Customer Acquisition) and Retention of Existing Custom (Customer Loyalty).

ACTION IM1: SUPPORT/ESTABLISH TWO DISTINCT CUSTOMER MARKETING FUNCTIONS:

- **CUSTOMER ACQUISITION**
- **CUSTOMER LOYALTY**

The growth agenda in West Northamptonshire is so vast, it will necessitate a substantial influx of new people to the area. However, a key question to ask when considering how to market West Northamptonshire to people, is what proportion of the population choose to move to a new area of the country?

In reality, the majority of the population are driven by the availability of employment – so one could argue that new employment opportunities will dwarf any direct marketing efforts to attract new people to the area.

Therefore, it could be argued that marketing effort should be focussed on attracting major employers to the area through an inward investment activity. And what would potential employers be looking for? They would certainly be interested in having access to a talented workforce and good relevant business connections relevant to their industry.

From this perspective, one could conceive that the purpose of direct marketing campaigns for attracting new residents to an area is actually to raise awareness amongst employers of the opportunities to locate to an area evidently making efforts to grow its talent-base.

And does the same apply with respect to customer retention? Would people really leave West Northamptonshire if they are not happy with their living standards? Or would it be completely dependent upon their employment situation?

ACTION IM2: STRENGTHEN INWARD INVESTMENT FUNCTION, TO CO-ORDINATE WITH CUSTOMER MARKETING

Increased employment opportunity will be essential to drive the target volume of growth in residential population. However, in combination with this increase in employment, it will be very important for customer marketing to attract and retain those people who do have more choice over the location of where they live and work. These people are the more affluent in society, who are able to vote with their feet on an area. They are those who have jobs from which there is a much lower skills-pool for UK employers to draw from. Therefore they are often prepared to move areas to take their next employment position, provided the right incentive and location.

ACTION IM3: PRIORITISE DIRECT CUSTOMER MARKETING ACTIVITY TO AFFLUENT GROUPS

Another pool of customers, are those who were born in West Northamptonshire, but currently work in larger centres across the UK. These people may have a longer term wish to move back to where their family and roots are. Attracting these people back should be easier than attracting those with no connections to the area. These people may have some negative views of where they used to live, and marketing activity will be crucial to communicate that West Northamptonshire is changing.

ACTION IM4: EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTRACT BACK CUSTOMERS WITH PREVIOUS CONNECTION WITH WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Finally, a strong advantage of concentrating marketing activity within and just outside the region, is that along with achieving retention, building up a sense of pride amongst existing residents will be key to virally making West Northamptonshire an attractive place to live.

ACTION IM5: BUILD IMAGE AND BRAND TO INSTILL SENSE OF PRIDE FOR WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AMONGST ALL RESIDENTS

Advice on image and data to assist in the selection of appropriate marketing channels has been provided for each of the selected primary target groups, for each location. Specific advice has

also been provided on the role of each respective town centre can play to the general image and marketing of the areas.

Annex 8 provides a series of maps, demonstrating the distribution of the target groups around the country: this will help to guide WNDC in terms of where to target future marketing.

ACTION IM6: DEVELOP A CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY THAT TARGETS CUSTOMERS BY BOTH THEIR SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPING AND THE TARGET RESIDENTIAL LOCATION (I.E. NORTHAMPTON, DAVENTRY, TOWCESTER), THROUGH IMAGE BUILDING AND PLACE MAKING ACTIVITY

Image to attract Flourishing Families to Northampton

Compared to Wealthy Achievers, this group's main obsession is family, with the breadwinner(s) driven to perform well at work to afford the best life for them all. Having to take family considerations into account means that this group is looking less at image and status, but locating themselves amongst others like them, to work in a herd to ensure having better neighbourhoods, safety, services and schooling.

The city centre would play a crucial role as the 'shop' window to their associated suburban living. The centre will need a strong retail and relevant leisure offer for families. The double-win of access to the country and access to the city is a key selling point.

Selling points would include:

- Time with the children
- Good pub
- Farm shops
- Local independents
- Dog friendly
- Quality design
- Environmentally friendly
- Mutually supportive neighbours
- City and Country
- Work-life balance
- Develop and promote much more relevant family-based activities in the city centre.

Sense of Place for Flourishing Families in Northampton

- Supportive Community
- City and Country

- Quality of Design - traditional building standards and character with modern energy efficiencies
- Locally sufficient
- Large, sustainable homes with gardens

Image to attract Approach to attracting Prosperous Professionals to Northampton

Whilst wealthy, many of these people are working very hard and need to access their place of work in often congested urban environments. A good commute to work is a highly valued commodity.

Therefore, sustainable modes such as walking and cycling are particularly appealing. Although this group has an affinity with urban living, they are older than their Educated Urbanites, and with their higher level of salary, and are looking for a location with the benefits of the city without the disbenefits.

CACI's work in Leicester paid close attention to the Prosperous Professional group – a group who would be looking for larger units within high density city locations, over and beyond that necessarily needed by a group with less children.

Similar themes have been drawn out in this research. They value quiet areas with properties that are light and airy. We would recommend developing an “urban oasis” concept, which provides people all the access to the city without the noise and pollution and cramped conditions. We would also recommend highlighting the points of difference of living in Northampton compared to living in a larger metropolitan area, including the idea of living in a compact city.

Compared to other groups, these people have high expectations of what the city should offer. The centre needs to be alive with farmers markets, events and cultural activity. In this sense, they are the most closely linked group to the Cultural Quarter masterplan activities in Northampton Town Centre.

Sense of Place for Prosperous Professionals in Northampton

- Friendly Community
- A cultural centre
- Light and airy design – the right ‘feel’
- Urban oasis in a compact city
- Large apartments and townhouses

Image to attract Starting Out to Northampton

This group are social networkers and looking for the right 'vibe' to a place. The advantages of being easy to get around and to be close to friends are a strong selling point. They are attracted by a place with a good mix of people and a good social scene.

This is the next generation, and therefore the more willing to adopt new enlightened, liberal lifestyles, and are looking for the housing product to match. However, the affordability of accommodation is a key factor, and as such affordability will be an important message to communicate.

There is a strong aspiration for gardens and off-street parking, which these customers cannot take for granted in terms of what they often can afford. Therefore communicating the opportunity to have garden space and off-street car parking will be a particularly strong selling point.

Other selling points would include:

- Care-free,
- Compact city living
- Quirky-different
- Walkability, cyclability
- Places to meet

Sense of Place for Starting Out in Northampton

- Vibrant community
- A place to meet and have fun
- Contemporary, quirky design
- Access to city life
- Affordable homes with outdoor space

Image to attract Secure Families to Northampton

These groups are looking for common values of respect, consideration and a comfortable, safe life. Their obsession is with accommodating their children. Areas need to be safe and traffic free. They are also looking for larger space than what they would perceive they would get from new development.

We would recommend the concept of marketing the concept of 'the space to breathe'. They would react well to being sold an English idyll, encapsulated by one respondent's desire for "Parks, Swings, Rivers and Streams".

Sense of Place for Secure Families in Northampton

- Respectful community
- A place for children
- Property designed to maximise space
- Traffic free and safe
- Access to green spaces
- Well-built family homes with gardens

Role of Northampton Town Centre

The historic character of central Northampton is an important asset that gives it an edge on nearby centres. The Northampton Central Area, Design, Development and Movement Framework (BDP November 2006, paragraph 2.26) states:

“The fact that the historic town centre is recognisable in the contemporary street map, over 120 years on, is evidence of the heritage value of the built environment and streetscape of the town, much of which is still evident on the ground. This is a key selling point for Northampton in comparison to its modern neighbours. The medieval origins of the market town are evident and the later Georgian and then Victorian developments have largely respected the historic street pattern”.

Linking this to retail the Framework states: “There is no doubt that the differentiating feature should be the quality of the retail, the availability of specialist and niche retail and the setting of the retail, in a high quality, traditional market town environment and heritage” (BDP November 2006 p35).

ACTION IM7: CO-ORDINATE THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT / INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVITY IN NORTHAMPTON TOWN CENTRE WITH MARKETING ACTIVITY, THROUGH AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CUSTOMER TYPES WHO WILL MOST BENEFIT/APPRECIATE EACH RELEVANT PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT AND NEW USE. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE INVOLVEMENT IN THE ORGANISATION OF EVENTS HOSTED IN THE CENTRE.

Image to attract to attracting Flourishing Families to Daventry

Compared to Wealthy Achievers, this group’s main obsession is family, with the breadwinner(s) driven to perform well at work to afford the best life for them all.

Having to take family considerations into account means that this group is looking less at image and status, but locating themselves amongst others like them, to work in a herd to ensure having better neighbourhoods, safety, services and schooling. The double-win of access to the town and country is a key selling point.

Compared with Northampton, Daventry is going to double in size, and therefore drastically change in terms of the level of infrastructure. This gives an opportunity to ensure school facilities are a top investment priority, which will be essential to attract Flourishing Families to the area – as they seek to be in the catchment of the best schools. The availability of fee-paying schools also needs to be considered, to anchor this population.

ACTION PP9b: WORK WITH DAVENTRY DISTRICT COUNCIL TO SEEK TO ESTABLISH FEE-PAYING SCHOOLS IN THE DAVENTRY AREA

This group is also the most environmentally aware, looking to ways they can reduce the carbon footprint of their homes and concerned about the impacts of global warming and rises oil prices on the future for their children.

This group are also very sensitive consumers when it comes to ethics and the negative impacts of globalisation. They are also particularly drawn to places with strong local trade. The opportunity for Daventry is to become a 21st century market town where gaining eco-town and fair-trade status are the most important ways of judging its success.

However, this will be entirely dependent on developing a much stronger town centre offer than is currently sustained, and making the centre relevant and usable for families.

Selling points would include:

- Time with the children
- Good pub,
- Farm shops
- Local independents
- Dog friendly
- Quality design
- Environmentally friendly
- Mutually supportive neighbours
- Work-life balance

Sense of Place for Flourishing Families in Daventry

- Supportive Community
- Town and Country – ‘Garden City’
- Quality of Design
- Traditional building standards and character with modern energy efficiencies
- Locally sufficient

- Large, sustainable homes with gardens

Image to attract Secure Families to Daventry

These groups are looking for common values of respect, consideration and a comfortable, safe life.

Their obsession is with accommodating their children. Areas need to be safe and traffic free. They are also looking for larger space than what they would perceive they would get from new development.

These groups are the life-blood of retail – and the increased levels of Secure Families represent a key opportunity for retail development, and likewise, this group is less sensitive to globalisation and will be expecting the town centre to have all the high street brands. There is an opportunity in Daventry to create a thriving retail environment, such as achieved in places such as Chichester, where independents are pepper-potted alongside national chains, so that they can thrive alongside each other.

A more detailed study is required to fully scope the retail opportunities for Daventry – and how this can be phased to match the housing growth, as the relationship between the two will be particularly sensitive.

ACTION PP13: WORK WITH DAVENTRY DISTRICT COUNCIL TO DEVELOP A STRONG TOWN CENTRE GROWTH STRATEGY FOR DAVENTRY THAT WILL MAXIMISE LOYALTY TO BOTH FLOURISHING FAMILY AND SECURE FAMILY GROUPS

Sense of Place for Secure Families in Daventry

- Respectful community
- A place for children
- Property designed to maximise space
- Traffic free and safe
- Access to green spaces
- Well-built family homes with gardens

Image to attract Wealthy Executives to Towcester

Access to the countryside is key to this group. Towcester has this access, but has much competition with quaint properties throughout the area.

For this reason the value of living in a market town, which provides a focus whilst having a village feel is crucial.

There is an opportunity here for the Wealthy Executives to buy into a series of flagship, unique designs which will act to generally create a buzz about the new housing. These properties will stand out to characterise the new Towcester.

Sense of Place for Wealthy Executives in Towcester

- Strong community spirit
- A place of leisure
- Contemporary design of the perfect home
- Bespoke architecture and limited editions of well known architects
- Setting the character for Towcester

Image to attract Affluent Greys to Towcester

Towcester presents the opportunity for an ideal place for retirement – the countryside and village feel, without being too far from services.

The town facilities in a village environment are key here. They will be looking at how they can get directly involved in community and will take particularly pride and ‘ownership’ of the town centre.

Appealing to this group would not be ajar to the overall conservative attitudes of the current population. Investing in community, cultural and tourist facilities will be relevant.

ACTION PP14: WORK WITH SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL TO DEVELOP A STRONGER CULTURAL AND TOURIST OFFER IN TOWCESTER TOWN CENTRE

Sense of Place for Affluent Greys in Towcester

- Established, mature community
- A place to start a 2nd life (the new retiring)
- Accessible design
- Access to all services
- Easy to maintain home

Image to attract Prosperous Professionals to Towcester

This commute-obsessed group will be sold by the great highways access in Towcester. More typically residing in city environments, in Towcester these people are reacting against a previous lifetime of urban-life.

For some ex-city dwellers, they are looking for the dream they have had for a while to have access to the country, a large property and a garden. While aspiring to the country, they need the town facilities to maintain their comfort.

Sense of Place for Prosperous Professionals in Towcester

- Friendly community
- A place to escape the rat-race
- Spacious, airy design
- Easy access to highway and country
- Large property and garden

Marketing Data for Northampton Priority Target Groups

Strategic target	Media (in order of preference)	Newspaper Influence	Interests	Target Locations
Wealthy Executives	Newspaper Airports & Railway Viral Trade press Lifestyle magazines	Telegraph Times Financial Times	Golf Photography Skiing Culture Investments	Northampton Kettering/Corby Bedford Coventry Milton Keynes High Wycombe Watford
Prosperous Professionals	Newspaper Airports and Railway Stations Trade press Lifestyle magazines	Guardian Independent Financial Times Times	Skiing Culture	North London West London South Birmingham Oxford Cambridge Leamington Spa South Birmingham
Flourishing Families	Lifestyle magazines TV Newspaper Airports & Railway Cinema / Childrens entertainment parks	Telegraph Times Mail	Gardening Golf Rugby Skiing Arts & Crafts Cookery Shopping	Northampton Kettering/Corby Birmingham Milton Keynes Watford
Starting Out	Newspaper Social networking sites Property sites Home improvement TV	Guardian Independent	Cinema Skiing Culture Football	Northampton Milton Keynes Coventry Birmingham Leicester
Secure Families	TV Shopping Centres Newspaper Cinema/Childrens entertainment parks	Express Mail	Football Fashion Sports Cookery Cricket DVD's	Leicester Birmingham Milton Keynes Luton

Marketing Data for Daventry Priority Target Groups

Strategic target	Media (in order of preference)	Newspaper Influence	Interests	Target Locations
Flourishing Families	Lifestyle magazines TV Newspaper Airports & Railway Cinema / Childrens entertainment parks	Telegraph Times Mail	Gardening Golf Rugby Skiing Arts & Crafts Cookery Shopping	Northampton Kettering/Corby Coventry Birmingham
Secure Families	TV Shopping Centres Newspaper Cinema/Childrens entertainment parks	Express Mail	Football Fashion Sports Cookery Cricket DVD/Games	Leicester Birmingham Milton Keynes Luton

Marketing Data for Towcester Priority Target Groups

Strategic target	Media (in order of preference)	Newspaper Influence	Interests	Target Locations
Wealthy Executives	Newspaper Airports & Railway Viral Trade press Lifestyle magazines	Telegraph Times Financial Times	Golf Photography Skiing Culture Investments	Northampton Milton Keynes Banbury High Wycombe Watford
Affluent Greys	Lifestyle Magazines TV Newspapers	Telegraph Times	Charity/Voluntary work Gardening Golf Photography Cookery Environment Hiking	Northampton Coventry Milton Keynes Banbury
Prosperous Professionals	Newspaper Airports and Railway Stations Trade press Lifestyle magazines	Guardian Independent Financial Times Times	Skiing Culture	Oxford Cambridge Leamington Spa South Birmingham

6 Action Plan

6.1 Introduction

The previous section provided a framework for the delivery of the WNDC Vision, and looked at a number of areas where Development Corporation activities could help attract and retain target groups. It introduced a series of actions, explaining how they would contribute to the creation of places that would reflect the needs and aspirations of a range of people. These draw together the common place making themes raised in the research (and also addressed in the place making crib sheet provided in Annex 5), introducing theme based actions required to achieve the vision for West Northamptonshire across the study area, as well as location-specific actions where appropriate.

The actions introduced in the previous section are summarised below in the form of Action Summary Tables. As opposed to the theme-based approach in the previous section, the Action Summary Tables provided below ordered by *area of activity*, in order to provide easier reference for those involved in different WNDC areas of activity.

Annex 1 provides a full Table of Actions which sets out more detailed information for each action, to enable each to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based (SMART). It sets out:

- A rationale for each action.
- Responsible partners for each action.
- Dependencies
- How each action could be monitored; and
- Timescale

The remainder of this Section is structured in the following way:

- Section 6.2: Action Summary Tables. This includes a summary of the evidence that supports the actions (i.e. the rationale);
- Section 6.3: Partnership working: as a crosscutting issue that will be integral to the delivery of many Actions proposed in this Strategy, this issue is discussed separately below;
- Section 6.4: Dependencies for the achievement of actions. This section addresses in broad terms the key barriers to the achievement of the proposed actions;
- Section 6.5: Steps for the delivery of actions. In order to give an indication of the timing for the overall delivery of actions, steps for delivery are discussed in broad terms.

6.2 Summary Tables

The Action Summary Tables are ordered to provide Actions in terms of area of activity, for ease of reference for those involved in different areas of work within WNDC. They are set out in the following order:

- Table 6.1: Delivery of Growth Actions;
- Table 6.2.1: Development Control Actions for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester;
- Table 6.2.2: Development Control Actions for Northampton;
- Table 6.2.3: Development Control Actions for Daventry;
- Table 6.2.4: Development Control Actions for Towcester;
- Table 6.2.5: Development Control Actions: Implementation and Enforcement across Northampton, Daventry and Towcester; and
- Table 6.3: Infrastructure Delivery Actions;
- Table 6.4: Image and Marketing Actions
- Table 6.5: Policy and Partnership Actions.

Section 5 of this Strategy provides the supporting argument for each Action introduced, linking each action to the target group preferences underpinning the action, and also to wider policy guidance. This is supplemented by the detailed information provided in the Annexes to this Strategy, which provide detailed information regarding:

Although many actions are new, this Strategy also reinforces a number of actions that relate to work already being carried out or proposed by the Development Corporation, but that would make a positive contribution to the Vision for the area. This is in order to create a comprehensive and integrated Action Plan.

Table 6.1 Delivery of Growth Recommendations

These overarching recommendations are intended to influence the approach taken across the board by the Development Corporation. They address the 'big picture' in terms of how the delivery of growth could be managed to ensure the early delivery of growth (and early attraction of family-oriented target groups) where viable, and how early provision of town centre uses and infrastructure would enable the attraction of younger target groups in town centre locations further into the future.

The delivery of Growth Actions are therefore overarching, and are intended to inform all areas of WNDC activity.

Delivery of Growth

DG1. Early delivery of major urban extensions in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

DG2. Continue delivery of town centre public realm improvements

DG3. Early delivery of town centre/ employment uses (office space, retail, leisure, cultural and other civic uses) in all three urban areas

Development Control Recommendations

The purpose of the Development Control recommendations is two fold. Firstly, they provide Development Control planners with immediate information to inform their approach to development proposals, and negotiations with developers.

Secondly, these Actions should be incorporated in to the planning policy framework for West Northamptonshire, in order to ensure the delivery of appropriate development standards (please see also Actions PP11 and PP12 above). This would involve the integration of the Actions into the Development Corporation's Planning Standards and Design Coding documents, and into the Local Development Framework for West Northamptonshire.

The Development Control Actions are therefore intended to inform the work of WNDC's development control officers, those producing Planning Standards and Design Coding documents, and also those officers at WNDC who would be responsible for liaising with the Joint Planning Unit and its constituent Local Authorities on planning policy matters.

Table 6.2.1 Development Control Recommendations for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

The Development Control Actions for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester relate to development standards that should be sought across the study area. These relate to those housing and neighbourhood qualities that were sought by all target groups, and would add value to all developments across West Northamptonshire.

Housing Standards, Design and Layout

- DC1. Continue to require Building for Life minimum silver standard for all new developments
- DC2. Ensure that non-residential buildings (particularly local centre and town centre buildings) also achieve high urban design standards
- DC3. Implement English Partnerships room space standards for new developments
- DC4. Implement High Code for Sustainable Homes sound insulation standards
- DC5. Design in gardens for all housing
- DC6. Limit flat developments to 4 storeys where possible

Open Spaces and Public Realm

- DC7. Deliver sufficient open spaces to meet needs in all new developments, in accordance with PPG17 open space studies carried out for Northampton Borough and Daventry and South Northamptonshire District Councils
- DC8. Implement Building for Life public realm questions (10 and 12)
- DC9. Implement Secured by Design standards for all new developments

Facilities, Services and Infrastructure

- DC10. Require provision of cycle routes within developments
- DC11. Require all new developments to provide appropriate, secure cycle storage
- DC12. Ensure adequate road linkages are provided from new developments with the wider network
- DC13. Seek to limit parking to the maximum standards set out in PPG13, and those standards set out in Annex 6 to this document
- DC14. Encourage developers to avoid provision of internal garages, instead providing any off-street parking via well-overlooked parking courtyards
- DC15. Ensure community facilities are provided from the outset in major new urban extension developments. This should be provided as part of a 'community hub'.
- DC16. In carrying out development control functions involving the loss of employment land, assess the need to retain an employment use in the area
- DC17. Seek incorporation of wireless broadband, space for home working and a (where appropriate) postal receipt services and flexible work space as part of community hubs during the masterplanning and design coding process for new developments

Table 6.2.2 Development Control Recommendations for Northampton

The Development Control Actions for Northampton relate to those area specific development standards and other development control implementation measures that would contribute to attracting the appropriate target groups to the town. The standards relate both to the approach to specific developments and improvements to the vibrancy and vitality of the centre of the town, a crucial element to attracting younger target groups.

Development Control Recommendations for Northampton

DC18. Northampton Housing Mix

- Detached and semi detached houses (2-5 bedrooms), in particular in urban extensions
- Terraced houses and flats, particularly in existing urban areas

DC19. Deliver employment uses in central Northampton

DC20. Implement proposals for the Northampton cultural quarter

DC21. Incorporate vertical mixed uses into developments in central Northampton

DC22. Take forward existing proposals for town centre regeneration as set out in the Northampton central area design, development and movement framework and the retail strategy for Northampton town centre

DC23. Deliver high quality mixed use development at Northampton Waterfront

Table 6.2.3 Development Control Recommendations for Daventry

The Development Control recommendations for Daventry relate to the approach to the housing mix in Daventry, and the implementation of existing proposals for facilities and services in the town.

Development Control Recommendations for Daventry

DC24. Housing Mix

- Detached and semi detached houses (2-4 bedrooms), in particular in urban extensions
- Terraced houses and flats, particularly in existing urban areas

DC25. Take forward existing proposals for:

- Education/ college facilities
- Sustainable construction centre
- Library/ cultural facility

Table 6.2.4 Development Control Recommendations for Towcester

The Development Control recommendations address the approach that could be taken to development within Towcester, given the particular target groups being sought in the town, in particular the need to create a village feel for new development in the town. Again, actions relate both to the approach to development standards, and the general approach to existing strategic planning proposals for new uses within central Towcester.

Development Control Recommendations for Towcester

DC26. Deliver a range of housing types, including detached and semi detached houses of 4 bedrooms+, along with smaller properties including flats and terraces

Development Control Recommendations for Towcester

- DC27. Create village character in Towcester Vale urban extension through masterplanning
- DC28. Deliver village related facilities (e.g. village hall, village pub) in Towcester Vale urban extension
- DC29. Ensure that Towcester Vale is well integrated with the existing settlement of Towcester
- DC30. Deliver high quality mixed use development at Moat Lane, according to the principles set out in the South Northamptonshire Moat Lane SPD

Table 6.2.5 Development Control Recommendations: Implementation and Enforcement across Northampton, Daventry and Towcester

The Enforcement and Implementation Development Control recommendations relate specifically to the need to ensure that development proposals are properly implemented across the study area. This is likely to require cross-working between WNDC development control officers and enforcement officers in Northampton Borough and Daventry and South Northamptonshire District Councils.

Development Control Implementation and Enforcement

- DC31. Ensure that planning standards and conditions are enforced post-completion of developments
- DC32. Ensure community assets (e.g. public spaces and roads) are properly maintained and ownership and responsibilities clearly set out

Table 6.3 Infrastructure Delivery Recommendations

The Infrastructure Delivery recommendations are intended to inform the WNDC approach to the delivery of infrastructure in the area. This includes the approach to the funding and delivery of projects in the short term, including integration into the Development Corporation's Infrastructure Delivery Framework. It is also proposed that these Actions are integrated into the local development (the West Northamptonshire Local Development Framework) and transport planning (Local Transport Plan) policy framework for the area (see also Actions PP12 and PP13 above).

These actions are therefore intended for use by the Development Corporation's infrastructure planning and delivery officers, as well as for those responsible for working with partner authorities on development and transport planning (i.e. Northamptonshire County Council, West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit, local authorities).

Infrastructure Delivery

- ID1. Integrate best practice guidance on public realm into future public realm investment schemes (and design coding document)
- ID2. Continue to deliver public realm improvements already proposed for Northampton, Daventry and Towcester
- ID3. Examine opportunities to deliver additional public realm improvements in Northampton Daventry and Towcester, including through Public Realm Phase 2
- ID4. Deliver frequent bus service (minimum 15-20 minute service) between the centres of all three urban areas
- ID5: Investigate opportunities to improve bus services between urban areas through seeking Quality Bus Partnerships and investigating the feasibility of 10-minute frequency bus routes
- ID6. Implement transport policy for growth policy PT3 by ensuring the delivery of frequent bus service (10 minute service) linking new urban extensions with (i) town centres; and (ii) Northampton train station, supported by bus priority, real time information and smart card integrated ticketing
- ID7. Ensure excellent public transport and cycle links from urban extensions to secondary schools (where they are not provided on-site)
- ID8. Continue to engage partners to deliver improvements to Northampton Station and to strategic (London, Midlands) and local rail links.
- ID9. Deliver improvements to strategic cycle routes
- ID10. Deliver improved pedestrian and cycle links to the countryside, through infrastructure funding and as an integral part to the masterplanning for new developments
- ID11. Investigate as a priority opportunities to provide leisure uses and swimming pools in the three urban areas
- ID12. Ensure adequate provision of health facilities in consultation with the relevant PCTs

Table 6.4 Image and Marketing Recommendations

The Image and Marketing recommendations are intended to inform the WNDC approach to their marketing and inward investment function, with regard to the 'people and places' theme of this report.

These actions are therefore intended for use by the Development Corporation's marketing and communication officers, as well as for those responsible for working with partner authorities on economic development (i.e. Northamptonshire County Council, West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit, local authorities).

Image and Marketing

IM1: Establish two distinct customer marketing functions; Customer Acquisition & Customer Loyalty

IM2: Strengthen Inward Investment function, to co-ordinate with customer marketing

IM3: Prioritise direct customer marketing activity to affluent groups

IM4: Explore opportunities to attract back customers with previous connection with West Northamptonshire

IM5: Build image and brand to instil sense of pride for West Northamptonshire amongst all residents

IM6: Develop a customer communications strategy that targets customers by both their socio-demographic grouping and the target residential location (i.e. Northampton, Daventry, Towcester), through image building and place making activity

IM7: Co-ordinate the physical development/infrastructure activity in Northampton Town Centre with marketing activity, through an understanding of the customer types who will most benefit/appreciate each relevant physical improvement and new use. This should include involvement in the organisation of events hosted in the centre.

Table 6.5 Partnership Working

The Partnership Working Recommendations are intended to inform the work of a range of WNDC areas of activity: most notably, town planning, transport and infrastructure planning, communications and delivery. Policy development and partnership working form a crucial umbrella for the implementation of WNDC activities.

WNDC's partner authorities have key roles to play in delivering the growth required to deliver WNDC's vision and attract the relevant target groups. A key finding of this Strategy is the importance of working with partnership authorities to ensure the delivery of services and infrastructure needed to deliver growth and, just as importantly, the need to ensure that any WNDC-led planning standards and infrastructure and development proposals are integrated into the relevant policy framework for the area.

By achieving an appropriate policy framework for infrastructure and development standards, a consistent and well orchestrated approach to growth would be achieved.

Partnership Working

PP1. Investigate potential for the integration of super-flexible homes into new developments in the production of the design coding document

PP2. Produce educational and childcare needs study in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council

PP3: Work with the relevant local authorities to ensure the provision of adequate employment and retail land allocations to accommodate the commercial uses needed to attract target groups (i.e. those set out in the SNEAP)

PP4: Work with partners to ensure a strategic focus on delivery of employment uses in central Northampton in future planning policy production

PP5. Produce brief for mixed use Northampton Waterfront

PP6. Work with partners to produce a Safer Streets Strategy for central Northampton

PP7. Production of a Strategy linking University with future growth of West Northamptonshire

PP8. Work with partners to deliver renewal of existing housing stock in Northampton

PP9. Formulate proposals for an Education Quarter at Daventry to guide and deliver development and for use in marketing

PP9b: Work with Daventry District Council to seek to establish fee-paying schools in the Daventry area

PP10. Integrate proposed Development Control and Infrastructure Delivery Actions into WNDC's Design Coding, Planning Standards and Infrastructure Delivery Framework documents

PP11. Integrate WNDC Planning Standards, Design Coding and Infrastructure Delivery Framework proposals into the West Northamptonshire Local Development Framework

PP12. Work with Northamptonshire County Council to integrate infrastructure proposals into Local Transport Plan

PP13: Work with Daventry District Council to develop a strong town centre growth strategy for Daventry that will maximise loyalty to both Flourishing Family and Secure Family groups.

PP14: Work with South Northamptonshire District Council to develop a stronger cultural and tourist offer in Towcester Town Centre

6.3 Partnership Working

Partnership working is of course essential for delivering the vision for the area, in particular relating to service and infrastructure delivery, and the integration of proposals for growth within plans and strategies.

Key organisations that will be essential for the delivery of the Actions set out above include:

- Northamptonshire County Council, as transport authority it produces the Local Transport Plan for the area as well as being responsible for education provision;
- Northampton Borough Council and Daventry and South Northamptonshire District Councils: who have responsibility for a wide range of functions including housing

issues, planning policy production (including the Joint Planning Unit) and planning enforcement;

- Network Rail, the strategic rail authority, who would be instrumental in delivering improvements to train service and station infrastructure;
- Northampton University, a key organisation that could be a key means of attracting younger target groups.

Whilst the action plan above provides actions for partnership working with each of these organisations, it is the Local Development Framework and Local Transport Plan documents that represent the key statutory documents that will drive forward physical development and infrastructure provision in the area.

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation should seek to work with the Joint Planning Unit and its constituent local planning authorities in the production of the following documents, in order to ensure that its objectives are, wherever possible, integrated into the planning framework for West Northamptonshire:

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy;
- Northampton Implementation Area DPD;
- West Northamptonshire Development Control Policies DPD;
- Daventry Town DPD;
- Development Guidance for Middlemore Site 6 SPD;
- Development Guidance for Middlemore Sites 7-9 SPD;
- (Northampton) Central Area Action Plan DPD;
- Sixfields Area Action Plan DPD;
- Towcester Town DPD;
- Moat Lane, Towcester SPD

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Northamptonshire covers both North and West Northamptonshire areas. The LTP for 2006-2011 was adopted in March 2006.

WNSDC should, of course, have regard to existing and planned research in support of the above documents, for example work relating to housing need, open space provision, retail, transport and location-specific development briefs. An extensive list of known existing and planned evidence base documents is provided the West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme (LDS). The West Northamptonshire LDS is available via the Joint Planning Unit website at <http://www.westnorthamptonshirejpu.org/>.

6.4 Dependencies: overcoming obstacles

The Full Action Plan provided in Annex 1 highlights a number of dependencies for the achievement of these actions. Key dependencies are addressed in turn below.

Deliverability

This Strategy (and indeed other documents currently being produced by WNDC) proposes a number of requirements for new developments in terms of infrastructure provision and increased development standards that could have implications in terms of development costs. It is accepted that commercial developers may be hesitant in providing standards above those that are required by adopted planning policies or building regulations. For this reason, Action PP11 and PP12 address integrating development requirements into the planning policy framework. As discussed in paragraphs 5.5.11 to 5.5.13 above, it is hoped that any additional developer costs can be recouped as a result of the added value achieved across the board by improved development quality and the delivery of significant new infrastructure for the area.

Housing Market and Scheme viability

There is a risk that fluctuating market conditions could risk making developments unviable, if developers are required to provide high development standards, at an extra build cost. However, this Strategy has highlighted the significant potential added value that these standards would create. Taken together, these could significantly increase the value of developments, thus providing developers with a payback at the point of sale. Given the scale of growth allocated to the area, it is essential that high standards are achieved in order to ensure that growth contributes to the improvement of the image of the area, rather than development that fails to contribute to the area and fails to attract target groups.

WNDC could in the future consider commissioning site-specific research to assess the master planning and design quality implications for specific locations and, through detailed scheme development appraisal, understand the feasible level of affordable housing and S106 contributions.

Availability of Section 106 funding

The level of funding available to spend on infrastructure will depend to an extent on funds available from Section 106 agreements (or planning obligations), in addition to the funding available directly from the Development Corporation. The Development Corporation's Infrastructure Delivery Framework addresses the funds to be sought from developers. As with development control requirements (see paragraph 6.4.2 above), it is considered that integration of these requirements into the formal planning policy framework for the area should be achieved in order to ensure that funds can be sought consistently from developers.

Stakeholder buy in/ conflicting objectives

The delivery of key objectives, in particular those relating to infrastructure and services, is dependent on working in partnership with providers. As it does not have plan-making powers, the integration of WNDC objectives into the planning and transport framework for the area is also dependent on policy making authorities. This Strategy has placed a strong emphasis on partnership working in order to ensure synergy with partners, objectives, plans and strategies. Section 6.3 above addresses key opportunities for partnership working.

6.5 Steps for delivering the Strategy Actions

The detailed Action Plan provided in Annex 1 provides detailed timings for each of the actions set out in the Action Summary Tables provided in Section 6.2 above. Table 6.5 below provides indicative steps for the delivery of actions.

Table 6.5 Steps for Delivering Key Actions

Action	Timescale			
	0-2	2-5	5-10	10-15
Action DG1: Early delivery of major urban extensions				
Action DG2: Continue delivery of town centre public realm improvements				
Action DG3: Early delivery of town centre uses (retail, commercial and civic uses) in all three urban areas				
Actions PP1-PP9*: Strategy development work with key partners				
*Includes Action PP3: Work with the relevant local authorities to ensure the provision of adequate employment and retail land allocations to accommodate the employment uses needed to attract target groups				
PP10. Integrate proposed Development Control and Infrastructure Delivery Actions into WNDC's Design Coding, Planning Standards and Infrastructure Delivery Framework documents				
PP11. Integrate WNDC Planning Standards, Design Coding and Infrastructure Delivery Framework proposals into the West Northamptonshire Local Development Framework				
Action PP12: Work with Northamptonshire County Council to integrate infrastructure proposals into Local Transport Plan				
Development Control (DC) actions				
Infrastructure Delivery (ID) actions				
Image and Marketing (IM) actions				

Steps for Delivery of Growth Actions

As discussed in Section 5.3 above, the early delivery of urban extensions would enable more constraint-free greenfield development to be developed early, and provide the potential to unlock substantial funding for infrastructure. It would enable the attraction of family target groups. Early delivery of town centre uses and town centre improvements would create the conditions necessary to attract the younger target groups, who seek town centre uses and high quality urban living offer that still needs to be developed in the urban areas, in particular Northampton. Early delivery of more family-oriented urban extensions also provides the potential to bring in the younger target groups of the future.

Steps for Delivering Development Control Actions

In the short term, the Development Corporation will be able to seek the Development Control actions set out above through negotiations with developers as it carries out its development control functions. It should be noted that, without policy backing, it may be difficult to require developers to provide standards that are not set out in a development plan policy. This approach on its own should therefore only be seen as an interim, short term measure, and should be supported by policy backing as a priority over the longer term.

Steps for Delivering Infrastructure Delivery Actions

The Infrastructure Delivery Framework being produced by the Development Corporation will again enable a consistent approach to the delivery of services and infrastructure and growth, and thus in the short term it is recommended that the Infrastructure Delivery actions set out above are incorporated into that Framework.

Again, however, it is recommended that, as a priority, the Development Corporation works with partners (notably West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and its constituent local authorities, and Northamptonshire County Council) to integrate infrastructure proposals into plans and strategies in order to enable confidence in delivery for all concerned. As well as helping to create places that would be attractive to target groups, incorporation into strategies would provide benefits in terms of the opportunity to highlight these facilities and services as part of marketing campaigns.

Steps for Delivering Image and Marketing Actions

The first steps for delivering the actions identified is for a structural review of the marketing, communications and inward investment functions, to ensure that actions are aligned with the principles of both customer acquisition and retention, and that customer marketing is well-coordinated with inward investment activity.

To implement a customer communications strategy and to be effective in activities such as marketing Northampton Town Centre, communications between partner organisations will need

to be further strengthened; and processes identified to allow funding streams for marketing activities to be combined and activities co-ordinated with partner organisations.

Steps for Delivering Policy Influencing and Partnership Working Actions

It is recommended that the Development Corporation integrates the additional Development Control standards set out in the Action Summary Table above into its Planning Standards and Design Coding documents as a priority, in order to provide certainty for developers, and to ensure a consistent approach to planning applications. Given the time frame for the production of these documents, it is considered that this should be achievable within the next year. However, as these documents do not represent planning policy, this approach should again only be used as an interim measure.

The Development Corporation should work with the West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and its constituent local authorities to integrate the Development Control standards sought within its Planning Standards and Design Coding documents (including any standards suggested in this People and Places Strategy) into the local development framework(s) for the area, as appropriate. It is anticipated that the relevant local development documents will be adopted over the next five years (see West Northamptonshire JPU, March 2007).

7 Moving forward

7.1 WNDC Activities

This Strategy has set out a range of Actions and indicative timescales for the delivery of these actions. These actions relate to WNDC's functions as a development control authority, as a key mechanism for infrastructure delivery (including as a source of funding), and as a focus for partnership working, a key factor in the delivery of growth.

It is hoped that these Actions will enable the Development Corporation to deliver housing, regeneration and infrastructure that reflects the preferences of the target groups needed to fulfil its vision, and that will reflect the principles of the sustainable communities agenda.

7.2 Further work

The Policy Influencing and Partnership Working Actions set out in Section 6.2 (and in more detail Annex 1) suggest the production of a range of new studies that could contribute to creating places that attract target groups and inform the future growth of the study area. This section sets out a number of additional work that should be considered in the short term by WNDC that would complement and build on the recommendations in this Strategy.

WNDC involvement in local development framework production

A key recommendation of this Strategy is that WNDC place making and infrastructure objectives should be integrated into the local development framework currently being produced by the West Northamptonshire JPU, and its constituent local authorities. It is suggested that, in order to achieve this, as a priority, WNDC formulated a strategy for consistently involving itself in this process.

Housing needs and existing communities

This Strategy has set out a range of Actions, informed by the preferences of specific target groups needed to achieve the delivery of market housing, and the economic aspirations set out in the SNEAP. However, it is of course essential that the interests of existing communities are fully taken into account in order to deliver places that reflect the needs and preferences of all groups, and therefore to truly deliver sustainable communities.

It is therefore suggested that WNDC carries out further research into the needs and preferences of existing communities on housing, neighbourhood qualities and infrastructure. This could be carried out jointly with the West Northamptonshire JPU in order to inform local development framework production.

Best Practice from benchmark towns

This strategy has used the existing policy framework and best practice guidance to develop place making Actions to create a more attractive area for future target groups. It has used benchmarking exercise (see Sections 2 and 4.2 above) to assess the kind of towns that Northampton, Daventry and Towcester should seek to emulate in the future in order to achieve the vision for the area. It is suggested that WNDC assesses best-practice from these areas: this could be achieved in the form of field visits to these areas. The Development Corporation could even consider beginning an open dialogue with the authorities in these areas as a means to develop best practice learning.

The future benchmark towns for each area are:

- Northampton: Leicester, Cambridge, Oxford, Reading, Southampton, Brighton and Crawley
- Daventry: Kettering, Witney, Leighton Buzzard, Letchworth Garden City and Braintree
- Towcester: Buckingham, Saffron Walden, Thame, Godalming and East Grinstead.

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