SECTION 1.0
INTRODUCTION
1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Development Framework (SDF) has been prepared by the West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) in relation to the 41Ha of land south of Bedford Road and east of London Road in Northampton.

The land is known by the local planning authority and other agencies as ‘Avon Nunn Mills’. However, it comprises three main sites – Avon, Nunn Mills and Ransome Road (ANMR) – and other land owned by Network Rail and WNDC. The ANMR site area is shown in Figure 1.

The SDF has a number of specific purposes. It will:

- Provide WNDC as the determining authority with a framework to help determine planning applications (i.e. during pre-application discussions) and will feed into the evidence base of the emerging Central Area Action Plan (CAAP);
- Support WNDC’s proposed Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to acquire land of unknown ownership in order to enable the construction of a new access road off Nunn Mills Road;
- Provide the rationale for WNDC to secure Government funding for its financial contribution to the delivery of a comprehensive regeneration scheme for the land; and
- Form the basis for WNDC’s future representations on the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) in respect of this land.
This SDF has been informed by discussions with West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Northampton Borough Council and with the landowners and their agents.

Two consultation events were held on October 20th and December 8th 2009 with key stakeholders. The first event took the form of a facilitated workshop to help shape the vision and objectives of the SDF. The outputs were used to inform the development options to test the capacity of the site for various forms of development.

The second event was used to seek those same stakeholders’ views on the emerging vision, objectives and spatial framework, using two development scenarios to demonstrate the impact of retaining and removing the main rail line safeguarding constraint. The output of this event has helped inform this report.

The details of these events are included in Appendix A.
The following background information has been reviewed:

- The planning applications submitted for the Ransome Road (WN/2006/0016) and Avon/ Nunn Mills (WN/2006/0014) sites in 2004;
- Ransome Road Masterplan, November 2006, Halcrow for Homes & Communities Agency (HCA);
- Avon Nunn Mills Regeneration Statement, March 2009, WNDC
- Avon Nunn Mills Vision Framework, October 2008 (HOK for Garbe);
- Masterplan, February 2009 (HOK for Garbe);
- West Northamptonshire Emergent Joint Core Strategy, July 2009, West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit;
- West Northamptonshire Strategic Employment Land Assessment (SELA), November 2009, WNJPU; and
- West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), December 2009, WNJPU.
SECTION 2.0
POSITION STATEMENT
The ANMR land is currently in five main land ownerships (See Figure 2).

Two separate but concurrent outline applications for the Avon Nunn Mills sites and the Ransome Road site have been made, which have not been determined, though planning permission was resolved to be granted by WNDC in 2007, subject to the agreement of a S106, which has not been signed to date.

The HCA is currently in the process of updating the existing planning application and TWP/Avon/Garbe are currently preparing new planning applications for the land to the north of the railway line.

The existing WNDC land will form part of the Avon/Garbe Group (AG) planning application and the land subject to its proposed CPO may form part of the AG and TWP applications. The Network Rail land is not expected to form part of any of the applications. Each application is expected to be submitted to WNDC for determination in 2010. The WNIPU is preparing the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy for submission in 2010 and Northampton Borough Council is preparing to submit the CAAP (which includes the land) in 2010.

The Northamptonshire County Council has prepared a Multi Modal Model to assess the individual and collective impact of development proposals in the JC and CAAP. It is understood that the model will be available for use in early 2010.
2.2 POLICY

PLANNING POLICY

The Emergent version of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) considers the ANMR land as part of the Northampton Implementation Area for housing growth and the Northampton Central Area for employment growth. As such, the JCS does not specifically identify the ANMR land. Rather, the JCS has included the housing and employment quantums of development based on the consented schemes in 2006 in its assessment of the existing urban capacity.

The JCS also proposes a major public transport infrastructure improvement to connect the various proposed growth areas in South East Northampton to the city centre. Although not precise, its Key Diagram indicates that this route may pass through the ANMR land (referred to more specifically in the CAAP below). It is understood that this proposal has not been developed or tested further.

The West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for West Northamptonshire has highlighted the potential for major housing development at ANMR. Covering Avon Nunn Mills (site ref. 201) and Ransome Road (site ref. 181) sites separately, the SHLAA re-affirms the quantums of dwellings proposed in the 2006 consented planning applications, i.e. 1,250 and 800 units respectively. It acknowledges various physical constraints and the viability challenges presented by the need for new infrastructure, though does not acknowledge the potential identified in the Strategic Employment Land Assessment (see below) for employment-related development. It sets out a 9 – 11 year potential development timetable from 2011-12 through to 2021-22 at an annual build-out rate of between 50 – 150 units.
The West Northamptonshire Strategic Employment Land Assessment (SELA) identifies the 12 Ha Avon site (‘N5 Waterside East - Avon’) within the ANMR land as a Potential Strategic Employment Site as part of Northampton Town Centre. The SELA recommends the site is subject to further evaluation in respect of policy, sustainability and deliverability but acknowledges that it has significant alternative potential for housing development.

The Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) sets out a vision for Northampton of an exemplar European city of circa 300,000 population and outlines the following key objectives for the land:

- 2,150 dwellings (1,250 at Avon Nunn Mills and 800 at Ransome Road);
- 17,500 m² of B1 floorspace across the site (28,000 m² minus Avon HQ @ 10,500 m²);
- An extended electrical transformer site;
- A neighbourhood retail centre;
- Play areas with links to adjoining leisure/open space assets;
- A CHP scheme; and
- Transport related principles which include a new link between Bedford Road and London Road through site (with junction improvements), a new road bridge over the safeguarded rail route, a public transport service to the city centre, a pedestrian bridge over the railway, the continuation of the riverside walk/cycleway and new cycle links to Hardingstone and Brackmills.

The CAAP acknowledges the safeguarded rail line route and seeks to identify the ANMR land as the location for part of the new public transport infrastructure proposed in the JCS.

The combination of the city wide policy aspirations for Northampton and the proposals contained within the Waterside Northampton, Strategic Framework for the Design and Development of Northampton’s Waterside, August 2009, David Lock Associates for WNDC, is illustrated in Figure 3.
TRANSPORT

There is an Northamptonshire County Council adopted transport strategy for growth, with sets out a 20% Model Shift Policy.

Northamptonshire County Council currently has two traffic models; the updated version of the older Northampton Multi Modal Model (NMMM) and the emerging Combined Northamptonshire Model. It is understood that NMMM model will continue to be used until it is replaced by the Combined Northamptonshire Model which is not currently ready for use for development assessment.

The Highways Agency issued an Article 14, TR110 holding objection to the granting of planning permission for the previous applications for the development.

The Highways Agency’s objection was with regard to the inadequate assessment of the impact of the traffic from the development on the A45 Trunk Road and the need, or otherwise, for improvements to the A45 in the light of the Highways Agency’s previous comments.

The original planning applications established that the primary vehicular access routes in to the site would be via Nunn Mills Road and Ransome Road with new junctions proposed to be constructed at the junctions of these roads with Bedford Road and London Road respectively. Nunn Mills Road and Ransome Road would be connected by a new link road (crossing the safeguarded rail line that bisects the site), which would be the main access road for the development.

A secondary access from New Southbridge Road has been shown on previous master plans for the development. The existing cul-de-sac already serves a large number of residential units and the assignment and distribution of units that could be accessed via this road would need to be tested.

It is understood that Avon Cosmetics have an extant right of access from the eastern end of New Southbridge Road. However, it is unlikely that this access could provide anything other than very limited, immediate access to the site.

In response to the previous development proposals the Northamptonshire County Council stated that no more than 650 residential units could be accessed from Nunn Mills Road and that no more than 450 residential units could be accessed from Ransome Road as a single points of access, which was conditional upon the improvements of the Bedford Road and London Road junctions and other improvements being implemented prior to any occupations. In view of the time that has elapsed the trigger levels will need to be reviewed and determined with the County Council.

There are site aspirations for dedicated pedestrian and cycle routes to link the town centre, local facilities and Delapre Park together with a new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists across the River Nene to the north of the site providing a direct link to Becket’s Park, an existing supermarket and a direct route towards the town centre.

An assessment of the quantum of the development that can be served from Nunn Mills Road and Ransome Road as single points of access will be required. It is likely that the quantum of development that can be accessed will be restricted and the trigger levels for the provision of the proposed connecting link road will need to be determined and agreed with the Highway Authority and Northamptonshire County Council.

Transport Assessments will need to identify the areas where mitigation of the impacts of the proposed development are required and use this information to prepare an Access and Movement Strategy which would inform the overall approach to mitigation. Measures to prevent ‘rat running’ of traffic between London Road and Bedford Road are likely to be required.
Alongside the Transport Assessments, planning applications will have to have a co-ordinated and robust Travel Plan as a key requirement of the Highways Agency and Northamptonshire County Council in order to secure a modal shift away from car usage towards sustainable methods of transport. Any measures put forward in the Travel Plan will be critical to securing support of the Highways Authority.

Improvements at the Nunn Mills Road / Bedford Road and Ransome Road / London Road junctions have previously been identified as being required and the extent and type of improvements would need to be re-assessed. Other off site junction improvements are likely to be required.

In addition, during consultations with the County Council, it has emerged that there are tentative proposals associated with the proposed expansion to the south east of Northampton for a future public transport route from the A45 Brackmills junction, via Eagle Drive, around the western side of Delapre Lake and connecting the above. There is the potential for this route to be incorporated in the detailed design of the extension of Ransome Road, although as with the above, this route has not been developed or tested further.

**REGENERATION**

Early in 2009, WNDC prepared a Regeneration Statement to formulate its response to the masterplan published by HoK on behalf of Avon/ Garbe. The Statement set out the following key objectives for the site:

- Sub-regional role for regeneration and town centre extension;
- Economic driver, new community and leisure/visitor attraction;
- Strategic inward investment opportunity for B1 (creative cluster) growth;
- Exploit location and movement networks with sustainable transport;
- Exemplar to promote city status;
- Waterfront destination and support facilities;
- Clear link to town centre;
- High quality design of built environment and public realm;
- Step change in regeneration of town and eco performance;
- Residential offer that fits town’s aspirations; and

Although not adopted as such, the statement provides a helpful starting point for the SDF, one of the main purposes of which is to demonstrate that these objectives are compatible.

The assessment of the various physical constraints has been determined by examining, where possible, the original planning applications and masterplans no additional study of these constraints has been undertaken for the SDF.
2.3 PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS

GROUND CONDITIONS
It is known that the ANMR land has widespread ground condition problems from its previous industrial and landfill uses. In places, the extent of these problems may constrain particular forms of development (e.g. houses with gardens) and the location and type of public open space (e.g. allotments). The environmental assessments supporting future planning applications will be expected to set out these problems and the proposed solutions in detail.

UTILITIES
The remaining buildings of the former Nunn Mills Power Station have an operational local sub-station, which is integral to their structure. It is expected that this sub-station will be replaced as part of the development scheme and that these buildings may be demolished and re-developed.

The sub-station on the eastern edge of the ANMR land is a major part of the Northampton utilities infrastructure. It is possible that the physical extent of the sub-station may need to be extended onto the ANMR land (assumed to be the land between the current site and the former rail line to the immediate south) and therefore this land should be safeguarded for this purpose. In any event, a 5 metre buffer is required from the substation to adjoining development.
The site falls within defended flood zones 2 and 3. A recent flood defence scheme delivered by HCA and part funded by WNDC has delivered 1:200 year event protection. Hardingstone Dyke runs alongside the railway line to provide part of the current site drainage system. The Environment Agency requires a 9 metre buffer to the River Nene corridor.

NBC is currently preparing a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), due for publication shortly, which includes a breach model. It is anticipated that the ANMR site will pass the PPS25 sequential test for housing and commercial development.

The Flood Risk Assessment for each forthcoming planning application will need to set out how the development proposals will manage any residual flood risk.

The Environment Agency scheme for a marina opposite the site on the River Nene has been approved for implementation in 2010. There is no capacity for an additional marina on the site.

OTHER CONSTRAINTS

The Grade II* Listed Engine Shed to the north of the railway line needs to be retained or reused. The building is currently in poor condition, having been vacant for a number of years.
2.4 SITE OPPORTUNITIES

The context of the site and its physical constraints present a number of unique opportunities for development adjacent to the town centre.

- The northern edge fronts the river and provides the opportunity to create a new destination for Northampton.
- The southern edge fronts Delapre Park and the lakes and provides the opportunity to improve links with the park and respond to the historic setting of Delapre Abbey.
- The site sits between Becket’s Park, City Meadows and Delapre Park and provides the opportunity for ‘green’ links between them, surrounding neighbourhoods and the city centre.
- Footpaths surrounding and running through the site provide the opportunity to create a network of pedestrian and cycle routes over the railway and river to link the centre with surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Points of access in to the site provide the opportunity to better integrate existing neighbourhoods with new development.
- Retention and refurbishment of the Grade II Listed Railway Shed provides the opportunity to create a focus for future community uses and celebrate the heritage of the site.
- The design and massing of the Avon Headquarters sets a precedent for future development across the site.
SECTION 3.0
THE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
“A new neighbourhood of Northampton’s city centre offering families and commuters the convenience of location in a beautiful green setting with a variety of local facilities offering corporates and inward investors Northampton’s most prestigious office address.”

### 3.1 Introduction

Based on the physical constraints and opportunities in Section 2.3, this section sets out the agreed vision for ANMR land and translates it into a spatial framework with overarching development objectives and specific guidance for character areas within the site on which future development proposals are expected to be based.

The vision highlighted on the adjacent page seeks to differentiate the value propositions of those choosing to live, work and invest in this area from those of neighbouring developments anticipated in the city centre in coming years.

The framework objectives expand on the vision in greater detail highlighting specific ideas and opportunities and providing the basis for the development framework design rationale.

The development framework is a composite of design principles that will need to be responded to in future masterplans. It focuses on access and movement, green infrastructure, broad land uses and urban design principles.

The character areas are driven from a combination of site response and the development framework and set out specific design principles for future development.
DEVELOP A DISTINCTIVE RESIDENTIAL OFFER FOR THE NEW CITY CENTRE

House types, size and tenure will be mixed to encourage a diverse community that is able to accommodate households through all stages of their lives. Affordable housing will be distributed across the site and is likely to be primarily rented accommodation and some shared equity. Approximately 30% of the houses will be apartments. The average density across the whole site is anticipated to be 50-60 dwellings per ha. It is anticipated that the majority of the neighbourhood will be higher density family housing.

The vision will deliver primarily residential development but will include high end commercial development, mixed use development and retail premises that will complement not compete with those already existing in other neighbourhoods. A two-form entry primary school and community facilities will be provided in line with the phasing of new development. The School will be within walking distance of the centre and within close proximity to other community facilities and amenities.

It is recognised that homes and buildings cannot be sustainable in isolation. In many cases it makes sense to join up delivery of infrastructure such as energy, water and waste at a community scale, creating a cost-effective means of meeting the needs of new development in ways that will benefit existing communities too. Community energy systems and the potential to make use of emerging thinking around the ‘allowable solutions’ mechanism could figure prominently in the low carbon solutions necessary to deliver the Avon Nunn Mills and Ransome Road sites.
CREATE A NEW WATERSIDE COMMERCIAL OFFER FOR NORTHAMPTON’S FUTURE CITY CENTRE

The Avon HQ will become the centrepiece of the city centre’s new waterside commercial area. Large businesses and other organisations will view the site as a highly competitive and efficient location, benefiting from the proximity to the city centre attractions, good transport links and a high-quality environment. The opportunity for employees to live nearby will also be important. The scale and architecture of the Avon building will set a design standard for these future buildings along the waterfront.
IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY TO AND FROM THE CITY

A designated public transport corridor through the site will facilitate better ways for people to move between the city centre, surrounding neighbourhoods and new neighbourhoods to the south of the city. A network of pedestrian and cycle routes will link residential areas with employment and local amenities. New routes will be introduced over the railway and river corridors to create better links between the city centre, Delapre Abbey, Becket’s Park, Hanlinglestone and Brackmills.

A vehicular crossing/s will be provided across the public transport corridor. Bus stops will be located along strategic routes within a five minute walk of employment areas and the neighbourhood centre to ensure that public transport becomes the cheapest and quickest way for people to travel. Car dependency will be reduced through various initiatives, these may include car pool club, a car sharing scheme, cycle hire and repair facilities and providing each new house with a bicycle and storage facility.
EXPLOIT THE NATURAL ASSETS OF THE SITE

The existing open spaces within and adjacent to the site, their relationship with the countryside and the biodiversity of the land will be maintained and enhanced. Existing green infrastructure will be improved and increased to provide convenient areas of amenity to encourage walking and cycling and promote health and well being. Sensitive ecological areas will be retained to enable habitats to be enhanced and species protected.

A network of ‘green’ corridors will provide views out to the countryside, link new green spaces with Becket’s Park, Delapre Abbey and City Meadows and provide access to different types of amenity which will include greens, squares, allotments, formal and informal play areas, health trails and playing pitches. Planting and new water bodies will be introduced in areas where there is currently limited wildlife. Existing watercourses will be enhanced to create environments with greater biodiversity and encourage new habitats.

Water will be conserved across the site through the use of sustainable urban drainage systems. The topography of the site and the location of existing watercourses and water bodies will be used to form a network of swales, gulleys and rills that feed into balancing water bodies. Buildings will be fitted with facilities for grey water recycling and run off from buildings will be reduced through the use of green roofs and water storage tanks.
3.3 THE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The development framework builds on the vision and objectives set out in Section 3.2 and establishes the overarching design principles for ANMR land that all future masterplans will need to respond to.
3.4 THE CHARACTER AREAS

AVON WATERSIDE
A vibrant mixed use waterfront that provides a prestigious business destination focused on the River Nene.

Design principles for Avon Waterside are:
- Mixed use development with commercial focus, high density housing and apartment living fronting the River Nene.
- Provision of a designated pedestrian and cycle route running along the waterfront.
- Integration of the natural setting of the river frontage and landscape buffer with new development.

NUNN MILLS CENTRE
A gateway to the neighbourhood focused around a community destination with a safe and accessible high quality physical environment encouraging prosperous day and evening economy.

Design principles for Nunn Mills are:
- Mixed use development, higher density housing and apartment living fronting parks, streets, boulevards and public transport hub and routes.
- Retention and refurbishment of the Grade II* Listed Engine Shed for community uses.
- Provision of a 2 Form Entry ‘urban’ primary school combined with other uses.
- Provision of designated pedestrian and cycle routes over the railway line.
- Provision of designated pedestrian and cycle route through Nunn Mills Park.
**RANsome BoulevARD**

A boulevard dominated by street activity fronted by development passing through the ANMR neighbourhood, linking public transport

**Design principles for Ransome Boulevard are:**

- The creation of a boulevard through Nunn Mill from London Road to Bedford Road with boulevard approach and treatment as a primary ‘street’.
- Provision of residential and mixed use development along key frontages.
- Higher density housing and apartment living.
- Landmark entrance / treatment at Avon Waterfront.

**NeNe EDGE**

A dense new neighbourhood location focused on the river where people can live and work.

**Design principles for Nene Edge are:**

- High density housing and apartment living fronting the park and river frontage.
- Provision of designated pedestrian and cycle routes over the River Nene to link Nunn Mill Park with the city centre.
- Provision of Nunn Mill Park to serve the new neighbourhood and provide a strategic green link between Delapre Abbey and the city centre.

**DeLaPRE**

High density housing fronting parkland

**Design principles for Delapre Edge are:**

- Provision of Nunn Mill Park to serve the new neighbourhood and link Delapre Abbey with the city centre.
- Medium density housing fronting parks, streets, boulevards and public transport routes.
- Provision of private and public open space suitable for family living.
- Provision of a designated pedestrian and cycle route across the railway and through Nunn Mill Park.
- Integration of the historic landscape of Delapre Abbey with new development.
- Extension and integration of City Meadows through to Delapre Lake.
- Provision of a recreational facility that takes advantage of the setting to Delapre Lake and exploits proximity to water based recreation activities.

**Becket’s meadow**

High density housing focused on the waterways and meadows.

**Design principles for River Nene East are:**

- Higher density housing and apartment living fronting parks, streets, boulevards and river frontage.
- Provision of designated pedestrian and cycle routes over the River Nene to link Becket’s Meadow with Delapre Park and City Meadows.
- Establish a landscape buffer around the substation.
- Where possible, create strategic cycle and pedestrian connections to City Meadows and Delapre Lake.
SECTION 4.0
DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS
4.1 INTRODUCTION

The scenarios demonstrate the impact of retaining and removing the rail line safeguarding constraint through landuse schedules and diagrams. Each scenario reflects the current as well as the desired situation and seeks to respond to the policy context, to acknowledged constraints and to the anticipated expectations of landowners and development promoters.

These scenarios are not proposed as preferred development options as the SDF is not based on a detailed masterplanned response to the vision, objectives and spatial framework. There are therefore likely to be a number of design responses, which it is assumed will form the basis of future masterplans and planning applications. However, each scenario is consistent with the development framework.

The following figures and tables illustrate the assumptions that have been made, the options that have been tested and the quantums of development achieved.
**Scenario One Quantum of Development**

- Total Area: 41.39ha
- Net developable area: 30.41ha (73.5%)
- Total dwellings: 1,786
- Total houses: 1,191 (66.7%)
- Total apartments: 595 (33.3%)
- Total commercial floorspace: 31,628m²
- Total retail floorspace: 2,609m²

**Section 4.0 Development Scenarios**

### 4.2 The Scenarios

- **Scenario One (Rail Safeguard Off)** Assumptions:
  - 1,700 dwellings with a 70% / 30% split (houses / apartments) and at an average density of 50 – 60 dph
  - 10,000m² B1 for a single occupier
  - 10,000m² B1 mixed with other uses
  - 2,000 - 3,000m² A1, A2, A3 mixed with other uses
  - 100 bed hotel
  - ‘Urban’ 2 Form Entry Primary School based on current Schools for the Future standards (0.5ha site)
  - A strategic urban park to link green infrastructure with the city centre

- The Ransome Road Boulevard follows Northamptonshire County Council’s alignment (Strategic Road Cost Study, July 2008, Halcrow Group Limited) minus the bunding required for a bridge
- Strategic open space either side of the Northamptonshire County Council’s alignment to create a ‘high street’ along the Ransome Road Boulevard with adequate urban realm
- Land surplus to requirement for the public transport corridor is given over to development
- Physical constraints as set out in Section 2.5 (minus railway line buffers)
No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing.
All dimensions are to be checked on site.
Area measurements for indicative purposes only.
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SECTION 4.0 DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

SCENARIO TWO QUANTUMS OF DEVELOPMENT
Total Area 41.3ha
Net developable area 27.56ha (66.6%)
Total dwellings 1,657
Total houses 1,082 (65.3%)
Total apartments 575 (34.7%)
Total commercial floorspace 29,339m²
Total retail floorspace 1,649m²

SCENARIO TWO (‘RAIL SAFEGUARD ON’) ASSUMPTIONS

- Land uses and quantums based on scenario one
- The Ransome Road Boulevard follows Northamptonshire County Council’s alignment (Strategic Road Cost Study, July 2008, Halcyon Group Limited) with the bunding required for a bridge
- Strategic open space either side of the Northamptonshire County Council’s alignment to create a buffer between development and the bridge
- The ‘high street’ orientated east west to address the impact of the bridge
- Physical constraints as set out in Section 2.3 (including railway line buffers)
5.1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation challenges of this project are significant. There is the need for greater clarity and focus by the parties if the best solutions, for this strategically important 41 hectare land area are to be realised. It is also clear that the role of WNDC in this process is key to securing a successful outcome.

The delivery work-stream has focussed on:

- The roles of the parties
- The delivery options available and
- The potential ways forward

Going forward, a number of technical assessments will be required, in particular, with regard to financial viability. Planning delivery tactics will need to be established to help ensure early delivery of objectives across all three sites and crucially to allow infrastructure to be delivered in a phased manner as market demand recovers from recession.

Critical to this approach will be the need to negotiate appropriate terms to secure ‘at grade’ crossing of the protected rail line and to ensure that the line itself is treated appropriately as part of the project and not left as waste land.

It will also be important to ensure that the whole site area plays a full part in the town’s evolution into a city. Current objectives are for a 100,000 increase in population from the current 200,000 level. Such growth will bring the ANMR land into the city core over time. As such it is one of the most important sites in helping to shape the future city centre, both in terms of new land uses and potential relocations from the existing town centre to unlock other core city projects.

Set out below are the conclusions of the work undertaken to date and consideration of the next steps required in order for the project to move forward.
5.2 DELIVERY ISSUES

It is clear that all parties are seeking to unlock the full potential of the whole site. However, it is not clear how the parties will embrace the concept of Northampton’s metamorphosis into a city and the role the site should play in this change.

Further work is therefore required from a strategic planning perspective to build in greater clarity on the potential scale of development and approach based on city ambition. However, crucially, it will also be necessary to set out a clear approach to transition so that development can start in a town context and evolve over time into the city context.

There is a recognition amongst all the land owners that WNDC has a crucial role to play in the delivery of the project, both in terms of the use of CPO powers to deliver access to the land areas north of the rail lines and of the commitment of finance to deliver the access roads required.

However, at this stage it is unclear how the financial viability of the sites will justify public investment and the extent to which this will be for part or all of the required road infrastructure.

The current financial climate is making it increasingly difficult to justify public spending and to secure public monies for projects. It will therefore be vital that any application for funds not only has the full backing of all parties but also sets out a clear and robust case for funding based on the benefits that will be committed to flow from such investment. From discussions to date there is concern that some of the parties have not recognised that such an approach will require commitments from them to deliver outputs. This is clearly an area that will require detailed agreement.

The balance between public investment and private sector commitment to deliver outputs will be crucial to any bid.

The relationship between phased infrastructure delivery, commitment to economic outputs, improving market conditions, financial requirements and city ambition creates a challenging matrix for all the parties to work actively together to agree and deliver.

5.3 DELIVERY OPTIONS

The options available to all the parties are;

DO NOTHING

This approach will come about if one or more parties are unable or unwilling to commit in the right way to the project. WNDC has made it clear that it has a number of projects that require its finance and time and that should appropriate agreement not be forthcoming, it will need to focus its investment elsewhere in order to meet its performance requirements.

The biggest challenge will be the treatment of shared infrastructure, of which there are several examples. For example it is not certain at this stage on the extent of investment that WNDC will be able to bring to the project and therefore it is not clear how much of the road infrastructure it will be able to fund. Provision may therefore need to be made by the parties to invest jointly in some road infrastructure.

Additionally, the County Council has highlighted a potential need for a two form entry primary school. More work is required to assess this but should it ultimately be required appropriate land and finance will need to be made available. Some suggestions have been made that this school may need to be provided through a joint-venture approach.

A variant of this approach is being pursued by the parties and could ultimately form the basis for delivery. However, while much good work has been undertaken, it is clear that there is still much to be done in order to set out a robust case for public sector investment.

The options available to all the parties are;

DO NOTHING

This approach will come about if one or more parties are unable or unwilling to commit in the right way to the project. WNDC has made it clear that it has a number of projects that require its finance and time and that should appropriate agreement not be forthcoming, it will need to focus its investment elsewhere in order to meet its performance requirements. Against a background of reducing public sector budgets, with Growth Area Funding particularly hard hit in the past twelve months, the case for prioritising this particular location will need to be well made.

There is therefore a significant need for all the parties to pull together to unlock the potential of this site. In particular, to support the case WNDC needs to make to be able to secure the monies required to deliver the road infrastructure. Without such a case, the Do Nothing option can only hope to generate very limited development of the site.
5.4 DELIVERY OUTPUTS

Off site. Whatever the outcome, it is clear that this issue has to be addressed.

**Equalisation Approach**

WNDC have been provided with advice on a potential Equalisation Approach to enable the judgement of the merits and challenges of such an approach alongside the Joint Venture and Do Nothing options. The Equalisation Approach is very well suited to a project such as this as it will change the emphasis of each landowner from focussing on their own land to secure a return to looking at the whole project. Such an approach will be able to accommodate the delivery of a school and other ‘shared’ infrastructure items.

However, it is recognised that for many landowners and developers such an approach is difficult to agree to as it effectively requires a move from landownership to taking an appropriate share in a delivery vehicle.

Consideration has been given to the phased delivery of the sites and the ability of the project to deliver change as development capacity is released by the provision of the new road infrastructure. This is based on logical steps that are generally accepted by the parties as being realistic. The ‘no public investment’ option needs to be tested to establish the extent to which the private sector may or may not be able to commit to some or all of the road infrastructure costs.

**No investment by WNDC**

This option will need to test the financial viability of the project and the ability of the existing landowners to fund the provision of the required road infrastructure.

**Access improvements at the London Road/ Ransome Road junction to unlock capacity on the HCA land.**

This option has been progressed and will help to unlock around 450 homes which will cover around half the HCA’s land area.

**Access provision along Nunn Mills Road to unlock development capacity on the Avon/ Garbe and Taylor Wimpey/ Persimmon land.**

This option will require the use of WNDC’s regeneration CPO powers and this process is already well advanced. This will release about half the development capacity of both sites. However, the exact allocation of capacity between the two sites will need to be agreed.

**Access provision to link Ransome Road and Nunn Mills Road across the safeguarded rail line land.**

This option will complete the connection and release the full development capacity of the whole land area. We have already referred to the need to secure this route ‘at grade’.
5.5 DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

Set out below are the headlines that form the major areas that will need to be progressed and agreed between the parties in order for the project to proceed based on WNDC investment and CPO powers.

Where WNDC investment is required the –

- Green Book Appraisal will need to fully justify the case for public money.

Contracts will need to be agreed with –

- landowners individually via a Joint Venture or through an Equalisation Agreement to ensure outputs are guaranteed on the back of public sector investment in infrastructure.

Shared infrastructure will need to be –

- addressed, including land and finance for the provision of a two-form entry primary school. The need for this element needs to be confirmed by the County Council.

- Where public monies are used it will be necessary to ensure clawback provision is made through the project as a whole or through individual agreements with landowners as profit is generated.

Specifically the next stage of work needs to focus on technical exercises to test the financial viability of the project and its ability to deliver early phases with the benefit of new infrastructure. The land use mix that is used to assess viability will need to be undertaken on a number of bases, including the following:

- Existing landowner objectives for each individual land area (including the small WNDC ownership)
- LDA led approach as set out here
- Highways Agency influenced approach based on maximum development capacity

The appraisals will need to reflect the phased delivery of the road infrastructure as set out above.

Sensitivities will also need to be run to test how the project may be affected by or benefit from changing market demand, costs, inflation, finance etc.

This work will act as the basis for consideration for public investment and crucially help to inform whether, even with public investment, the project can deliver outputs to justify the phased delivery of the access road.
A workshop was held with key stakeholders on Tuesday 20th October 2009, 10am – 2pm at 78, Derngate, Northampton. The workshop was set up to restate the purpose and value of the SDF, validate the position statement, agree a vision for the site and its role within the city vision and agree SDF objectives and targets.

The table below sets out organisations that attended the workshop.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>ATTENDEES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LDA Design</td>
<td>Louise Waite / Neil Homer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Delivery</td>
<td>Simon Davies / Stuart Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transform: MKSM</td>
<td>Sue McGlynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNDC</td>
<td>Natalie Oates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton Borough Council</td>
<td>Paul Lewin / Julia Tinker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbe</td>
<td>Mick Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoK</td>
<td>Sherin A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taylor Wimpey Persimmon</td>
<td>Mark Dinsdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes and Communities Agency</td>
<td>Sheila Cooper / Anthony Sowden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon</td>
<td>Ed Saunders</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX A - STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP ATTENDEES
Discussions focused on the position statement. They are reflected in the text of Section 2 and informed the vision and scenarios set out in sections 3 and 4. The following objectives were agreed with stakeholders for the site:

1. It is a central city site / area;
2. Development should reflect village attributes at a city / urban scale;
3. Quality environment with streets, spaces, green infrastructure, a ‘heart’ with a mix of activities including a primary school;
4. Low energy lifestyle;
5. Commercial development to support inward investment with at least one other site for a major commercial occupier;
6. ‘Link road’ designed to serve development as a street;
7. 50 – 60 dph, 80% housing / 20% apartments;
8. Affordable housing standards are flexible (currently 35%); and
9. On site delivery of open space is flexible.

A stakeholder meeting was set up on the 8th December 2010, 10am-2pm. In the meeting the findings of the work undertaken on the SDF were presented to stakeholders.

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>ATTENDEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LDA Design</td>
<td>Peter Corrie / Neil Homer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Delivery</td>
<td>Simon Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transform: MKSM</td>
<td>Sue McGlynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNDC</td>
<td>Adrian Arnold / Chris Garden / Natalie Oates / Chris Preston / Paul Quinn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton Borough Council</td>
<td>Paul Lewin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton County Council</td>
<td>not present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbe</td>
<td>Mick Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoK</td>
<td>Sherin A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Wimpey Persimmon</td>
<td>Mark Dinndale / Colin Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes and Communities Agency</td>
<td>Sheila Cooper / Anthony Bowden (till 11:30am)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon</td>
<td>Ed Saunders</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Development Plan for the area comprises the East Midlands Regional Plan (RSS8) (March 2009) and the saved policies of The Northampton Local Plan (1997).

RSS8 is broken down into four sections, the Spatial Strategy, Core Policies, Topic Based priorities and Sub-Regional Strategies. Northampton is identified as a growth town within the Milton Keynes and South Midlands (MKSM) Sub-Regional Strategy. The MKSM Growth Area Business Plan recognises the redevelopment of Avon Nunn Mills as a ‘key planned intervention’.

**PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

The planning policies of relevance to the Avon Nunn Mills/Ransome Road sites are listed below.

**WNDC PURPOSE**

Under S136(1) of the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, WNDC as an Urban Development Corporation has a statutory “objective” to deliver the regeneration of the area. The Secretary of State has determined that WNDC should have development control powers for certain types of development in order to carry out its objective.

The documents referred to below represent the wide range of national and local planning guidance that has relevance to the Avon Nunn Mills/Ransome Road development area. These clearly represent a wide ranging body of material and interest. In order to provide a more concise statement of how WNDC’s vision will be interpreted at the local level, we have produced the WNDC Planning Principles document ‘Setting the Standard’ to give a clear guide to our intentions and the emphasis we place on efficiency, quality, infrastructure and environmental sustainability.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NATIONAL POLICY</th>
<th>EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL PLAN (MARCH 2009), INCLUDING MKSM SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGY POLICIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPS1</td>
<td>Delivering Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS4</td>
<td>Planning for Sustainable Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG 13</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG 14</td>
<td>Development on Unstable Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG 15</td>
<td>Planning and the Historic Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG 16</td>
<td>Archaeology and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG 17</td>
<td>Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG 24</td>
<td>Planning and Noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS 25</td>
<td>Development and Flood Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS9</td>
<td>Biodiversity and Geological Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS10</td>
<td>Planning for Sustainable Waste Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS22</td>
<td>Renewable energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS23</td>
<td>Planning and Pollution Control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Regional Core Objectives
2. Promoting Better Design
3. Distribution of new development
11. Development in the Southern Sub-Area
13b. Housing Provision (Northamptonshire)
14. Regional Priorities for Affordable Housing
17. Regional Priorities for Managing the Release of Land For Housing
18. Regional Priorities for the Economy
19. Regional Priorities for Regeneration
20. Regional Priorities for Employment Land
26. Protecting the Regions Natural and Cultural Heritage
27. Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment
28. Regional Priorities for Environmental and Green Infrastructure
29. Priorities for Enhancing the Regions Biodiversity
32. Regional Approach to Water Resources and Water Quality
33. Regional Priorities for Strategic River Corridors
35. Regional Approach to Managing Flood Risk
36. Regional Priorities for Air Quality
39. Regional priorities for Energy Reduction and Efficiency
40. Regional Priorities for Low Carbon Energy Generation
41. Regional priorities for Culture Sport and Recreation
43. Regional Transport Objectives
44. Sub-Area Transport Objectives
45. Regional Approach to Traffic Growth Reduction
48. Regional Car Parking Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MKSM NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICIES</th>
<th>NORTHAMPTON LOCAL PLAN (SAVED POLICIES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Spatial Framework</td>
<td>E1 Development affecting character and structure of the landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Northampton Implementation Area</td>
<td>E2 Development alongside the River Nene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Northampton Central Area</td>
<td>E9 Locally important landscape areas inc. Becket's Park and Delapre Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1  Development affecting character and structure of the landscape</td>
<td>E10 Loss of trees or hedgerows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2  Development alongside the River Nene</td>
<td>E11 Replacement of trees or hedgerows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7  Nature conservation protection</td>
<td>E12 Provision of infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E19  Provision of infrastructure</td>
<td>H7 Residential Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14  Amenity space and children's play facilities</td>
<td>H16 Housing for the Elderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H17  Provision of mobility housing</td>
<td>H19 Provision of infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H32  Affordable housing</td>
<td>B3 Existing business allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4  Existing business allocation</td>
<td>B12 Business uses – affect on environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4  Development requiring road improvements</td>
<td>T12 Adequate manoeuvring and servicing space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T34  Safeguarding rail routes</td>
<td>T14 Access to buildings and disabled parking provision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T12  Adequate manoeuvring and servicing space</td>
<td>R4 New retail development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T14  Safeguarding rail routes</td>
<td>R5 Appropriate locations for large retail development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T34  Safeguarding rail routes</td>
<td>L4 Provision of sports facilities in residential developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4  New retail development</td>
<td>L6 Maintenance of public open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5  Appropriate locations for large retail development</td>
<td>L17 Leisure use of River Nene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4  Provision of sports facilities in residential developments</td>
<td>D17 Redevelopment of the Southbridge/Nunn Mills area for residential, business, leisure and retail uses with the necessary infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sites and surrounding area have a number of constraints that will need to be addressed through any overarching regeneration framework and/or revised master plans and subsequent planning application. These are drawn from the experience gained in processing the existing planning applications for Avon Nunn Mills and Ransome Road. The key issues are summarised below:

**Impact Upon Highway Network.** A detailed Transport Assessment will be required to consider the impact of the proposals upon the surrounding highway network. The Highways Agency will need to be fully consulted regarding the impact of the proposals upon the A45 trunk road. NCC Highways will also be key consultees. A range of sustainable transport measures will be required to reduce the impact of car generated trips to and from the area, including contributions to bus service improvements, improvements to pedestrian and cycle links on and off site, and enhancements to provide safe routes to school. Residential and workplace Travel Plans will be required to accompany any planning application to demonstrate how modal shift away from car journeys will be achieved. Commitment to these targets will be expected through a detailed s.106 agreement.

**Road Bridge/ Railway Line.** To enable the area to be fully utilised, a new road link is required from Bedford Road, through to the Ransome Road/London Road junction. Although currently disused, the rail corridor to Brackmills is safeguarded within the Northampton Local Plan. Network Rail policy is not to allow new level crossings across safeguarded routes and, as a result, a road bridge is required to form this crossing. The potential impact of the railway line will also need to be taken into account in the design of the scheme in terms of the relationship of built form to the corridor and potential noise implications. Further discussions would be welcomed with Network Rail regarding the long term potential of the rail corridor.

**Affordable Housing.** Based upon the Housing Needs Study 2006 and the Housing Market Assessment 2007, undertaken by Northampton Borough Council’s Housing Strategy Team, WNDC will seek a 35% level of affordable housing in new residential developments with a 70/30 split in favour of rented accommodation compared to shared ownership. Any variation away from this required level would need to be justified in terms of the development viability appraisal and wider discussions concerning the s.106 agenda.

**Contaminated Land.** The Avon/ Nunn Mills and Ransome Road sites contain significant levels of ground contamination due to their former use. Significant remediation is therefore required to enable the land to be developed for other purposes. The method of remediation and nature of deposits may have an impact upon the appropriate type of residential development on certain areas of the sites. Strategies to address the remediation of contaminated land will need to be submitted with any planning application.

**Flood Risk.** Following the flood events in 1998, the Environment Agency have improved flood defences in the Southbridge area to the degree that the sites are now protected against a 1 in 200 year flood event. Flood Risk Assessments will be required to accompany any application, in line with PPS25.

**Biodiversity/ Green Infrastructure.** Any development will need to assess the existing habitats within the sites and set the proposals within the wider Green Infrastructure Network for the surrounding area. Ecological assessments submitted with the two applications in 2004 and a further walk over survey of the Ransome Road site was undertaken in 2006. Up to date ecological assessments would be required to accompany any revised planning submission, in line with PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.
Open Space/Recreation. The proposals will be expected to create a network of open space and recreation opportunities and has the potential to contribute to off-site provision, for example at Delapre Park and Becket’s Park, in lieu of on-site provision.

Design Aspirations. WNDC’s “Planning Principles” document outlines our aim to create places that local people can be proud of and others want to visit, work, and invest in. The location of the area, adjacent to the town centre on a prominent river frontage merits the creation of a distinctive and high quality environment. This will be controlled through the formal planning process and the requirement of detailed Masterplans and the application of appropriate Design Codes. The site is of strategic importance in the regeneration of Northampton as a whole and it is critical that any development and approved Masterplan take account of, and integrate with developing Masterplans for the City Centre and wider Waterside area.

Impact Upon Existing Communities. Any development proposals need to take account of the impact upon existing communities surrounding the area in terms of the physical impact of the built form, the potential impact of extra traffic generation and disturbance, and the social impact of the proposed community. Proposed community facilities should be located and designed to be of benefit to existing residents, in addition to the new community.

Standard Charge/ s.106 Contributions. The starting point for discussions relating to s.106 contributions is WNDC’s Planning Obligations Strategy (December 2008), which is available on our website. Clearly, there are significant abnormal costs associated with the regeneration of these complex sites. These costs, and the regeneration benefits of the scheme, will be taken into account in determining an appropriate level of contribution.
This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2000.