

Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2)

Town Centres and Town Centre Uses Background Paper
(Update)

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Kettering
Borough Council

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SECTION A – BURTON LATIMER, DESBOROUGH & ROTHWELL TOWN CENTRES

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This background paper is split into 8 sections, and seeks to provide an update on the previous Background Paper: Town Centres and Town Uses (February 2012), and the Background Paper: Defining Town Centre Boundaries for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell which forms part of an evidence base for the emerging Part 2 Local Plan.
- 1.2 The Background Paper: Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012) provides an overview of available retail evidence, together with a range of policy options for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres within the context of the requirements of PPS4 (Planning Policy Statement 4). This evidence base includes an overview of:
- Assessment of the Roles of the Market Towns;
 - Strategic Retail Capacity Assessment;
 - Conservation Area Appraisals;
 - Health Check Appraisals.
 - Urban Design Frameworks (Burton Latimer and Desborough)
 - Comments from Meetings with Town Councils (Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell)
- 1.3 The background paper sets out:
- a. An assessment of the need for development site allocations and environmental improvements in Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres in order to identify options for policies and development in these town centres;
 - b. A case for exploring whether the issue of the PPS4 requirement for a sequential test for main town centre uses outside of existing centres could be better addressed by also adopting a more flexible local policy using locally set floor space thresholds;
 - c. A case for exploring whether the issue of the PPS4 impact assessments for main town centre uses outside existing centres could be better addressed by also adopting a more flexible local policy using locally set floor space thresholds within each of the borough's towns.
- 1.4 The Background Paper: Defining Town Centre Boundaries for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell (February 2012) set out the approach for defining the town centre boundaries for each of the market towns within the context of the requirements of PPS4 (Planning Policy Statement 4). Proposed town centre boundary changes for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell together with reasons to justify these changes were set out in the background paper.
- 1.5 Since these background papers were published there have been a significant number of policy changes at both a national, regional, and local level. The requirements of Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4) have been cancelled and replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was adopted on

27th March 2012. The East Midlands Regional Plan was also revoked on 20th March 2013, and the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (NNCSS) was superseded by the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (NNJCS), which was adopted on 14th July 2016. A major new locally strategic out of town retail park (Rushden Lakes) was approved by the Planning Inspectorate on 11th June 2014 which partially influenced retail policy and the spatial role of Rushden as set out in the NNJCS.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The majority of additional retail development within the Borough will be focused in Kettering town centre where the Joint Core Strategy identifies a minimum net increase in comparison shopping floor space of 12,500m². Retail development within Kettering town centre has been allocated in the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan, which was adopted in July 2011, and will need to be updated to reflect retail projections set out within the NNJCS.
- 2.2 The NNJCS defines each of the smaller market towns (i.e. Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell) as providing the secondary focus for growth within the Borough. These market towns are also likely to receive a significant level of growth within the plan period of the Part 2 Local Plan, which leads up until 2031.
- 2.3 One of the aims of the Part 2 Local Plan is to provide town centre environments that offer a range and type of facilities and services to meet the needs of the local residents within the catchment they serve. In preparing the Part 2 Local Plan decisions will need to be made in relation to the level of detail that the Part 2 Local Plan should provide in terms of future development in the small town centres. This could include criteria based policies to guide applications for development, or allocations and detailed proposals for development in these town centres. This paper looks at the options available and assesses these against the needs and opportunities in the town centres in order to assess the appropriate level of detail to be provided in the Part 2 Local Plan

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 As discussed in paragraph 1.5, there has been significant change to relevant planning policy at a local, regional and national level. Below is a summary of current planning policy considered relevant to town centre issues.
- 3.2 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**
- 3.3 Section 2 of the NPPF seeks to promote the vitality and viability of town centres, recognising that town centres act as the heart of a community.
- 3.4 To achieve these aims, the Government wants to focus the growth of main town centre uses in existing town centres. Through the plan making process, the NPPF directs local planning authorities to:
 - a. pursue policies to support town centre viability and vitality;
 - b. define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas;

- c. promote competitive town centres which provide customer choice with a diverse offer reflecting the individuality of town centres;
- d. retain and enhance existing markets and create new ones, ensuring that they remain attractive;
- e. allocate suitable sites to meet the scale and type of main town centre use development needed in town centres, assessing whether there is a need to expand town centres;
- f. allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available;
- g. set policies for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in/adjacent to town centres;
- h. recognise that development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres, setting out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites; and
- i. plan positively to encourage economic activity in town centres which are in decline.

3.5 North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (NNJCS)

- 3.6 The NNJCS sets out the framework for development in Kettering Borough and the other partnership authority areas. This identifies Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell as market towns, whose purpose is to provide a service role for their local community and wider rural hinterland.
- 3.7 The NNJCS also identifies Burton Latimer as providing a more localised convenience and services role. In these towns, the scale of development will be related to existing commitments, the current and potential capacity of infrastructure and services, regeneration needs and the character of the town.
- 3.8 The NNJCS places a focus on regeneration, diversification and expansion of the employment and service base at Desborough, whilst seeking to consolidate and enhance the successful town centres at Rothwell.

4.0 EMERGING EVIDENCE BASE

- 4.1 The 2012 Town Centres and Town Centre Uses Background Paper set out a number of documents relating to Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres and summarised the main findings from each document, providing an evidence base for developing policies for these town centres. These documents include:
 - a. North Northants Centres Project (DTZ Piedad Consulting, 2004);
 - b. Roles and Relationships Study (2005);
 - c. North Northamptonshire Retail Capacity Update (2011);
 - d. Desborough Conservation Area Appraisal (30th March 2007);
 - e. Rothwell Conservation Area Appraisal (23rd March 1978);
 - f. Burton Latimer Conservation Area Appraisal (24th November 2009);
 - g. Desborough Town Centre Health Check (Roger Tym and Partners, July 2010);
 - h. Desborough Town Centre Health Check – Update (KBC, May 2011);
 - i. Rothwell Town Centre Health Check (KBC, May 2011);

- j. Burton Latimer Health Check (KBC, May 2011);
 - k. Burton Latimer – Urban Design Framework (August 2006);
 - l. Desborough Urban Design Framework (January 2004);
 - m. SSPLDD Issues Consultation Feedback;
 - n. Town Council Meeting – comments relating to town centres.
- 4.2 Since the publication of the Town Centres and Town Centre Uses Background Paper (2012), further evidence has been published. This includes:
- 4.3 **SSPLDD Options Consultation Feedback (September 2012)**
Feedback from the SSPLDD Options Consultation was reported to Council Members in September 2012 on a wide range of issues, including matters relating specifically to each of the market towns (e.g. town centre boundaries, development criteria for town centre development, development sites and opportunities for redevelopment, land appropriate for environmental improvements). Consultation feedback was also reported to Members in relation to overarching town centres, retail and community facilities issues (e.g. whether to apply locally set floor space thresholds to sequential and impact assessments, protection of village and neighbourhood facilities, etc.). The feedback through this consultation are summarised in more detail in paragraphs 5.0, 5.1 of this background paper and table 1 below.
- 4.4 **Planning Policy Committee Paper 22nd November 2017 SSP2 Local Plan – Town Centres (Market Towns)**
This paper informs Council Members of the requirements of the NPPF and recommends the direction to be taken to fulfil these requirements through the various Development Plan documents. The recommendations laid out in the report were endorsed by Members.
- 4.5 **Planning Policy Committee Paper 21st July 2016 – Focused consultation comments to Town Centre Boundary Update**
This paper informs Council Members of the outcome of the focused consultation with town councils, neighbourhood plan groups and local chamber of trade and town centre partnerships with respect of defining the town centre boundaries for each of the market towns. The consultation feedback with the various groups informed the resulting town centre boundaries, which were endorsed by Members for inclusion within the draft Part 2 Local Plan. This is discussed in more detail in section B of this background paper. Proposed town centre boundaries for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell are also attached to this background paper as Appendix 1.
- 4.6 **Planning Policy Committee Paper 15th March 2016 SSPLDD Part 2 Local Plan – Updates for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell Town Centres**
This paper reports on the 2016 update to the earlier Town Centre Health Checks which were last undertaken in 2012. The Health Check updates are informed by footfall surveys, town centre survey/questionnaire responses, and use class survey information. Consultation with agents was also undertaken. A summary of the key findings and conclusions from Town Centre Health Check Updates (2016) for each of the market towns are provided below:

4.6.1 Burton Latimer Town Centre Health Check Update

- a. The proportion of convenience goods retailers has declined from 9% (2012) to 5.63%, but the total number of convenience goods units has increased by 1 unit;
- b. The proportion of comparison goods retailers has declined from 21.10% (2012) to 12.68%, but the total number of comparison goods units has increased by 2 units, primarily within the charity shop/pet shop/other comparison retail sector;
- c. The proportion of service retailers has declined from 45.4% (2012) to 29.58%, but the total number of service retail units within the town has increased by 6 units, mainly with the restaurant/café/fast food and hairdresser/beauty/health centres and estate agents sector;
- d. The proportion of vacant units has declined from 12.10% to 5.63%, halving the number of units to 4 units, demonstrating a strong demand for retail units within the town centre. This is the same as the number of vacant units reported in the 2011 Health Check, demonstrating a return back to a more buoyant local retail market;
- e. Overall the number of retail units has increased within the town centre by 8 units since the last health check period, which continues the upward trend since 2011. In particular, the number of service units falling within the restaurant/cafes/fast food sector and miscellaneous units falling within employment/careers/post offices/information sector has continued to steadily increase its presence within the town and are above figures for the national average;
- f. Variance between the fall in proportion of units, compared to the increase in the total number of units can be explained by evidence of sub-division of existing units;
- g. Footfall is highest during weekdays, with weekend and weekday footfall generally highest in the mornings. Given few respondents work in the town and the main reason for their visit was 'other' and 'outdoor activity', followed by 'grocery shopping', there appears to be a number of draws to the town centre which may not be solely commercial.
- h. The top three most liked Burton Latimer Town Centre attributes were that it is near/convenient (90%), free parking (52%), and easy parking/likeable people (38%).
- i. The top three most disliked attributes of Burton Latimer Town Centre were lack of choice of specialist shops (43%), lack of choice of multiple shops (29%), and too much traffic/congestion (24%).
- j. The top three answers for how the Burton Latimer Town Centre could be improved were more independent shops / better choice of shops in general (38%), better quality shops / other (24%), specified new shops / more secure

parking (19%). An emphasis on delivering a greater range and quality of shops is likely to provide further draw to the town as this was one of the most popular requests to improve the town. Whilst better parking was also raised as an area for improvement, this will require careful consideration in order to maintain the high level of pedestrian based trips to the town centre.

4.6.2 Desborough Town Centre Health Check Update

- a. The proportion of convenience goods retailers has declined from 10.92% (2012) to 7.89%, but the total number of convenience goods units remains unchanged since 2012. The proportion of butchers to other units within the town centre is performing above national average.
- b. The proportion of comparison goods retailers has declined from 21.83% (2012) to 14.47%, with the total number of comparison goods units falling by 1 unit. The proportion of florist/garden and chemists/toiletries/opticians retail sector units are above the national average.
- c. The proportion of service retailers has declined from 36.37% (2012) to 32.89%, but the total number of service retail units within the town has increased by 8 units, mainly with the restaurant/café/fast food and hairdresser/beauty/health centres and estate agents sector;
- d. The proportion of vacant units has declined from 21.81% to 9.21%, although the actual number of units vacant is unchanged at 7 units (excluding vacant land sites). The long standing vacancy of properties within the town centre are clearly visible within the community, and are recognised as an area of opportunity to enhance the town centre. The percentage change in vacant units may be as a result of an increase in the total number of retail units within the Desborough Town Centre increasing from 44 units to 51 units since the 2011 Town Centre Health Check was carried out.
- e. Despite a measured proportional fall in the provision of retail units categorised by the Butchers, Chemists/Opticians, Florists, Hairdressers/Beauticians, Travel Agents, Building Societies, and Employment/Post Office/Information sectors, provision remains above the national average.
- f. Similar to the findings for Burton Latimer, variance between the fall in proportion of units, compared to the increase in the total number of units can be explained by new units being created through the sub-division of existing units;
- g. Footfall is highest during weekdays, with market day (Thursdays) footfall very similar to non-market weekdays, although footfall within the town is relatively consistent over the whole week. Employment (19%) was given as one of the top three reasons for people's visit to the town on survey days, which may assist with levelling off peaks in footfall activity, and provide a more diverse customer/visitor base.

- h. The top three most liked Desborough Town Centre attributes were likeable people (56%), safe feeling/groups (48%), and near/convenient (41%).
- i. The top three most disliked attributes of Desborough Town Centre were the lack of choice of specialist shops (43%), lack of choice of multiple shops (29%), and too much traffic/congestion (24%).
- j. The top three answers for how the Desborough Town Centre could be improved were more independent shops / better choice of shops in general (38%), better quality shops / other (24%), specified new shops / more or secure parking (19%). The need for improved parking may correlate with a high number of people surveyed confirming they visited the town centre by car despite travelling from Desborough, and making relatively low numbers of linked trips with other activities.

4.6.3 Rothwell Town Centre Health Check Update

- a. The proportion of convenience goods retailers has declined from 7.81% (2012) to 6.67%, but the total number of convenience goods units remains unchanged since 2011. However, the proportion of butchers retail units to other units within the town centre is recorded to be above national average.
- b. The proportion of comparison goods retailers has declined from 31.26% (2012) to 21.33%, with the total number of comparison goods units falling by 4 units. However, the proportion of sport/toys/cycles/hobbies, and gifts/china/glass/leather goods, retail sector units are all above the national average.
- c. The proportion of service retailers has increased from 45.33% (2012) to 46.67%, and the total number of service retail units within the town has increased by 6 units, as is performing above the national average overall. In addition, the proportion of estate agent/auctioneers, building societies and restaurant/cafes/coffee bars/ fast food and take-way retail sector units are all above the national average.
- d. The proportion of vacant units has increased from 3.13% to 5.33%, and increased by 2 units to 4 units, but remains significantly below the national average and still below figures recorded in 2011. The total number of retail units within the town has remained the same as in 2012 at 64 units.
- e. Footfall is highest during the weekends, with market day (Mondays) mornings recording the second highest levels of footfall. Market day footfall is higher than non-market day.
- f. The top three most liked Rothwell Town Centre attributes were near/convenient (35%), historic buildings/range of eating places (32%), and character/ atmosphere and free parking (29%). A greater proportion of the people surveyed in Rothwell, stated they eat and drink out in the town 2-3 days a week, once a

week and once a month. 26% of people who visited Rothwell on the days of the survey to eat/drink out, and its restaurants and bars were rated as one of the top three reasons for liking the town.

- g. The top three most disliked attributes of Rothwell Town Centre were too much congestion/traffic (39%), lack of clean/secure toilets and dirty shopping streets/litter and shortage of secure parking (16%), and lack of police/ security and specified shops absent (10%).
- h. The top three answers for how the Rothwell Town Centre could be improved were more parking/secure parking (22%), improvement to weekly market (19%), and removal of litter/cleaner streets (16%).

4.7 Burton Latimer Parish Plan (December 2012) [adopted by Kettering Borough Council in February 2014].

The Parish Plan provides a set of actions and priorities for the town, informed through household questionnaires. It is a working document which was adopted by Kettering Borough Council on 5th November 2014, and is reviewed annually in consultation with Kettering Borough Council officers. The plan has the status as informal Borough Council guidance. The Parish Plan was last reviewed and updated occurred in February 2016, and reported progress made through the Parish Plan since the previous review.

5.0 SSPLDD OPTIONS CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

5.1 Table 1 below, sets out comments to the SSPLDD Options Consultation which are relevant to Town Centre issues (only) for the market towns of Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell. Endorsed Council responses are also provided. These build on and take forwards the SSPLDD Issues Consultation responses reported within the Background Paper : Town Centres and Town Centre Uses (February 2012)

Table 1: Summary of comments and responses to the SSPLDD Options Consultation

Summary of Options Consultation Comments	Kettering Borough Council Response
BURTON LATIMER	
English Heritage - Site BL1 is supported for environmental improvement provided the works enhance the setting of the Grade II listed war memorial adjacent. This should be criteria within any policy.	Noted. The criteria for development within Burton Latimer Town Centre are set out in Paragraph 10.0.9 of the SSPLDD Options Paper Consultation, and suggests a reference to enhancing the historic character of the town. The need for environmental improvements to enhance the setting of the War Memorial will be considered as the proposals are developed.
A further site [<i>opportunity site</i>] is available at Church Lane. It is currently in a mixed commercial use but would be appropriate for	The site suggested is somewhat removed from the existing built form of the settlement and within an area proposed as

residential. It would reduce crime and disorder and result in less traffic movements than the existing uses. (1)	Historically and Visually Important Open Space. The site will however be assessed against the criteria set out in the Housing Allocations Background Paper in order to determine whether it should be included in the next iteration of the plan.
Northants County Council (Local Highway Authority) – supports the proposed environmental improvements and would be committed to working with KBC to ensure any scheme affecting the public highway was appropriate.	Any new development would need to mitigate its impacts on the highway network and other local infrastructure through physical improvements or developer obligations secured via S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Kettering Borough Council would consult with the Highway Authority on any environmental improvements affecting the public highway.
Natural England – Environmental improvements could include urban tree planting and natural features which bring a range of social, environmental and economic benefits.	Environmental improvements could include the introduction of trees and landscaping to the public realm and this will be considered as detailed proposals are formulated.
Anglian Water - Recommend identified environmental improvement should include improved surface water management measures such as retrofitting sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for existing development.	Any detailed scheme of environmental improvement would need to incorporate appropriate drainage to be determined at the design stage.
Impacts on highway infrastructure need to be considered and assessed. (1)	Noted. Any new development would need to mitigate its impacts on the highway network and other local infrastructure through physical improvements or developer obligations secured via S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
English Heritage – Welcome the inclusion of the criteria relating to enhancing the historic character of the town. <i>[with respect of development within the town centre boundary]</i>	Noted.
The town centre boundary should be extended to include site BL4 so as to encourage redevelopment. The boundary should also include the businesses on the High Street, to the south of the Library.	The site does not currently accommodate a main town centre use however including it within the town centre boundary could help to encourage redevelopment involving main town centre uses without the need for sequential testing. A potential revision to the boundary will be considered in the next iteration of the plan.
The vitality and viability of the town centres must be protected and any future development should be sympathetic to the historical nature and appearance of the town as a whole, should enhance the historical character of the town and should be designed to reflect that character. Small scale development of retail within the town	Comments regarding town centre are addressed in the development criteria for proposals within the town centre boundary.

centre should be supported and be complementary to that which is already established. Any further development of residential property should be above employment uses at first floor level. The conservation area must be maintained, with any redevelopment of sites within the conservation area being sympathetic to its surroundings. The KBC policy regarding shop fronts should be adopted and enforced when any redevelopment takes place.	
DESBOROUGH	
Desborough Town Council - Agree with the proposed development principles.	Noted.
NCC Highways - Support the design principles which comply with Strategic Policy 24 of the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan, particularly regarding pedestrian connectivity. NCC Highways welcomes and agrees the policy criteria to seek to enhance pedestrian connectivity within the town, and to the surrounding residential areas and to public open spaces.	Noted. KBC ensure that NCC Highways are consulted to ensure highways safety.
NCC Police - The design principles should reflect the need to design out crime, and arson and ensure Community Safety.	Noted.
Natural England - Natural features e.g. tree planting should be included within 'environmental improvements' of Town Centre.	The improvements are generally supported and thus should be progressed. 'Green' improvements suggested by Natural England should be investigated.
English Heritage - The development principles should refer to the protection and enhancement of the character of the conservation area.	These options should be progressed. An additional design principle referring to the protection and enhancement of the character of the conservation area should be made if considered appropriate.
Redevelopment from within should be a priority over new sites. (The policy should be progressed with an expansion of the redevelopment policy to increase its weight within the document.
Lawrences should not be a supermarket. (2)	Noted.
The NPPF states that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail (para.59). In addition, planning policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes (para.60). Any policies on design within the LDD need to be in conformity with this NPPF advice.	Design principles for the sites would be prepared in accordance with NPPF advice.
Make the old A6 a smaller road, with more crossings and speed calming measures. A roundabout instead of the crossroads at Marlow house where there are often accidents. Improve on what we have got before considering expansion. Desborough needs improving from within.	Proposals have been included in the SSPLDD for improvements to Desborough town centre these include Environmental Improvements to narrow the old A6 and to improve the Gold Street/ A6 junction and opportunity sites within the centre to improve provision within the town.
The opportunity sites identified are not	Noted.

appropriate. The health check undertaken was flawed and inadequate. (2)	
Desborough Town Council would like to continue to see the following Sites identified as development sites and opportunities in and adjacent to Desborough Town Centre: - Site 2 – Factory Site, Station Road - Site 3 – Littlestones and Goodwins Factory - Site 6 – Factory premises at junction of Union Street/King Street.	Background paper: Town Centres and Town Centre Uses explains that these sites should not be included as they do not relate strongly to the town centre- with limited town centre frontage. As they do not strongly relate there is not considered to be a need for a specific policy with regards to these sites. Redevelopment of these sites for appropriate uses could take place under the existing policy framework.
Question 41 should consider surface water management measures such as rain gardens and green streets.	Noted. Comments will be used to inform the preparation of detailed policies and proposals.
Road narrowing is NOT an environmental improvement. It slows traffic reducing air quality, noise and local connections.	Road Narrowing would be an environmental improvement in terms of safety and pedestrianisation.
Question 42: [Desborough development criteria] As in the case of the criteria for Burton Latimer, we recommend that the criteria refer also refer to the protection and enhancement of the character of the conservation area as some of the sites are within the conservation area.	Noted. Adding this as an additional design principle will be considered.
Desborough Town Council agrees with the town centre boundary shown on the Desborough Town Council Options map.	Noted.
ROTHWELL	
NCC Highways supports in principle environmental improvements to improve the public realm of town centres such as Rothwell as schemes such as these improve the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists, as part of a long term strategy, as outlined in Strategic Policy 24 in the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan (NTP). Environmental improvements need to be carefully designed and NCC is committed to working together with partners to identify appropriate schemes and balance issues associated with them such as the impact of removal of on-street parking. Ensuring an appropriate balance of parking needs to be determined in consultation with local stakeholders including businesses, local residents and disability groups to ensure access for all. As Highway Authority, NCC has responsibility for maintaining the highway. Therefore the materials palette used for any public realm works need to be from a palette	Noted. Comments will be used to inform the preparation of policies setting out details of the environmental improvements. NCC will continue to be consulted on proposals as they are developed.

<p>of materials agreed with NCC which takes into consideration the on-going cost of reinstatement and maintenance, particularly at a time when funding is limited. Where existing highway materials are of good quality, and there are no capacity or road safety benefits, there is a reduced case for improving the public realm purely from a highway perspective.</p>	
<p>English Heritage - Question 50 <i>[relating to development criteria for the town centre]</i>: We are broadly content with these proposals and the development criteria. However, the proposed employment site (R3 Cooper's Coaches) is adjacent to the conservation area and a Grade II listed building, so development on this site will affect their setting. Thus, there should be a specific development criterion for this site which refers to the need for development of R3 to protect and enhance the setting of the conservation area and the listed building.</p>	<p>Noted. Recommended that design principles for Coopers Coaches site be prepared which take into account English Heritages comments.</p>
<p>NFRS - note the comments with regards to Rothwell Fire Station. There are no plans currently for NFRS to relocate from its current location within the town. Should this location be required for redevelopment NFRS would be open to discussions regarding an alternative location, providing that operational response standards would not be negatively impacted and there were no financial implications for the fire authority.</p>	<p>Noted. Redevelopment opportunities in the town centre will be reviewed to take into account comments made.</p>
<p>Rothwell Town Council – <i>[Development within Rothwell Town Centre Boundary]</i> Market Hill and Rowell Fair: the first statement in this section should be amended to read that no development will be permitted in any section of Market Hill, including the roadway as well as the Square, which would affect Rowell Fair in any way. Market Hill Square is our historic market place and there are ancient rights as to what should happen in this area. Cars are only permitted to occupy this space when it is not being used for the market or Rowell Fair or other town events. Bridge Street: Rothwell Town Council wishes to retain the on-street parking in Bridge Street. <i>[Historic Character of the Town Centre]</i> it is not only new buildings which should be designed to respect and enhance the character of the town centre, but also any alterations to existing buildings or any other part of the street scene must be in keeping with the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>Noted. Redevelopment opportunities in the town centre will be reviewed to take into account comments made.</p>

<p>[Town Centre Boundary] This must be extended to take in the beginning of Fox Street, including Ram's Supermarket, Buckby's Coaches and Cooper's Garage.</p>	
<p>Natural England - We note that "environmental improvements" appear to be focussed on modifying roads, parking and pavements. Whilst Natural England has no local knowledge of the settlements concerned, we advise that the opportunity for using natural features such as tree planting should be considered. Urban tree planting has a range of social, economic and environmental benefits.</p>	<p>Whilst we completely agree that the use of schemes such as tree planting are often positive the centre of Rothwell has a very hard urban form and trees are not characteristic of the Conservation Area. There are attractive areas of green space, trees and parks within the Conservation Area and there are many examples of mature native tree species, but tree planting along some of the historic routes would be contrary to the character of the area.</p>
<p>Anglian Water - Environmental improvements should consider surface water management measures such as rain gardens and green streets.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Redevelopment of library for housing is totally inappropriate, should remain a community facility. (1)</p>	<p>Redevelopment opportunities in the town centre will be reviewed to take into account comments made.</p>
<p>Narrowing streets would not be an environmental improvement as slowing traffic would impact on air pollution. (1)</p>	<p>Noted. The area does need some improvements to the existing highway/roundabout and pedestrian footpaths. Slowing traffic can have significant benefits for pedestrian safety.</p>
<p>No background evidence has been provided for the High Street/ Desborough Road environmental improvements. (1)</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Agree environmental improvements should be identified. Access to Alms houses needs to be maintained. (1)</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Agree with development principles. The Fire Station and library site could provide additional parking which would free up other development space and design options (1) Development principle 3 should read: Removal of on-street parking, as appropriate, on Bridge Street will be supported. (1)</p>	<p>Re-development opportunities in the town centre will be reviewed to take into account comments made.</p>
<p>Misleading to state Rothwell is a thriving market town. It has a number of bars most of which are in poor state of repair and lack business to renovate. Over the life of the document these will most close and stand empty. The document lack vision to deal with public houses closing and what will happen to these buildings. The majority of the businesses are hair salons or barbers. These offer little in the way of quality employment and limited value to the community. The area is not "attractive" as it is blighted by</p>	<p>Whilst there are some empty shops and a few premises that could have an improved appearance within the street scene the empty premises are part and parcel of the economic life of a town centre and the changing tastes and aspirations of the town's residents. Businesses continue to thrive in the town and the purpose of this document is to ensure they continue to do so in future by identifying environmental improvements and opportunities for redevelopment within the town and by</p>

permitted modern style shop fronts not in keeping and empty shops.	setting criteria to guide development within the town centre.
<p>[Development Sites in the Town Centre] (7) Former Medical Centre, Bridge Street: this already has a Planning Application in for a residential home, employing approximately 45 people. (8) Library/Fire Station Site: Rothwell Town Council agrees the fire station could be moved to a site with better and faster access routes on one of the employment areas to be provided on the edge of Rothwell. The Library building is a relatively new one and is already in the ideal location so this should not be considered for development, or the Library moved elsewhere because it is currently well served by the bus services. (9) Cooper's Coaches: as stated in paragraph (4) we agree this site would be ideal for small business/craft units. (10) Abishot Mouldings: as stated in paragraph (6) this area is better suited for a residential use provided an alternative factory site can be provided for Abishot on one of the employment sites to be provided on the edge of the town. (11) Factory Unit, Bell Hill: could you please identify on a plan which site this refers to.</p>	Inclusion of the former medical centre will be reviewed to take into account the planning permission recently granted on the site. Comments regarding the Library/ Fire station and Cooper's Coaches are noted and will be used to inform the next iteration of the plan. The Abishot Mouldings site is located within the town boundary and therefore if the site becomes available could be redeveloped for residential uses without the need for the site to be allocated in the plan.
No background evidence / justification for the identification of the High Street / Desborough Road environmental improvements has been provided.	The evidence for the environmental improvements is contained in the Town Centres and Town Centre Uses Background Paper and supported by the Health Check for Rothwell.
Question 49 should consider surface water management measures such as rain gardens and green streets.	Noted.
<p>These comments relate to the third bullet point within paragraph 12.0.10 which states: "Removal of on-street parking on Bridge Street will be supported." In the Traffic and Transport Chapter of the Environmental Statement which accompanied the planning application for 'Rothwell North', the additional traffic exacerbating existing congestion caused by on-street parking bays on Bridge Street was identified as a potentially significant impact. The mitigation measure proposed was for a financial contribution to fund a TRO to remove spaces (although not necessarily all of them) and sustainable transport measures to minimise the amount of traffic generated by the scheme; proposals which have been the subject of subsequent discussions with the highway authority. It is therefore considered that as part of the</p>	Your suggested rewording of the option is duly noted and will be considered when drafting policies.

<p>Rothwell North development it will be possible to deliver the removal of some of the on-street parking on Bridge Street. In the circumstances, it is therefore requested that the criterion is amended to state: “Removal of on-street parking, as appropriate, on Bridge Street will be supported.” (Emboldened text indicates requested change).</p>	
GENERAL COMMENTS	
<p>Broughton Parish Council - The use of a single line to define the town centre is supported.</p>	
<p>Both the Force and NFRS would expect that any identified sites are built to the adherence of the principles of Designing out Crime in order to fulfil the requirements for full Secured by Design Accreditation, whilst also incorporating relevant community and fire safety measures.</p>	<p>Specific design principles will be prepared to reflect the principles of secured by design.</p>
<p>Redevelopment of current brownfield and/or derelict sites which are available should be strongly considered. Both the Force [Police] and NFRS would support the redevelopment of current derelict or brownfield sites within towns as part of the growth agenda, whether this is for new dwellings, commercial premises or perhaps ‘community spaces’ provided that these are designed within the principles of designing out crime. Where brownfield and/or derelict sites exist they provide the opportunity for incidences of crime or arson to occur, which in turn impacts on emergency services and other authorities to respond. Appropriately developing these areas may contribute towards reducing the opportunity of these incidences occurring, through enabling a legitimate use and providing capable guardians for the site.</p>	<p>Noted. A number of the opportunity sites identified in the town centres are previously developed sites.</p>
<p>We agree with defining town centre boundaries, but we believe that there should be a clearly defined hierarchy of centres across the Borough, to include town, district (if appropriate), local and neighbourhood centres. As it stands the Options Paper appears to give limited recognition of the roles that other lower order centres play in terms of meeting retail needs. A policy which defines centres could also help investor confidence by giving certainty regarding the Council’s priorities for the location and scale of new retail/leisure development.</p>	<p>The Site Specific Proposals LDD will sit alongside the adopted North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy which defines a hierarchy of settlements for North Northamptonshire (policy 1) and sets out roles for the town centres.</p>
<p>Agree to the use of a single line to define the</p>	<p>Noted. The background paper 'Defining</p>

<p>town centre boundaries (2 Agree, 2 Strongly Agree, 1 Disagree).</p>	<p>town centre boundaries for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell' sets out the methodology for defining town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas in the smaller towns. It is proposed that the town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas are drawn with a single line as the small towns do not have areas of predominantly leisure, business and town centre uses adjacent to the primary shopping areas. The town centre boundaries need not therefore extend beyond the town centre boundaries and no differentiation need be made between primary frontages and periphery secondary frontages.</p>
<p>Disagree to not include policies identifying sites for development in Burton Latimer, Desborough, and Rothwell Town Centres, thereby leaving the town centre unplanned (2).</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Agree (4), Disagree (1) to inclusion of a policy identifying opportunities for redevelopment in the smaller town centres.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Agree (1), Strongly Disagree (1) to inclusion of a policy identifying environmental improvements in Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres. Disagree (2) to not including a policy identifying environmental improvements in Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres....If measures are to be included they must demonstrate real measureable environmental outcomes such as reduced noise, improved air quality and impact on climate change.</p>	<p>Noted. Details of the proposed environmental improvements are set out in chapters 10, 11 and 12 of the document and include a wide ranging series of measures to improve the public realm.</p>
<p>Agree (7) to the inclusion of a policy to identify opportunities for environmental improvements in smaller towns. If a policy is included, we would welcome reference to good design principles which ensures that safety is a key consideration. Good design which incorporates designing out crime and safety measures can contribute to environmental sustainability. For example, the fitting of appropriate sprinkler systems in buildings can reduce the impact a fire may have on the environment. NCC Highways supports the inclusion of a policy of identifying opportunities for environmental improvements in the smaller towns as part of improving the walking and cycling environment, increasing access for all and fulfilling the Council's wider objectives to</p>	<p>Noted. Good design and crime prevention is an overarching requirement of national policy and any scheme would be considered on its merits.</p>

<p>promote sustainable growth. Environmental improvements also have the potential to improve air quality and bring benefits for the whole community, by reducing congestion if carefully designed.</p>	
<p>Agree (1), Strongly Agree (2) to include a policy setting out criteria to be applied to development within Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centre boundaries.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Agree (5), Strongly Agree (2), Disagree (1). To including a policy setting out development principles to be applied to development within the smaller town centres. Note that there is no policy around ensuring high quality design and place shaping across the district. Through the inclusion of such a policy it will ensure that a consistent approach towards development principles is applied to development within all smaller town centres. Such a policy should include references to designing out crime and improving community and fire safety through the implementation of appropriate measures. We support this approach as it provides the opportunity to address historic environment/townscape matters.</p>	<p>Noted. Policies will be included in the next version of the plan to set out design principles for allocated sites. In addition to this the Joint Core Strategy review will set out place shaping principles to be applied to all development.</p>

6.0 SWOT ANALYSIS, DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

- 6.1 The Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012) provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each of the market towns and identifies potential options for future development. The most recent market town centre health check updates has further informed these findings, which together with subsequent development commitments provides further update on potential options for future development within each of the market towns.
- 6.2 A summary of the main conclusions drawn from the Town Centre Health Check Update (2016) for each of the market towns is provided in paragraphs 4.6.1 – 4.6.3 above.
- 6.3 For each of the market towns, the identification of opportunity development sites was informed by a number of background papers, including the Burton Latimer and Desborough Urban Design Framework (January 2004). At the SSPLDD Options Consultation stage, a number of responses were received and there was strong support for policies identifying development sites and opportunities for redevelopment and environmental improvements in town centres as well as setting criteria in policies to assess development proposals in these town centres. The progression of opportunity site allocations aligns to a degree with paragraph 23 of the NPPF, as set out in paragraph 3.4 (criteria e) of this background paper, although

presently falls short in terms of not allocating the sites for specific purposes, instead leaving final site use to be determined by the open market. Members of Planning Policy Committee were recommended that in order to fully accord with paragraph 23 of the NPPF, opportunity sites will need to be considered against identified need for main town centre uses within the respective market towns. Criteria (f), Policy 12 (JCS) also advocates that Part 2 local plans identify additional development opportunities where these do not undermine the focus for retail development at Kettering Town Centre, ensuring that the scale and nature of the proposals is consistent with the character of the settlement and the role of the Market Town. In November 2017, Members endorsed this recommendation together with the preparation of a policy for each of the market towns' town centres. This has been incorporated into the development criteria policy relating to each of the market towns, seeking for primarily town centre uses at ground floor level with residential and/or employment above; priority of redevelopment of historic buildings and buildings of local significance through a series of tests; retention of existing business uses unless demonstrated unviable; and a requirement to meet design out crime standards. Members also endorsed recommendations to prepare visions for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell town centres, which includes key sites for development/enhancement, together with a strategy for economic development that promotes the town centres as destinations in their own right. These will be set out within the relevant chapters of the draft Part 2 Local Plan.

- 6.4 These town centre visions will be included in the chapters for the relevant market towns within the draft Part 2 Local Plan and will be informed by the updated SWOT analysis, town centre development opportunity sites and environmental improvements for each of the market towns, which is provided below and which takes into account conclusions from the SSPLDD Options Consultation, Market Town Centres Health Check Updates, and recent commitments and any other material considerations. Draft policies for each of the opportunity sites will be provided within the draft Part 2 Local Plan and informed by the updated SWOT analysis and development opportunity site information provided in paragraphs 6.5, 6.14, 6.22 and tables 2, 4, and 6 below. Endorsed recommendations discussed in paragraph 6.3 (above) also feeds into the updated development criteria for each of the market towns provided in paragraphs 6.13, 6.21, 6.29 and Boxes 1, 2 and 3 shown below within this background paper.

6.5 BURTON LATIMER TOWN CENTRE SWOT ANALYSIS

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality restaurants; • Latimer Business Park; • Good public transport links with Kettering; • Central community square; • Good links to the strategic road network; • Surrounded by attractive countryside helping to create a pleasant and peaceful environment within the town; • Town centre is convenient and accessible; • Strong provision of essential services available within/adjacent the town centre. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of activities for youngsters; • Competition from Kettering limits opportunities for comparison retail provision; • Safe and secure parking within the town is considered to be limited; • Comparison and service retail has shown signs of weakness.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance evening economy capitalising on the existing strong restaurant presence; • Underused land and gap sites in the town centre provide opportunities to enhance the town centre; • Improve the quality of the town centre environment (particularly High Street and Church Hill Way) and make it more pedestrian friendly by managing traffic; • Enhance the role and offerings of the town centre for local people; • Significant housing growth within the town provides opportunity to support new town centre uses; • Opportunities to enhance the town square (millennium gardens) which currently hosts the monthly farmers market. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk that the town could become a dormitory settlement; • Further loss of footfall; • Vandalism and anti-social behaviour was previously reported as an issue in the evenings; • Risk of housing development out-pacing town centre infrastructure provision/enhancements.

6.6 BURTON LATIMER TOWN CENTRE OPPORTUNITY SITES

6.7 Sites of development opportunity within Burton Latimer were identified by reference number on page 81 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (2012). The update to these sites is provided below in table 2. As discussed in paragraph 6.4 of this background paper, draft policies for each of the opportunity sites will be included within the draft Part 2 Local Plan. Taking into account the visitor questionnaire/survey feedback, proposals for retail units of a scale which would support specialised shops or multiple shops, or independent shops which provide a better retail offer in general should be supported on these sites.

Table 2: Burton Latimer Opportunity Sites

Site location	Reference	Update
The Paddock Court / Council Car Park	BL1	A public realm 'town centre' improvement scheme has since been drawn up by the Council, which includes enhancement and reconfiguration of the existing play park and car park area. The scheme is funded through S106

		contributions (£248,000) subject to delivery by January 2020, and was endorsed by Members of the Council on 14 th March 2018. The site should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment. As a result of comment through the SSPLDD Options Consultation, consideration should also be given to enhancing the setting of the adjacent grade II listed War Memorial.
The Churchill Way Retail Parade	BL2	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
The Churchill Way / High Street Back land Areas	BL3	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
Jock's Auto's	BL4	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.

6.8 BURTON LATIMER TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

6.9 Sites which may provide opportunity for Environmental Improvement within Burton Latimer were identified by reference on page 78 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (2012). The update to these sites is provided below:

Table 3: Burton Latimer Environmental Improvements

Site location	Reference	Update
Kettering Road Approach	BL5	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained for environmental improvements.
The High Street	BL6	Council Members raised concern regarding the loss of on-street parking and impact on vitality and viability of the town centre. The site should be retained within the draft Part 2 Local Plan for environmental improvements, but a final scheme will need to be carefully balanced to address these concerns.
The Southern Gateway to the Town	BL7	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained for environmental improvements.
The area at Town Square	BL8	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained for environmental improvements. The site is also the location of the monthly farmers market, and is a suitable for enhanced /additional market provision. In consultation with Burton Latimer Town Council, opportunities to strengthen the existing market offering at this site will be explored and feed into any schemes for environmental improvements.

6.10 SSPLDD Options Consultation comments highlighted that environmental improvements could include tree planting and landscaping together with drainage. A

final scheme will need to be prepared in consultation with NCC Highways due to technical implications and maintenance requirements.

6.11 Since publication of the Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012), a number of S106 agreements have secured contributions towards a number of transport improvements within the town, which will help towards the delivery of some of the identified environmental improvements. Some of these have been delivered (e.g. various bus stop infrastructure improvements (Churchill Way, Higham Road, High Street), parking modifications (High Street), pedestrian crossing facility (High Street, Piggott's Lane)

6.12 **BURTON LATIMER TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

6.13 The SSPLDD Options Paper Consultation set out criteria to be applied to development proposals within the Burton Latimer Town Centre boundary. These were consulted on within the SSPLDD Options Consultation and were supported for inclusion within the Burton Latimer chapter of the draft Part 2 Local Plan. Additional suggestions were also made with respect of giving priority to redevelopment of historic buildings; retaining existing business uses unless unviable; and demonstrating that proposals incorporate '*design out crime*' standards.

Box 1. Draft criteria to be applied to development within Burton Latimer Town Centre boundary.

Development should:

- Enhance the historic character of the town and should be designed in the context of this historic character. The positive character of the old village should be reflected in the town centre;
- Should not result in the loss of retail units and promote comparison retailing;
- Proposals for small scale retail and small scale employment within the town centre will be supported;
- Development should not result in the loss of active uses at ground floor level in the town centre;
- Development proposals within the town centre should provide active uses at ground floor level. Active uses include shops, services, restaurants, professional and business uses;
- Development should abut and front on to the street and provide a good sense of enclosure;
- Proposals which support A3 uses in the town centre will be supported;
- Proposals for residential development or employment above ground floor level will be supported;
- Give priority to redevelopment of historic buildings and buildings of local significance;
- Retain existing business uses unless demonstrated to be unviable;
- Demonstrate that proposals accord with '*design out crime*' standards.

6.14 DESBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE SWOT ANALYSIS

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonably broad <u>range</u> of retail facilities for its size despite a reported decline in number of retail units through the latest health check. Good links to the strategic road network; Visitors reported the town feels safe; Above national average presence of restaurants/cafes/hot food takeaway, could help to support a night-time economy. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of jobs; Retail presence has declined (station road cited as an example); Poor internal access with narrow streets and bottlenecks (southern end of Station Road and High Street); Bus services not frequent enough; Retail and services are concentrated at either end of Station Road with shops scattered along it but with housing in between providing a low-key/residential feel; Lack of choice of shops (including specialist shops); Lack of car parking; Lack of larger supermarket; Lack of clean and secure toilets; Derelict sites (vacant land) adversely impacting on the appearance of the town;
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to shop fronts; Identification of a permanent home for the heritage centre; Aspiration for speciality/niche shops; Areas of vacant land in the town centre which could be redeveloped; Demand for small-scale, new-start businesses; Creating attractive gateways into the town centre; Town identified as a possible location for a medium sized supermarket within the Joint Core Strategy. Local residents have expressed a need for a Petrol Filling Station (demand) 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land ownership/restrictive covenants; Limited funding opportunities; Convenience retail trade draw from neighbouring towns located outside of the borough.

6.15 DESBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE OPPORTUNITY SITES

- 6.16 Sites of development opportunity within Desborough Town Centre were identified by reference number on page 86 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (2012). An update to these sites is provided below in table 4. As discussed in paragraph 6.4 of this background paper, draft policies for each of the opportunity sites will be included within the draft Part 2 Local Plan. Taking into account the visitor questionnaire/ survey feedback, proposals for a supermarket of a greater scale and offer than currently provided for within Desborough, or additional retail units which could help the town delivery a better range of shops in the town (particularly independent/specialist shops) would be supported on these sites.

Table 4: Desborough Opportunity Sites

Site location	Reference	Update
High Street / Station Road	DE1	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment, particularly for facilitating enhanced market provision.
The Lawrence's Factory Site	DE2	Development of the site for retail is prevented by restrictive covenant. As a result the approved retail use did not come forwards. However, the site occupies a key town centre location and remains suitable for an alternative main town centre use. The site should be retained as an opportunity site.
The Station Yard	DE3	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
Vacant Co-op Dairy Site	DE4	The site remains vacant, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
Corner of Havelock Street / Station Road	DE5	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.

6.17 DESBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

6.18 Sites which may provide opportunity for Environmental Improvement within Desborough were identified by reference on page 87 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (2012). An update to these sites is provided below:

Table 5: Desborough Environmental Improvements

Site location	Reference	Update
High Street / Station Road Area	DE6	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
Lower Street / Rothwell Road Junction	DE7	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
The Gold Street / A6 Junction	DE8	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
The Old A6	DE9	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.
Burghley Close / Mansfield Close	DE10	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.

6.19 SSPLDD Options Consultation comments highlighted that green improvements could be provided, which will require further investigation, with a final schemes prepared in consultation with Natural England in order to optimise opportunities for green improvements.

6.20 **DESBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

6.21 The SSPLDD Options Paper Consultation set out criteria to be applied to development proposals within the Desborough Town Centre boundary. These were consulted on within the SSPLDD Options Consultation and were supported for inclusion within the Desborough chapter of the draft Part 2 Local Plan. An additional suggestion was also made with respect of protecting and enhancing the designated Conservation Area.

Box 2. Draft criteria to be applied to development proposals within Desborough Town Centre boundary.

Development should:

- Not result in the loss of retail units;
- Where possible increase footfall in the town centre both during the day and in the evening;
- Consider the re-introduction of traditional materials, including local stone, and detailing both in the design of buildings and through the re-introduction of traditional boundary treatments. Alternatively contemporary designs should be of high architectural quality;
- Create attractive active frontage onto streets and building form should abut the street and maintain or recreate a sense of enclosure;
- Design of developments should reflect the location of the development within the town. Design of buildings in key locations should reflect the importance of these buildings in the street scene. However design on less prominent sites should also be of high architectural quality. All designs should respond to the local context;
- Seek to enhance pedestrian connectivity within the town and to surrounding residential areas and to public open spaces;
- Proposals for residential development above ground floor level will be supported;
- Protect and enhance the character and appearance of the designated Conservation Area;
- Proposals for residential development or employment above ground floor level will be supported;
- Give priority to redevelopment of historic buildings and buildings of local significance;
- Retain existing business uses unless demonstrated to be unviable;
- Demonstrate that proposals accord with 'design out crime' standards.

6.22 ROTHWELL TOWN CENTRE SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Quality Restaurants; • Small Speciality Shops; • Reasonable range of shops for its size; • Good links to the strategic road network; • Service retail has shown signs of strength. 	WEAKNESSES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of jobs; • Slight lack of parking; • Potential for deliveries; • On street car parking at top of Bridge Street; • Comparison retail has shown signs of weakness.
OPPORTUNITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the restaurant and bar provision and enhance the evening economy. 	THREATS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vandalism and other night-time anti-social behaviour is an issue; • Loss of footfall

6.23 The former medical site was identified as an opportunity within the Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012). This site has now been delivered as an assisted living unit. As a result, it can no longer be included as an opportunity or opportunity site within the town centre.

6.24 ROTHWELL TOWN CENTRE OPPORTUNITY SITES

6.25 Sites of development opportunity within Rothwell Town Centre were identified by reference number on page 98 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (2012). An update to these sites is provided below in table 6. As discussed in paragraph 6.4 of this background paper, draft policies for each of the opportunity sites will be included within the draft Part 2 Local Plan. Taking into account the visitor questionnaire/ survey feedback, proposals for attracting specific shops to the town should be supported.

Table 6: Rothwell Opportunity Sites

Site location	Reference	Update
Former Medical Centre, Bridge Street	RO1	Planning permission KET/2015/0300 was granted for 14 assisted living units which have been delivered. As a result, it is recommended that the site is no longer included as an opportunity site within the draft Part 2 Local Plan.
Library / Fire Station	RO2	Comments received through the SSPLDD Options Consultations supported relocation of the fire station but not the library, and was supported by the Council's Members. Comments from NFRS confirmed they do not intend to relocate, but if the site were to be allocated for development, they would be open to discussions regarding an alternative location. However, Northamptonshire County Council has since carried out public consultation on a review of library services between October 2017 and

		January 2018 as part of a wider financial review. No decision has yet been made with respect of the future of Rothwell Library. Given these circumstances, it is considered appropriate to retain the library / fire station an identified opportunity site to facilitate possible redevelopment should the library element cease to occupy the site in the future.
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6.26 ROTHWELL TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

6.27 Identified areas for Environmental Improvements in Rothwell were identified by reference number on page 99 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (2012). An update to these sites is provided below:

Table 7: Rothwell Environmental Improvements

Site location	Reference	Update
The High Street / Desborough Road	RO3	There has been no change to the status of the site, and should be retained as an opportunity for redevelopment.

6.28 ROTHWELL TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

6.29 The SSPLDD Options Paper Consultation set out criteria to be applied to development proposals within the Rothwell Town Centre boundary. These were consulted on within the SSPLDD Options Consultation and were supported for inclusion within the Rothwell chapter of the draft Part 2 Local Plan. An additional suggestion was also made with respect of protecting and enhancing the designated Conservation Area.

Box 3. Draft criteria to be applied to development proposals within Rothwell Town Centre boundary.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development should allow the continued use of the Market Hill car park for the Rowell Fair; • Development which provides additional car parking in the town centre will be supported; • Removal of on-street parking on Bridge Street will be supported where this is appropriate; • Development should respect the historic character of the town centre and new buildings should be designed to respect and enhance this character; • Development should front onto and abut the main streets or public areas to create a good sense of enclosure; • Developments which provide additional retail units or uses which would increase footfall in the town centre will be supported; • Proposals for residential development or employment above ground floor level will be supported. • Give priority to redevelopment of historic buildings and buildings of local significance; • Retain existing business uses unless demonstrated to be unviable; • Demonstrate that proposals accord with 'design out crime' standards.

SECTION B: DEFINING THE TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARIES IN THE MARKET TOWNS

- 7.0 Saved Policy 64 (Local Plan) currently defines the existing established shopping areas within the market towns. This policy will be lost through the adoption of the Part 2 Local Plan, and revised town centre boundaries and town centre policies will need to be included within the Part 2 Local Plan.
- 7.1 As discussed in paragraph 1.1, the SSPLDD Background Paper: Defining town centre boundaries for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell (February 2012) provides an evidence base in support of the emerging Part 2 Local Plan and sets out an agreed approach for defining the town centre boundaries within each of the market towns, utilising evidence provided through up-to-date use class surveys within each of the towns. At the time that this background paper was prepared, PPS4 placed emphasis on promoting the vitality and viability of town centres as important places for communities, as well as a focus on locating main town centre uses in existing centres, enhancing consumer choice, and conserving the historic, archaeological and architectural heritage of centres. PPS4 also required Local Planning Authorities to define a network of centres and at a local level define the extent of the centre and the primary shopping area. PPS4 was subsequently replaced by the adoption of the NPPF in March 2012. As a result, the background paper needs updating to reflect these changes at a national level.
- 7.2 The NPPF maintains the general approach of PPS4, requiring Local Planning Authorities to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.
- 7.3 The 2012 Background paper uses a single line to define the primary shopping areas and extent of the town centres within each of the market towns. The use of a single line reflects the fact that the market towns are smaller towns, which do not have areas of predominantly leisure, business and town centre uses adjacent to the primary shopping area, and would not therefore have town centre boundaries extending beyond the primary shopping area. This position remains unchanged, and was endorsed by Members of the Planning Policy Committee in March 2016.
- 7.4 To ensure an up-to-date evidence base, work to update the town centre boundaries also takes into account commitments and physical changes made (i.e. buildings or sites have become vacant or have been redeveloped) since the boundaries were last reviewed, changes to the Development Plan and other relevant documents including the Market Town Centre Health Check updates (March 2016) which incorporates up-to-date Use Class surveys. In addition, a focused consultation exercise with the relevant town councils, local chambers of commerce, town centre partnerships was also undertaken to inform the final draft boundaries and to better understand the aspirations for these local areas, which builds on earlier consultation responses obtained through the SSPLDD Issues and Options Consultation. Council Member comments have also been taken into account, where these are material.
- 7.5 The resulting town centre boundaries / primary shopping areas are attached as Appendix 1, which are shown against the existing town centre boundaries,

highlighting areas of significant change. Boundaries typically follow the line of the building, curtilage or other appropriate features such as roads. Significant changes to the town centre boundaries are annotated, and correspond with the summary and justification of changes set out in table 8 below which updates information contained within the SSPLDD Background Paper: Defining town centre boundaries for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell (February 2012).

Table 8: Justification for changes to the town centre boundaries/ PSA's

Change to the boundary	Justification for change
Burton Latimer	
1. Extension of the boundary to include Sainsbury's, Library, Town Council offices and site BL4 (151 High Street).	These are town centre uses and therefore should be located within the town centre boundary. Site BL4 (151 High Street) is also included in line with comment through the SSPLDD Options Consultation, and the opportunity it provides to deliver additional town centre uses.
2. Boundary had been reduced to exclude residential development.	This area has a strong residential character and contains no town centre uses.
3. Minor amendment to boundary around Lloyds Pharmacy.	The amendment reflects the actual location of buildings.
4. Extension of boundary to include 'Pet All' shop	This is a main town centre retail use and therefore should be located within the town centre boundary.
5. Minor amendment to boundary to the rear of restaurant.	The amendment reflects the actual location of buildings.
6. Extension of the boundary to include the town centre car park, play area, and car park serving bowling club (incorporating site BL1)	The car park is an important facility for people using the town centre, which is co-joined by the play area and car park which is currently reserved for bowling club users. These facilities are centrally located to the town and provide opportunity for enhancement to benefit the wider town centre.
7. Minor amendment to boundary.	Garden land included within the town centre boundary should be removed as it relates to the residential property on Churchill Way which is excluded from the Town Centre Boundary
8. Minor amendment to boundary around the rear of Burton Newsagents to the Restaurant 'The China Palace Restaurant'	Include land to the rear of these properties within the town centre boundary, as they are main town centre uses.
9. Extension of the boundary to include restaurant and car repairs adjacent to existing boundary.	The restaurant is a town centre use and therefore should be located within the town centre boundary. The car repairs site has been included because if this use relocates, it would make a logical extension for town centre uses.
10. Extension of the boundary to include road junction.	This junction forms the gateway to the town centre and has potential to be enhanced to create an attractive gateway to the town

	centre.
11. Minor amendment to boundary	Boundary has been amended to follow the line of retail units permitted on the site.
12. Boundary reduced to exclude residential development.	This area has a strong residential character and contains no town centre uses.
Desborough	
1. Boundary extended to include library and doctors surgery.	These uses are associated with town centres and are therefore appropriate to be included within the town centre boundary
2. Boundary extended to include road junction and land to south	This is an area where there is potential for environmental enhancements and an opportunity to create an attractive gateway into the town centre. This area has therefore been included in the town centre boundary.
3. Minor amendment to the boundary	The site is occupied by a dwelling, but together with the former Lawrence's Factory Site, provides scope for significant development which could deliver a town centre use. A marketing exercise for the site was undertaken by KBC and further work is on-going regarding potential uses/ redevelopment. Due to its proximity to the Lawrence's site and potential to facilitate delivery of the adjacent land, the site is included within the town centre boundary.
4. Boundary extended to include car park	This car park is an important facility for people using the town centre and is therefore included within the town centre boundary.
5. Change considered	This area of the town centre boundary includes uses which are not generally associated with town centres. Exclusion of this area was therefore considered. However if the existing uses in this area were to relocate this area would provide a good opportunity site for expansion of town centre uses and for this reason this area remains within the town centre boundary.
6. Minor amendment	Boundary previously cut across buildings, the boundary has been amended to follow the building line.
7. Minor amendment	Boundary previously cut across buildings, the boundary has been amended to follow the building line.
8. Minor amendment	The boundary previously included access to the indoor bowls club. Due to the membership nature of this facility, it is not strictly considered to be a main town centre use. The access is therefore removed from the town centre boundary.
Rothwell	
1. Extension of boundary to include former	In February 2016 the site was in use as a

Midland Bank on the corner of Bridge Street and Desborough Road.	Turkish Restaurant, which is a main town centre use. In addition, the site is occupied by a prominent building located at the gateway to the town centre. The site should therefore be included in the town centre boundary.
2. Minor amendment	Minor amendment to follow line of the curtilage.
3. Minor amendment	Boundary previously cut across building, this has been amended to follow the building line.
4. Boundary extended to include service unit	This unit is used as a Physiotherapy Centre and it is appropriate to include this within the town centre boundary.
5. Minor amendment	Boundary previously cut across buildings, this has been amended to follow the building line and exclude a residential building located off a side street (Tresham Street).
6. Minor amendment	The original town centre boundary cut across part of the library building. This has been extended to include all of the library building.
7. Minor amendment to exclude residential properties	These residential properties are associated with the remainder of the street to the north and not the town centre and have therefore been excluded.
8. The town centre boundary currently cuts through the building occupied by A.J Mills Building Memorial Showroom and excludes part of the curtilage for The Blue Bell Pub.	Extend the town centre boundary to include both the showroom which is linked to retail and pub curtilages which are main town centre uses.
9. Minor amendment	Town centre boundary cut through an existing building. Town centre boundary amended to follow the building line.
10. Boundary extended to include Bakehouse Mews	This is a new town centre mews development incorporating service units, bars, restaurants /cafes which are main town centre uses, and should be included in the town centre boundary
11. Boundary extended to include Market House and Market Hill Car Park	Planning permission has been granted for change of use to the ground floor of Market House from offices to retail. This is clearly a town centre use and should be included in the boundary. Market Hill Car Park is an important facility for people using the town centre, and is also host to the weekly town market. These two areas should therefore be included in the town centre boundary.
12. Boundary extended to include an office use	Manor House is reported to be in use as an office which is a main town centre use. It is therefore appropriate to include this site within the town centre boundary.
13. Boundary extended to include newsagents, pub and public realm in front of	The newsagents and pub have been included within the town centre boundary as

the war memorial.	these are clearly town centre uses and functionally form part of the town centre boundary. The boundary has been extended to include the public realm as this is a gateway into the town centre and may offer opportunities for environmental improvements.
14. Boundary extended to include convenience retail unit	This is a town centre use and should be included in the boundary

SECTION C: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN CENTRES

- 8.0 Identified opportunity sites provide scope to enhance the viability and vitality of the town centres, by replacing redundant land and units with active uses which can contribute towards the overall economic health of the town centre. In addition, it is recognised that residential development within towns can further strengthen the town centre offer by boosting local demand and on street activity, making use of either opportunity sites or redevelopment of existing sites.
- 8.1 At the time that the Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012) was prepared, PPS4 sought for local planning authorities to encourage residential or office development above ground floor retail, leisure or other facilities within centres. The NPPF maintains emphasis on the importance of residential development within town centres, with Paragraph 23, Section 2 (NPPF) recognising that residential development can play an important role in ensuring vitality of centres and seeks for local planning authorities to set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites. Policy 12 (NPPF) criteria (a) also gives support to securing and maintaining a vibrant mix of main town centre uses including supporting the provision of additional residential uses on appropriate sites including the re-use of vacant space above shops.
- 8.2 Within the Part 2 Local Plan, housing site allocations for the market towns have been prepared and assessed against the Joint Core Strategy Strategic Principles and Policy, the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and other evidence including Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) evidence on deliverability the sustainability appraisal criteria. In this instance, none of the draft housing sites considered most suitable for development are located within the defined town centre areas. The identified opportunity sites for each of the market towns offers scope for development for main town centre compatible uses, but have not been specifically ring fenced for residential use, although the sites may be suitable for a residential element as part of a wider mixed use development. A general approach will therefore be to include a residential use policy within the draft Part 2 Local Plan which focuses on new development and changes of use within the three town centres of Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell. Separate policies which set out development criteria for each of the market town's town centres, will also provide additional guidance to direct residential development within town centres in suitable locations.

SECTION D: THE LOCATION AND SCALE OF TOWN CENTRE USES - LOCATION - SEQUENTIAL ASSESSMENTS

9.0 Section B of the Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012) provides the background to Option 37 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper which proposed the following:

Box 4. Option 37 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper

Option 37

To include a policy addressing requirements for Sequential Assessments for proposals involving main town centre uses not in an existing centre. The policy would omit the PPS4 requirement for a Sequential Assessment for small-scale proposals of less than 250m² gross floor-space.

The policy could also omit the requirements for proposals above this threshold if certain criteria were met, including considerations of:

- Local catchment need
- Location-specific developments
- Rural employment provision

9.1 The alternative option (option 38) was not to include such a policy. The purpose of the policy proposal was to reduce the sequential assessment burden on very minor proposals, which may hinder sustainable economic development and small business growth within the borough. The full background to this approach is set out in more detail within the Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012).

9.2 The outcome of the public consultation generally supported the inclusion of a locally set sequential assessment floor space threshold, although there was also objection. As a result, in September 2012, Members instructed officers to investigate further the use of setting a local threshold for sequential assessments.

9.3 Around the same time, the National Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4) was withdrawn and replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was adopted in March 2012. Since this date, the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (NNCSS) has also been replaced by the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (NNJCS) adopted in July 2016, and the East Midlands Regional Plan was revoked in March 2013. The changes to national, and local planning policy introduced exemptions to the sequential assessment requirements, reducing the burden on small businesses to some degree. These are set out below in table 9.

Table 9. Key material changes to sequential assessment requirements.

Policy Document	Policy / Section & Paragraph	Material Change
NPPF	Section 2, Paragraph 25	Exemption of sequential assessment requirement for small-scale rural offices and development.
NNJCS	Policy 12	Exemption of sequential assessment requirement for small-scale rural development and the creation of local centres in the SUE's.

- 9.4 The Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012) highlighted that the adverse impacts of the sequential assessment requirement were particularly pertinent to proposals for rural economic development, which is now addressed by the exemptions set out in table 9 (above).
- 9.5 The NPPF also broadens the definition of town centres, making it clear that town centres excluded areas where there may be an isolated parade of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Conversely therefore, this definition provides a material consideration for assessing whether a development proposal is a 'neighbourhood' retail use, compared with a retail use in accordance with the definition of a '*main town centre use*' and can be treated accordingly. The original motives for proposing a locally set floor-space sequential assessment threshold has therefore been resolved, and a decision not to progress a locally set floor-space sequential assessment threshold was endorsed by Members in November 2017, together with recommendation to include a policy within the draft Local Plan which clarifies the circumstances under which a sequential test would apply. As a borough wide policy, this will be included in the main Town Centres, Retail and Community Facilities chapter of the next iteration of emerging draft plan.

SECTION E: THE LOCATION AND SCALE OF TOWN CENTRE USES - SCALE - IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 10.0 Section C of the Town Centres and Town Uses Background Paper (February 2012) provides the background to Option 39 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper which proposed the following:

Box 5. Option 39 of the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper

Option 39

To include a policy setting local thresholds for the requirement for Impact Assessments for proposals for retail and leisure uses, outside of existing centres. The policy would require an Impact Assessment for such proposals which would be likely to have a significant impact on town centres and/or exceed the draft gross floorspace thresholds below:

- Kettering - 750m²
- Burton Latimer - 400m²
- Desborough - 300m²
- Rothwell - 500m²

- 10.1 The alternative option (option 40) was to not include such a policy. The purpose of the policy was to respond to the provisions set out within PPS4. PPS4 set out a default 2500m² gross floorspace threshold at or above which, all proposals for main town centre uses not located within a town centre are required to demonstrate their impact on affected town centres through the provision of an impact assessment. PPS4 enabled local planning authorities to set a lower local gross floorspace threshold requirement, where it is felt that town centres would benefit from greater

protection and likely to be significantly affected otherwise. This was the impetus behind the proposal set out in option 39 and council officers recommended that the thresholds set out above (option 39) reflect the scale at which it is considered a development would begin to have significant impacts on that centre [i.e. Kettering, Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell].

10.2 As discussed in paragraph 1.5, PPS4 was superseded by Section 2 (NPPF) in March 2012, however, the provision to locally set an impact assessment floor-space threshold has been retained and remains relevant. The only exemption to this is that set out in Policy 12, NNJCS, which exempts the need for an impact assessment requirement on small-scale rural development and the creation of local centres in the SUE's.

10.3 Options 39 and 40 were publicly consulted on through the SSPLDD Options Paper was consulted on in spring 2012. The outcome of the public consultation was reported to Members of Planning Policy Committee in September 2012, and concluded a degree of support for a locally set threshold. This view is maintained Borough Council Officers and the thresholds set out above are to be incorporated into the draft Part 2 Local Plan.

SECTION F: TOWN MARKETS

11.0 The NPPF paragraph 23 states that local planning authorities should ‘*retain and enhance existing markets...ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive.*’ *It is recognised that markets add diversity and interest to the town centres of Burton Latimer, Rothwell and Desborough, with each town operating its own markets to varying degrees. It is recognised that markets can contribute significantly towards the vitality and viability of towns and can also make a positive contribution to local economies. They add to community culture, help the regeneration of an area and offer an experience, thus increasing prosperity. The Portas Review (2011)⁽¹⁾ suggested that markets can play a crucial role in the future welfare of traditional shopping areas and high streets. It is important therefore to ensure the long term vitality and vibrancy of market offer within the towns of Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell. Each of the market towns operate the following markets on the days set out in table 10 below.*

Table 10: Operational Markets within the Market Towns

	Burton Latimer	Desborough	Rothwell
Monthly Farmers Market	1 st Saturday of each Month		
Weekday Market		Every Thursday	Every Monday

11.1 As part of the market town health check update (2016) footfall surveys were undertaken, revealing slightly higher footfall figures during market day in Rothwell, but less significant uplift in footfall occurred in Desborough. This could indicate

potential weaknesses in the existing market offer within each of the market towns as footfall increase would be expected to be more marked, and may show that there is clear scope to improve and enhance the type, frequency, quantity and quality of market availability within each of the towns.

11.2 To ensure that the market towns are in the best available position to enhance the market offer provided within each of the towns, a policy which promotes and supports the development of the markets and market places within the towns should be included within the draft Part 2 Local Plan. In accordance with the SSP2 Local Plan – Town Centres (Market Towns) a policy will need to be prepared in consultation with town councils of Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell.

11.3 Although this work remains outstanding, a markets policy for the market towns could include provisions to ensure the following criteria set out Box 6 are met:

Box 6. Outline of Possible Markets Policy

- Markets are located within the defined town centre area, and within close walking distance to existing retail uses;
- Market proposals/sites will not displace existing main town centres uses or markets, unless these uses/markets are relocated elsewhere within the defined town centre which is not to their detriment, and the proposal enhances the existing available retail offer;
- Existing main town centres uses are not obscured or obstructed by the positioning of a new markets or alteration to an existing market, ensuring that any proposal makes a positive contribution to existing retail and service offer within the town;
- The trading area of market sites occupy a level surface to facilitate pedestrian access, layout, and appearance of markets.
- New or enhanced markets accord with Market Standards Guidance which could be prepared to provide a framework across all markets within the borough to provide a consistent standard.

As this work is still in progress, any final policy will need to be subject to a sustainability appraisal.

SECTION G: ADDRESSING TOWN CENTRE DECLINE

12.0 As highlighted in paragraph 3.4 (criteria i), the NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan positively to encourage economic activity in town centres which are in decline. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to monitor the health of town centres in order to identify how well they are performing. A series of health checks have been undertaken for the three market towns since 2010. The most recent health check updates for Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell were prepared in 2016.

12.1 The 2016 health check updates provided a number of summary headline conclusions for each of the market towns which are outlined in paragraph 4.6.1 – 4.6.3.

- 12.2 In preparing the Health Check Update (2016), caution has been applied to relying on comparisons with national average figures, as national figures are derived from town centres which do not necessarily reflect the character and composition of the three market towns. Greater emphasis is therefore placed on comparing the performance of the towns against previous health check baseline data. With this in mind, like any town, all three market town centres can demonstrate areas of decline which provide opportunity to enhance their vitality and viability. The findings and conclusions from each of the Market Town Health Checks have been used to inform and update the earlier SWOT analysis undertaken for each of the market towns, as set out in the earlier Town Centres and Town Centre Uses Background Paper (February 2012). As discussed in paragraph 6.1 (above), this information together with evidence of existing commitments and subsequently delivered development also informs an update to the previously identified Town Centre Opportunity Sites, Town Centre Sites for Environmental Improvements, and Development Criteria for each of the town centres. These updated recommendations will be taken forwards through the draft Part 2 Local Plan for public consultation, and inform an agreed approach (including Part 2 Local Plan Policies) to address areas of decline which are evident within each of the market towns in order to strengthen their vitality and viability.
- 12.13 In November 2017, Members also endorsed recommendation to identify areas of the town centres showing signs of decline, and to plan positively by allocating sites for development where necessary, together with areas of environmental enhancement where it is considered beneficial to do so. Potential site allocations through have been made through the identification of opportunity sites and the approach taken to progress these opportunity sites is discussed in paragraph 6.4 (and subsequent paragraphs and tables referred to within) of this background paper. Identified areas for environmental improvement have already been identified and assessed as discussed in paragraphs 6.9 - 6.11, 6.18-6.19, 6.27, and tables 3, 5, and 7.

SECTION H: DEVELOPMENT LOCATED OUTSIDE OF TOWN CENTRES

- 13.0 The NPPF requires local authorities to set policies through the plan making process to address circumstances where main town centre use development cannot be located within or adjacent town centres, as set out in paragraph 3.4 (criteria g) of this background paper.
- 13.1 NPPF includes the sequential test and impact assessment requirements which seek to address this issue when certain circumstances apply. As set out in section D of this background paper, Members of Planning Policy Committee endorsed a recommendation not to progress the application of a locally set floorspace threshold which would trigger when the sequential test would apply, favouring inclusion of a policy within the draft Part 2 Local Plan which clarifies the circumstances under which a sequential test would apply instead, in order to aid developers and council officers. This will be contained within the main Town Centres, Retail and Community Facilities chapter of the draft Part 2 Local Plan and will need to be subject to a sustainability assessment. An appropriately worded policy may include the following requirements set out in Box 7:

Box 7. Outline of application of the sequential test policy

Development for main town centre uses not located within the town centre shall apply the sequential test as set out in paragraph 25, Section 2 of the NPPF where proposals are not for small scale rural office or other small scale rural development, or where they relate to the creation of local centres in SUEs.

In accordance with the NPPF (glossary of terms) reference to town centres applies to town centres, district centres and local centres, but does not apply to small parades of shops which are purely of neighbourhood significance.

Proposals for small retail units of a purely neighbourhood significance to serve their immediate locality and restricted as such, are exempt from the requirements of the sequential test.

- 13.2 As discussed in section E (paragraph 10.3) of this background paper, comments received through the SSPLDD Options Consultation Paper (March 2012) gave a degree of support to the use of locally set floorspace thresholds which would be used to trigger when the impact assessment would be required for proposals for main town centre uses located outside of the town centre. The use of locally set impact assessments will provide greater control over where main town centre uses are located, in order to protect the vitality and viability of town centres, district centres and local centres. In November 2017, Members have endorsed the inclusion of the proposed locally set impact assessment floorspace thresholds within the draft Part 2 Local Plan.
- 13.3 Specific circumstances where there is an identified need for main town centres uses to be located outside of the defined town centre will be address on a case by case basis. Kettering is well served to the north and south by a number of out-of-town retail parks including Northfield Avenue (Northfield Retail Park), Carina Road Retail Park, as well as the edge of town centre retail area off Meadow Road, and further retail development need at Kettering is instead focused on regenerating and strengthening the existing retail offer provided within the existing town centre.
- 13.4 A specific need has been identified however, for a medium sized food store to serve the Rothwell/Desborough area as set out in Policy 12, criteria (e) of the NNJCS. The North Northamptonshire Retail Capacity 2014 Update defines this as a priority for the early part of the NNJCS plan period. No sites have currently been identified, and in November 2017, Members endorsed recommendations to include a call for suitable sites through the draft Part 2 Local Plan, together with suitable policy criteria to be uses if a call for sites is unsuccessful. A locational policy for a medium sized food store could set out the following requirements set out in Box 8:

Box 8. Outline of Possible medium-sized food store Policy

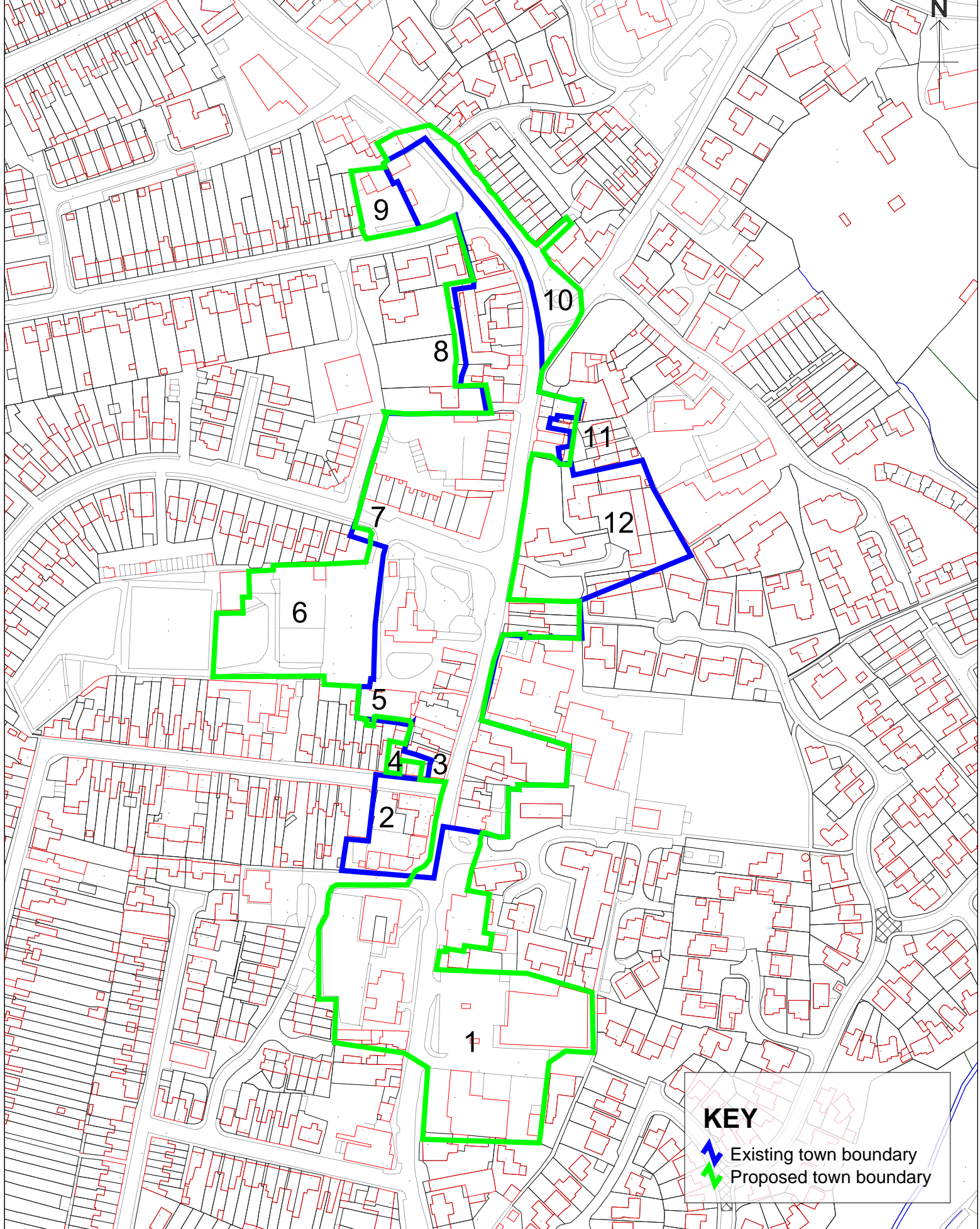
Development shall:

- Be located within the defined town centre boundary of Desborough or Rothwell unless it can be demonstrated that no suitable sites are available. Where no suitable town centre sites are available development shall be located on the edge of the town centre of



Desborough or Rothwell, within close walking distance to the town centre.

- Give priority to pedestrian and cycle access in order to encourage visits by sustainable modes of transport, and support on street activity and linked trips within the town they serve.
- Ensure that the provision of car parking does not dominate the streetscene, giving primacy to the retail presence within the town which will be orientated towards the primary movement routes in order to deliver active frontages which will enhance vitality of the area and strengthen the overall retail presence of the town.
- Be designed to a layout and scale which responds to the character and appearance of the area.
- Be supported for ancillary services such as a Petrol Filling Station, where it can be demonstrated that associated impacts are acceptable and in accordance with relevant Development Plan policies.

APPENDIX 1



KEY

-  Existing town boundary
-  Proposed town boundary

Title: Burton Latimer - Existing & Proposed Town Centre Boundary

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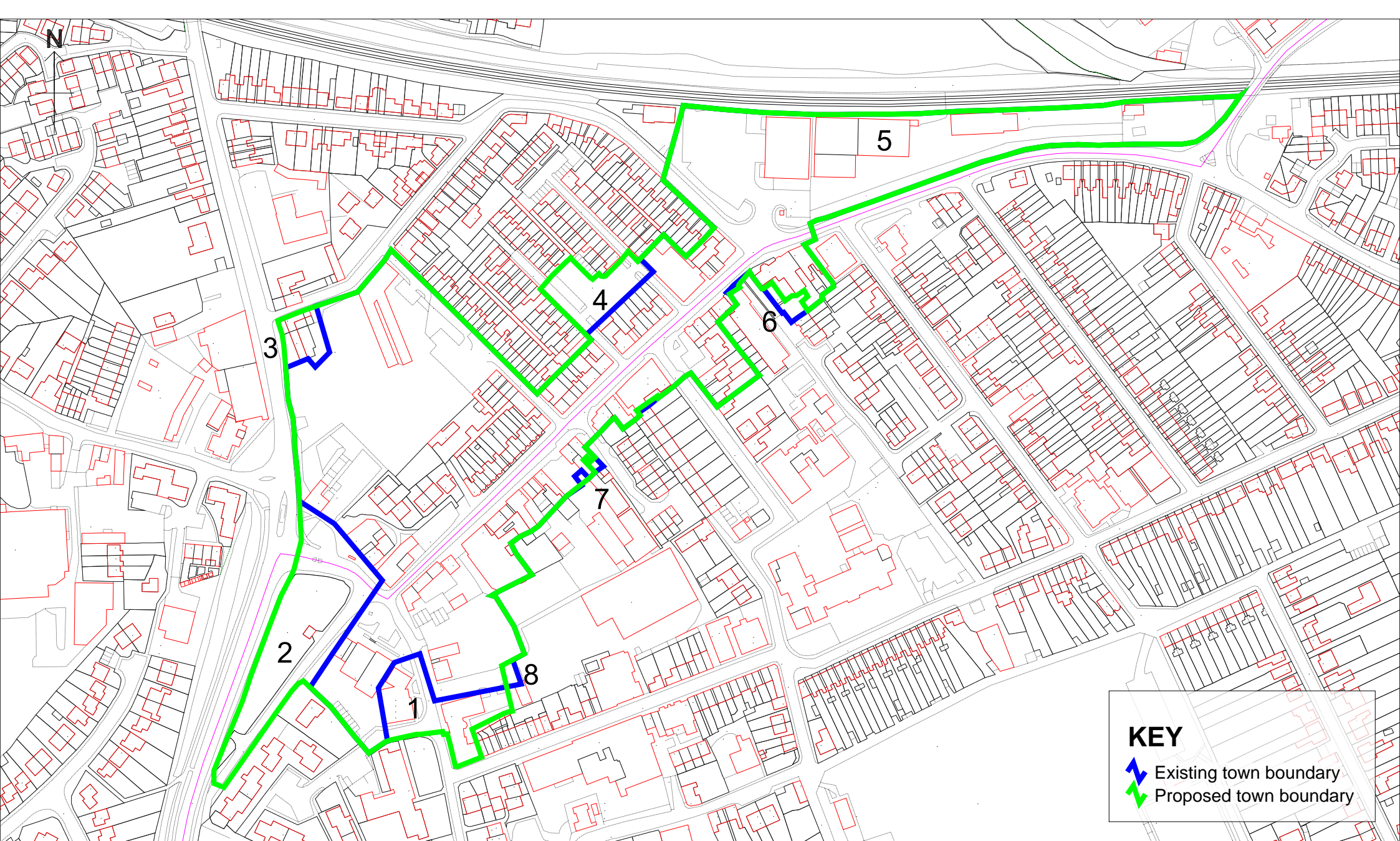
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Kettering
Borough Council



KEY

- Existing town boundary
- Proposed town boundary

Title: Desborough - Existing & Proposed Town Centre Boundary

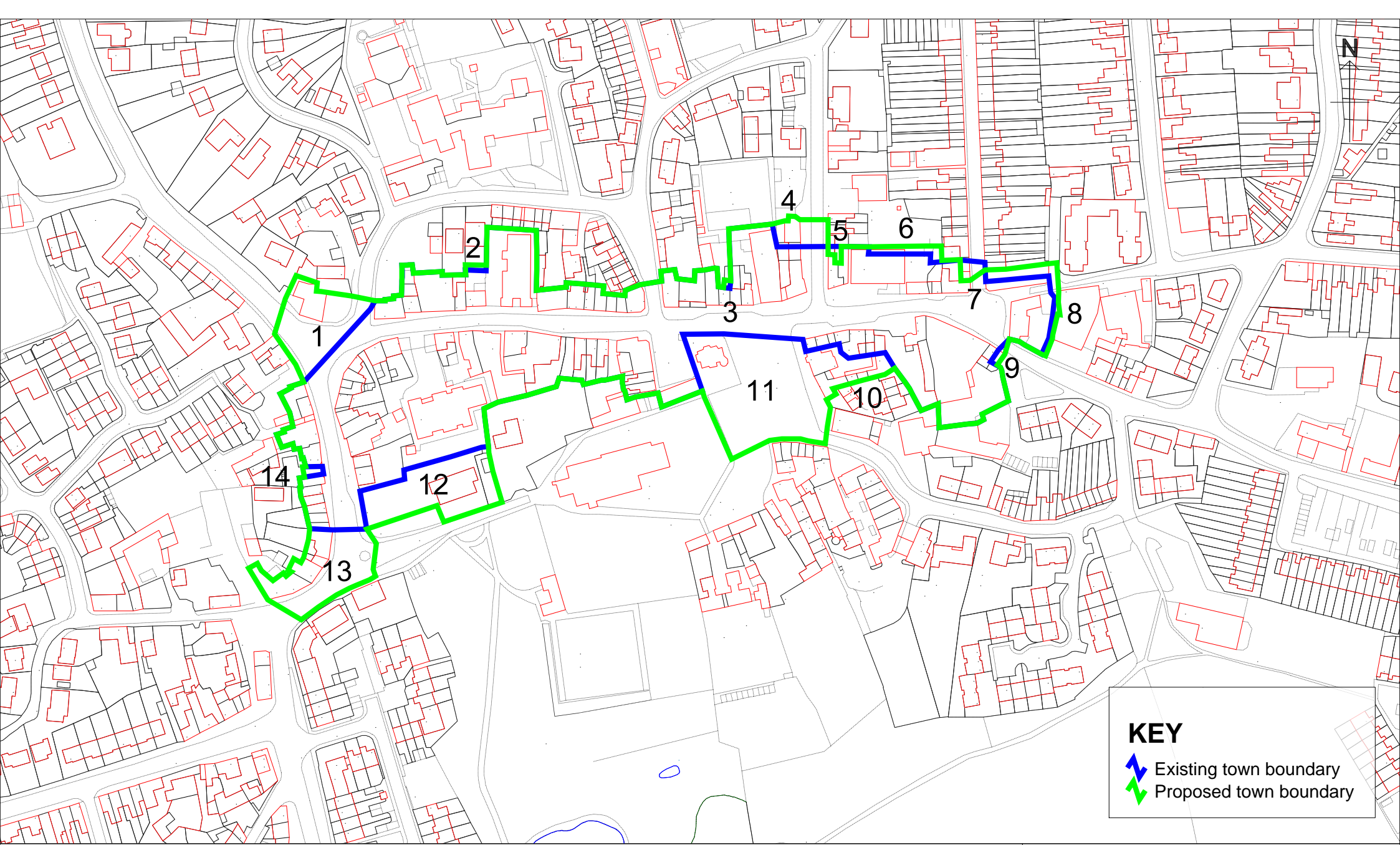
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KEY

-  Existing town boundary
-  Proposed town boundary

Title: Rothwell - Existing and Proposed Town Centre Boundary

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