Executive Summary

Preamble

Atkins Ltd in association with Lambert Smith Hampton and Nortoft ltd were commissioned in November 2008 to prepare the Strategic Employment Land Assessment (SELA) for Northamptonshire on behalf of Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd (NEL) following a full and open competitive tender procedure.

This study builds on a substantial body of work which has already been undertaken to inform future strategic economic and employment land policies and priorities in the county. This includes, but not by way of exclusion, the Northamptonshire Commercial Property and Employment Land Assessment studies (CoPELA 2003 and 2006), North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit Employment Land Futures (2005) and Northampton Employment Land Study (2006). These studies collectively set out a range of analyses of future employment floor-space demand and supply requirements for the county based on core MKSM aims and objectives. In addition, the Strategic [Sustainable] Northamptonshire Economic Action Plan (SNEAP) issued in February 2008 established a preferred economic vision for the county. This set out aspirational employment targets for North and West Northamptonshire for the periods up to 2021 and 2026. For the period 2001-2021, the aim is to provide an additional 47,400 jobs in North Northamptonshire (as adopted in the Core Spatial Strategy) and 53,000 additional jobs in West Northamptonshire. The NEL brief stipulated the following requirements of the SELA:

- Assess the Northamptonshire commercial property market.
- Evaluate the range of employment forecasts for the area and the underlying assumptions, in line with planning policy.
- Evaluate current employment land allocations in relation to commercial market demands and strategic priorities.
- Identify measures required to ensure that an appropriate range of employment sites are made available to meet employment forecast requirements.
- Identify strategic site policies and potential sites for growth in line with adopted and emerging Core Spatial Strategies (CSSs) with a particular focus on differing requirements from planning bodies (e.g. Strategic Distribution Sites).
- Provide a single strategic employment land assessment framework for use by local, county and regional partners.
- Provide guidance on monitoring, review, and how outcomes can be rolled forward to 2031.

Methodology

As laid out in the Government's Employment Land Review Guidance note, a number of distinct areas of activity have been undertaken as part of the process of producing a Strategic Employment Land Review. These include:

- Identifying a preferred econometric model for future job growth in Northamptonshire and the county's Housing Market Areas.
- Examining and recommending on the quantum of future development land required to facilitate Northamptonshire's growth requirements.
- Providing a detailed overview of current commercial market conditions affecting Northamptonshire.
- Supporting the regional and county evidence base for economic and planning policy.
- Identifying key strategic sites and policies for growth in line with adopted and emerging planning guidance.
- Providing guidance on monitoring and review, and how jobs growth can be achieved through employment land delivery.

Consultation Response

A range of consultations have taken place throughout the study period. These included an open 'Call for Sites' process, an unrestricted six week consultation period for consideration of the draft report and four stakeholder

workshops for both public and private partners. These consultations led to a range of responses from public and private partners on strategic and site specific issues. Responses of a general nature have been positive regarding SELA. Given the study's strategic nature, site specific information provided in SELA does not equate to the full details required for formal site allocations in the development plan making process. Whilst statutory bodies such as the Highways Agency and Environment Agency have been consulted during the study, this does not replace any formal requirements of local authorities to engage with statutory consultees as part of the plan making and application process. Consequently, any comments concerning sites in the SELA will need to be thoroughly tested through the formal planning process when detailed site information should be made available to ensure compliance with the requirements of these agencies and wider planning partners.

Employment Land Reviews (ELRs)

The purpose of the SELA is to provide an evidence base to assist in informing planning and economic development policy in Northamptonshire. It will provide plan making authorities in the County with an objective and single source of information on which to draw, as appropriate as they develop LDF policies. The use, or not of the evidence base should be justified in preparing an LDF. The SELA ensures that a common evidence base is available to plan makers.

The SELA is compliant with Government's ELR Guidance with a primary role being to identify key employment sites that have a reasonable prospect of being deliverable and developable subject to overcoming relevant physical and policy constraints and being tested through the full planning system. The SELA operates at a sub-regional level and focuses on the identification of potential B-use employment sites or locations. As a consultancy document, it does not determine whether or not specific sites should be allocated for B-use employment purposes. However, it provides an evidence base including a list of potential sites which can be taken forward for 'next stage evaluation' by plan making authorities as part of the formal plan making and planning application process.

Compliance with ELR "Guidance Note" Requirements

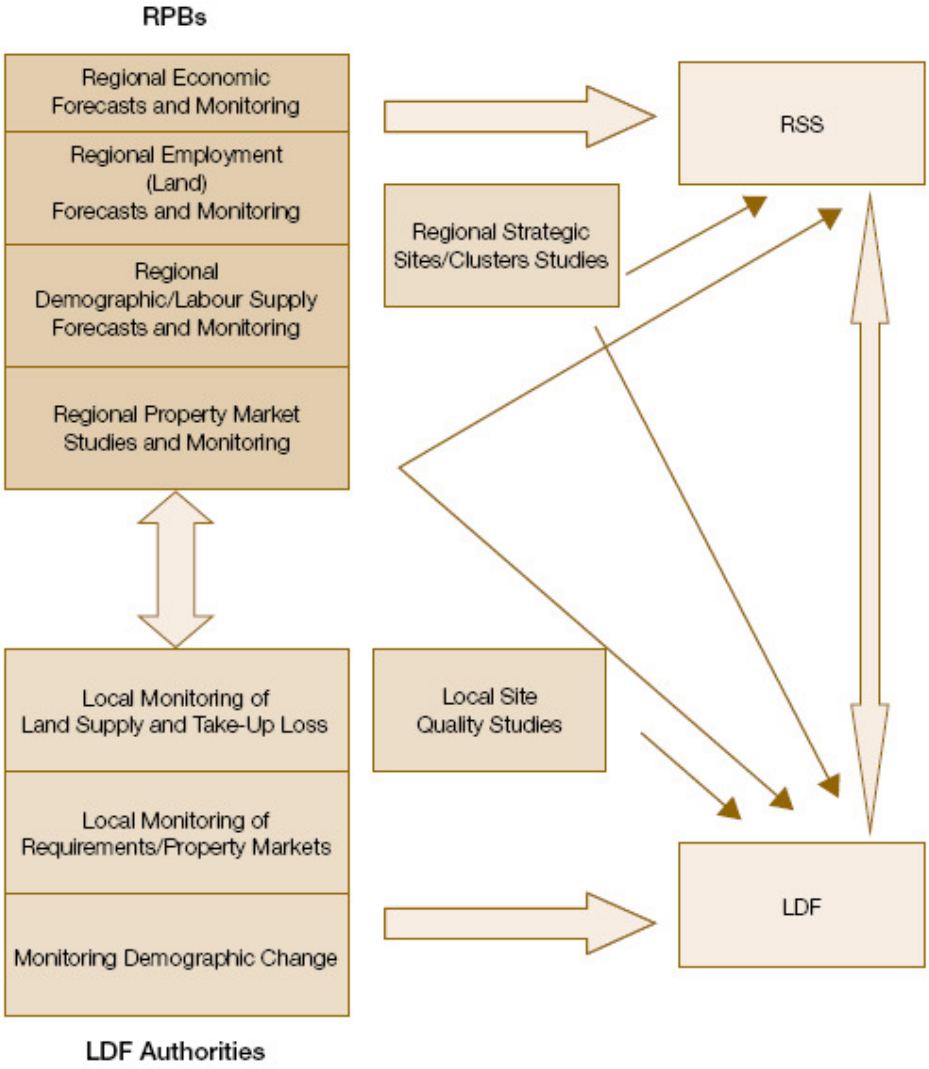
The SELA takes a strategic approach to identifying future needs for employment land and jobs growth. In particular, it supports the "RPB" section of the hierarchy depicted in Figure ES1 as set out in the Government's Guidance Notes on ELRs. The SELA is a study categorised as "*Regional Strategic Site/Cluster Study*" (see Figure ES1), albeit disaggregated to the sub-regional level (i.e. Northamptonshire). As a sub-regional study, it does not replace the detailed local Employment Land Reviews (ELRS), required from LDF local authorities, but seeks to support the strategic planning policy direction for the County and its constituent authorities. Paragraph 2.25 of the Employment Land Review Guidance Note states:

"*At the regional level, for example, there will be a far greater focus on economic and employment forecasts and aggregate supply and, apart from regionally important locations, far less concern about the attributes of individual sites*."

In development of LDFs and having regard to the findings and recommendations of the SELA, it remains a requirement for local authorities to undertake detailed ELRs, categorised as "*Local Site Quality Studies*" in Figure ES1. A number of the sites identified in the SELA study are classified as "unconstrained", being already allocated or are contained within adopted Development Plan Documents and saved Local Plan allocations. In development of their LDFs, consideration should also be given by LDF local authorities to any significant losses or gains which may impact on the supply position in their local authority areas. The SELA supports a number of requirements set out in Government's ELR Guidance particularly focusing on regional, strategic and cluster issues (see Figure ES1).

The Guidance Note on ELRs highlights the limitations of forecasting future business and employment needs at the level of individual local authorities. It stresses the most appropriate boundaries for any aggregate analysis of demand and supply should reasonably reflect the geographical markets in which businesses operate. In this report, the primary areas used are those defined as North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire as both travel-to-work and Housing Market Areas. In practice the County as a whole provides an equally important spatial unit for analysis given the significance of economic and functional links between the two Housing Market Areas. It is recognised that there are also smaller level functional geographies within Northamptonshire which should be considered by local partners in plan making.

Figure ES1: Economic and Employment Land Review Hierarchy



Note: The regional level forecasting should be disaggregated to sub-regional levels, where appropriate.

Source: Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Notes (ODPM, 2004)

Clusters

In addition to setting out a preferred economic scenario for growth and the quantum of development needed, the SELA considers a number of key employment clusters in the County. These are identified as key sectors in the report, including: High Performance Engineering and Motor sport: Environmental Technologies; and Distribution. A range of sector plans are being prepared by NEL, the emerging implications of which have been considered in this report. The High Performance Engineering and Motor Sports sector in Northamptonshire is considered to be of regional significance. Environmental Technologies is another major sector which is being targeted throughout the County as a means of attracting new business investment. This is a broad ranging sector with diverse needs in terms of sites and premises. This includes waste management activities, the preferred sites and locations for which are being identified through the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF). Local partners should work together to maximise the economic impact of the sector in terms of opportunities to provide supporting B use (notably B2 and B1c) sites, which may benefit from agglomeration effects.

Future Employment Needs

Building on the substantial body of existing forecasting work and analysis of actual economic performance of the county since 2001, a series of employment growth scenarios for the County have been created and evaluated in this study: -

- Dwellings and population led scenario.

- Econometric / Trend based scenario (Tempro v5.4).
- Policy Scenario.

The purpose of the analysis was to test a range of potential growth options for Northamptonshire and its constituent areas, whilst avoiding duplication of work that has already been undertaken. After testing the three assessments and initial consultation with key stakeholders, a 'preferred-scenario' was identified. This rolls forward the SNEAP preferred economic vision and is summarised below in Tables ES2 (jobs growth) and ES3 (B use floor-space requirements).

Table ES2 – Job Growth - Employment Forecasts 2001-2031 – Preferred Policy Scenario (FTEs)

	2001-26	2001-31
North Northamptonshire		
Industrial	*2,418*	*2,902*
Warehousing	*8,687*	*10,424*
Office	*21,684*	*26,021*
B Space Jobs	32,788	39,346
Non B Jobs	31,330	37,596
All Jobs	**64,118**	**76,942**
% of B Space Jobs	*51.1*	*51.1*
West Northamptonshire		
Industrial	*-2,930*	*-3,516*
Warehousing	*9,726*	*11,671*
Office	*25,526*	*30,631*
B Space Jobs	32,322	38,786
Non B Jobs	35,797	42,956
All Jobs	**68,119**	**81,743**
% of B Space Jobs	*47.4*	*47.4*
Northamptonshire		
Industrial	*-512*	*-614*
Warehousing	*18,412*	*22,094*
Office	*47,210*	*56,652*
B Space Jobs	*65,110*	*78,132*
Non B Jobs	67,126	80,551
All Jobs	**132,237**	**158,684**
% of B Space Jobs	*49.24*	*49.2*

Table ES3– B-Use Floor-space Requirements 2001-2031 – Preferred Policy Scenario (sqm)

	2001-26	2001-31
North Northamptonshire		
Industrial	*84,630*	*101,556*
Warehousing	*764,456*	*917,347*
Off ice	*390,312*	*468,374*
Total B Floor-space	**1,239,398**	**1,487,278**
West Northamptonshire		
Industrial	-102,550	-123,060
Warehousing	855,888	1,027,066
Off ice	459,468	551,362
Total B Floor-space	**1,212,806**	**1,455,367**
Northamptonshire		
Industrial	-17,920	-21,504
Warehousing	1,620,344	1,944,413
Off ice	849,780	1,019,736
Total B Floor-space	**2,452,204**	**2,942,645**

The three key scenarios were created using different techniques and assumptions:

- **Dwellings and population led scenario**: This estimates the job growth requirements that would emerge if the county seeks to plan for a balance between planned housing and employment change.
- **Econometric / Trend based scenario (Tempro v5.4):** This estimates employment change likely to occur without major policy intervention. Based on existing industrial structures and historical trends.
- **Policy Scenario:** This scenario was established by the SNEAP preferred economic scenario. The only change that has been made has been to roll forward the employment growth estimates to 2031

Demand-Supply Balance

Initially a call for information on existing planning allocations and potential sites promoted by the public sector was undertaken. An open and transparent 'Call for Sites' process promoted by private developers and land owners was then undertaken to assess the potential supply of employment land in the County. Based on these, an objective and comprehensive market based assessment was conducted for all sites including those identified from other sources.

Tables ES4 (North Northamptonshire) and ES5 (West Northamptonshire) summarise the potential gross existing and potential capacity of all sites. These capacity assessments are categorised according to whether or not a strong planning status is evident ('unconstrained) or not ('constrained'). A site was considered to be constrained in planning terms if the site is not identified as allocated for employment uses in existing local plans nor has any existing planning approval specifically related to employment uses. For each category of site, a composite assessment of commercial quality was undertaken, measured by local commercial agents using an objective standardised scoring system. This was then tabulated into two categories ('high quality' and 'poorer' quality).

Table ES4 – Gross Existing and Potential Supply Capacity – North Northamptonshire (sqm)

	Office (sqm)	Industrial (sqm)	Distribution (sqm)
Constrained Land	**1,314,756**	**2,689,514**	**2,057,110**
High Quality	326,971	643,741	589,639
Poorer Quality	987,785	2,045,773	1,467,472
Unconstrained Land	**118,036**	**319,237**	**85,070**
High Quality	98,436	159,603	40,496
Poorer Quality	19,600	159,634	44,574
Total	**1,432,791**	**3,008,751**	**2,142,180**

Table ES5 - Gross Existing and Potential Supply Capacity – West Northamptonshire (sqm)

	Office (sqm)	Industrial (sqm)	Distribution (sqm)
Constrained Land	**879,134**	**1,283,638**	**1,765,749**
High Quality	225,993	107,643	941,747
Poorer Quality	653,141	1,175,995	824,003
Unconstrained Land	**188,467**	**228,787**	**357,623**
High Quality	173,507	193,123	353,623
Poorer Quality	14,960	35,664	4,000
Total	**1,067,601**	**1,512,425**	**2,123,372**

Tables ES6 (North Northamptonshire) and ES7 (West Northamptonshire) set out the net balance between demand and existing / potential supply at 2026 and 2031. The quantitative analysis of net balance has been undertaken having regard only to sites which are unconstrained in planning terms and categorised in terms of their composite quality and suitability for employment.

Monitoring

In implementing the recommendations of the SELA and in moving forward towards meeting the established jobs growth targets, the need for an effective monitoring system is essential. In addition to monitoring employment land, it is important that partners such as the JPUs, local authorities, delivery vehicles and NEL work together to support the provision of a collective economic monitoring system.

Forward forecasting using appropriate charts which have been standardised with others in MKSM will be an essential tool for monitoring progress against national, regional and sub-regional objectives.

Table ES6 – Demand-Supply Balance: North Northamptonshire (sqm)

	Offices (sqm)	Industrial (sqm)	Warehousing (sqm)	Total (sqm)
Demand 2001-2026	390,312	84,630	764,456	1,239,398
Demand 2001-2031	468,374	101,556	917,347	1,428,278
Take up 01-08	30,000	-160,000	792,000	662,000
NET demand 08-2026	360,312	244,630	-27,544	577,398
Net demand 08-2031	438,374	261,556	125,347	825,277
High quality supply without planning or other major constraints	98,436	159,603	40,496	298,534
Net Balance to 2026	261,877	85,027	-68,040	278,864
Net Balance to 2031	339,939	101,953	84,852	526,744
Total high quality supply from all sites assessed (regardless of constraints)	425,406	803,344	630,134	1,858,884
Net Balance to 2026	-65,094	-558,714	-657,678	-1,281,486
Net Balance to 2031	12,968	-541,788	-504,787	-1,033,607

Table ES7 - Demand-Supply Balance: West Northamptonshire (sqm)

	Offices (sqm)	Industrial (sqm)	Warehousing (sqm)	Total (sqm)
Demand 2001-2026	459,468	-102,550	855,888	1,212,806
Demand 2001-2031	551,362	-123,060	1,027,066	1,455,367
Take up 01-08	17,000	-140,000	679,000	556,000
NET demand 08-2026	442,468	37,450	176,888	656,806
Net demand 08-2031	534,362	16,940	348,066	899,367
High quality supply without planning or other major constraints	173,507	193,123	353,623	720,252
Net Balance to 2026	268,961	-155,673	-176,735	-63,446
Net Balance to 2031	360,855	-176,183	-5,557	179,115
Total high quality supply from all sites assessed (regardless of constraints)	399,500	300,765	1,295,369	1,995,635
Net Balance to 2026	42,968	-263,315	-1,118,481	-1,338,829
Net Balance to 2031	134,862	-283,825	-947,303	-1,096,268

Demand-Supply Commentary

North Northamptonshire

There is a significant net shortfall of existing unconstrained capacity for offices under the two supply estimates. There is limited capacity for warehousing development, particularly up to 2031. Moreover, it is important to highlight that the capacity assessments do not make an allowance for choice and flexibility in the supply of sites to meet the future needs of the County. In order to meet the identified shortfall in offices and warehousing, a significant quantity of good quality land will need to be identified and brought forward for development. Locations on the "next stage evaluation" list are available to be considered and tested through the planning process for primarily employment purposes. A summary of the list is set out at the end of this Executive Summary.

Further to this, it is recognised that there is also a potential further 'pipeline' of floor-space that currently may be being considered through the planning process including approvals that have been decided by committees, but have not yet been implemented. Initial estimates indicate that some hundreds of thousands of square metres of commercial space remain in this position. Partners should continue to work on effective monitoring activities to reconcile this data with the supply estimates provided in the SELA. Subject to a reasonable degree of certainty regarding the likelihood of such proposals being implemented, it may be necessary to take these into consideration when updating the supply estimates set out in this report.

West Northamptonshire

A similar pattern to that in North Northamptonshire is identifiable in terms of offices. This sector demonstrates a significant net shortfall of existing unconstrained supply capacity before any consideration is given to the need for choice, flexibility and risk. Whilst theoretically, forecast demand for warehousing has already been met largely by take-up since 2001, there is an underlying need to ensure that future plans for expanding employment in the area is not constrained to the extent that a large proportion of latent market demand is 'pushed' away from the county. This is particularly important for key distribution locations in the area such as Daventry (DIRFT) where significant, sustainable opportunities for future growth remain. Moreover, it is critical to emphasise that the capacity summaries presented in the tables above assume a 'best-case scenario' whereby all available, unconstrained sites are made available for development. In reality, this will not be the case for a variety of unforeseen reasons and action must be taken to remedy existing short term supply constraints in the county: this reinforces the need to plan for choice and flexibility through the provision of a greater amount of land and floor-space over and above future estimates of actual demand. . Locations on the "next stage evaluation" list are available to be considered and tested through the planning process for primarily employment purposes. A summary of the list is set out at the end of this Executive Summary

As in North Northamptonshire, it is recognised there is a potential further 'pipeline' supply of floor-space that may currently be being dealt with through the planning process including approvals not yet implemented. Initial estimates indicate that within West Northamptonshire in general and within the three Urban Development Areas in particular, hundreds of thousands of square metres remain in this position. Subject to a reasonable degree of certainty regarding the likelihood of such proposals being implemented, it may be necessary to take these into consideration when updating the supply estimates set out in this report.

Northamptonshire

As a whole, the above analysis demonstrates that both North and West Northamptonshire have insufficient, good quality, unconstrained supply capacity to provide for projected demand for office floor-space. The supply of available, good quality industrial land in the North is also limited. Given the high level of take-up of warehousing space in recent years, a high proportion of forecast demand has already been satisfied. However, this may indicate that future estimates of warehousing demand are below market requirements. Irrespective of this, in pursuing a balanced role in the distribution and warehousing market, additional land for this use will need to be made available in Northamptonshire. The tables above highlight that the national B8 market has a significant impact on both the demand and supply analysis for Northamptonshire (both West and North).

Historically, demand in Northamptonshire has far exceeded forecast levels, as indicated by the Valuation Office Agency data on B8 take up from 2001 to 2008 which was recorded as some 1,471,000sqm compared to a total SELA B8 floor-space forecast to 2026 of 1,620,344.

There are clearly forces at work within the national B8 market which indicate a level of latent demand over and above the trends projected in the SELA and SNEAP. The SELA highlights the varied nature of local and national B8 activities. Consequently, careful consideration must be given to providing a sustainable balance of B8 accommodation which can service these differing needs and size requirements whilst ensuring the future economic

well-being of the County. This must further be balanced with the need to meet the strategic policy priorities of creating high value-added jobs and supporting high quality, environmentally sustainable development.

Existing Employment Sites

It is also important to recognise that a considerable amount of employment floor-space is already provided by existing sites and premises. In light of the strategic policy requirement for Northamptonshire to support significant employment growth and the SELA findings regarding the need for further employment land allocations to meet this requirement, it is recommended as a general principle that, unless there is a clear requirement for existing employment land allocations to be lost, local authorities are encouraged to adopt a policy that existing employment sites should not be released for alternative uses. Where existing employment sites are being considered for release to other uses, the case should be supported by strong evidence of need for the alternative use relative to employment needs. This evidence should take into account vacancy data for specific local areas and, if relevant, the needs of key employment sectors.

Conclusions and Policy Considerations

Key Policy Drivers

In planning for economic development, the consultation paper on PPS4 specifies a need for local authorities to take a proactive and flexible approach. This is important to ensure that local authorities can respond quickly and efficiently to changing business needs. The policy guidance calls for local authorities to allocate a range of sites and to plan for a broad range of business types. This is also reflected in the East Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy. Together these will form a Regional Plan, (the East Midlands Plan). The East Midlands Plan will expect employment allocations to be responsive to market needs and requirements of potential investors (including small businesses). These allocations should also provide for the needs of priority sectors identified in the RES and should provide a catalyst for the regeneration of urban areas. Such principles have guided this study throughout.

East Midlands Plan

The East Midlands Plan highlights the importance of Northampton's role as a Principal Urban Area in driving growth in the County through both housing and employment development. This needs to be complemented by enhancement of public transport infrastructure and facilities. The tightness of the town's boundaries dictates that a strategic and coordinated approach needs to be taken to the planning and delivery of this longer term growth. This plan also highlights that the regeneration of Corby should be supported by a level of housing development that will significantly reduce the need for in-commuting. Other Growth Towns, such as, Kettering and Wellingborough will also be enhanced, as will Daventry in its role as a Sub-Regional Centre. Policy 21 of the RSS establishes the potential for provision of strategic distribution sites in Northamptonshire. It stipulates North and West Northamptonshire among the preferred locations for these sites. In allocating sites in Local Development Documents, policy dictates that local authorities should give priority to sites which can be served by rail freight and operate as inter-modal terminals.

MKSM Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy

The MKSM sub-regional spatial strategy aims to provide high-value economic growth commensurate with planned housing development. Over the 30 year period to 2031, the strategy plans for provision of up to 141,000 additional jobs in Northamptonshire.

SNEAP builds on MKSM strategy and sets out a preferred economic vision for Northamptonshire, focused on raising productivity and accelerating employment growth in a range of business sectors. For North Northamptonshire, the SNEAP aim is to achieve a step-change in the ability to deliver a planned number of 47,400 jobs for the period 2001-2021. For West Northamptonshire, the aim is to achieve jobs growth of 53,000 over the same period. These job 'targets' are becoming widely accepted in the county as the basis for strategic policy development. SNEAP emphasises that without significant interventions from the public sector, the county will fall short of the job growth 'targets' which form part of the preferred economic vision.

Core Spatial Strategies

The adopted Core Spatial Strategy in North Northamptonshire establishes the spatial vision for development of this part of the County. This strategy takes forward key aspects of the East Midlands Plan in North Northamptonshire. It plans for growth through the development of a strong network of settlements linked by good transport connections and emphasises the importance of matching housing growth with economic growth. In considering the

planned total of 47,400 new jobs to be provided in the period up to 2021, the Core Strategy identifies that 23,590 of these will be B-use jobs and allocates these on a district by district basis as targets. The pre-submission West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy is in the course of preparation and will need to take policy decisions informed by the information provided in the SELA.

Infrastructure Constraints including the Strategic Road Network

The SELA has assessed employment sites against a range of criteria, but it is clear that further evaluation will be required in meeting the requirements of the formal planning system. Inevitably, the development of sites will have impacts on infrastructure capacity. Consequently, in order to ensure sites are taken through the planning process in a timely and efficient manner, promoters should seek early engagement with the relevant statutory agencies.. This should be the case for all strategic planning partners, including the Highways Agency, Environment Agency, English Heritage and others to ensure that the detailed requirements of these bodies are fully considered as part of the formal planning process.

It should be highlighted that sites recommended in this document for 'next stage evaluation' have not been accepted in terms of the ability of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) to accommodate trips generated by proposed sites. In particular, a number of sites will have a direct impact on the SRN and this will need to be fully investigated. Any site coming forward will require full supporting evidence, in particular a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan produced in compliance with the latest standard, currently DFT Circular 02/2007, the "Guidance on Transport Assessment" and the "Good Practice Guidelines: Delivering travel plans through the planning system".

Flexibility and Choice

As a growth area with the need to achieve ambitious employment and housing development targets, we consider that the need for flexibility and a proactive planning approach is imperative if the county is to fulfil its contribution to the growth agenda. Moreover, such an approach is equally important if adopted and other endorsed strategies in the county are to be realised. In planning for future employment land supply, and in accordance with Government Guidance, spatial units should be used which make sense in terms of functional economic geography. In order to ensure that these functional areas can be translated into administrative areas, there is an objective rationale to indicate that demand and supply estimates are provided primarily for North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire.

Phasing of Development Land Release

In achieving long term growth aspirations, the county is expected to seek to maximise demand-led supply through promoting the area positively as a location for business. However, a long term goal is to ensure a balance of speculative and end-user demand as the county grows. Key centres such as Northampton need to develop further the promotion and image of the town as a viable, national centre of commerce ideally placed to attract footloose investment.

This should be reflected, in part, by ensuring a healthy supply of high quality and readily available land. In delivering employment land opportunities, local partners should give careful consideration to the release of development land and phasing of construction to ensure that the efficiency of the market is not undermined through excessive supply at any one time. This will be important to ensure that optimum development values can be maintained in order to support long term developer interest in the county.

Rural Economic Development

In providing a healthy balance of employment across the county, we consider that the provision of new employment uses in rural areas should be encouraged so long as they support local needs at a scale commensurate with the character and environment of the area in question. Particular emphasis should be given to the promotion of sustainable sites in the centre of rural towns and, in some cases villages, where highlighted in policy as Rural Service Centres.

Industrial Employment Land

This study reflects national trends in respect of the ongoing decline of the manufacturing sector. Across the county, a large element of manufacturing activities are located in dated buildings, the majority of which are approaching 30 years old and obsolescence is becoming a significant issue. However, our assessment of local commercial property markets highlights the continuing demand for a range of industrial users for modern high quality premises in Northamptonshire. Furthermore, Tables B2 (North) and B3 (West) of SNEAP show the Cambridge Econometrics'

sector forecasts which identify high relative growth in some manufacturing and industrial sectors. This may indicate that some industrial sectors in Northamptonshire outperform regional and national trajectories. Building on the existing strengths of key industrial activities, NEL are targeting key sectors which have the potential to support further jobs growth and facilitate innovation. These include High Performance Engineering and Motor sports and Environmental Technologies. In planning to meet the needs of industrial occupiers and investors, including the target sectors, it is critical that the quantitative balance between demand and supply does not detract from the practicalities of providing suitable sites and premises in response to the day-to-day needs of existing and potential industrial businesses.

Established Spatial Priorities

In accordance with established spatial priorities in the county, drawn from Regional and local policy, it is appropriate that local development documents promote employment growth according to the following hierarchy of locations. As noted in SNEAP, a key objective is regenerating the town centres. Given Northamptonshire's strategic role as a Growth Area, this hierarchy of settlements should preferably be reflected by public investment in key infrastructure and other facilities to ensure the respective roles of the county's settlements can be maintained and enhanced:

- Principal Urban Area – Northampton Implementation Area (i.e. functional area of Northampton). The county town currently has a population of around 200,000 with MKSM / SNEAP aspirations to grow to approximately 300,000 over the next 20 years.
- Growth Towns – Corby; Kettering; Wellingborough. Each of the towns have populations of between 60,000 – 75,000 including adjacent urban areas with expansion targets to around 100,000.
- Sub-Regional Centres– Daventry, with a population of around 25,000 should roughly double over 20 years. Rushden could be considered equivalent to a sub-regional centre. Each has a master plan which demonstrates their potential to perform an increasing employment role in the county.
- Smaller Towns – Burton Latimer; Rothwell; Desborough; Irthlingborough; Higham Ferrers; Towcester. Promotion of economic growth at a sustainable scale, primarily through regeneration of the town centres and provision of smaller scale urban extensions containing employment sites.
- Rural Service Centres – Brackley; Oundle; Thrapston; Raunds. Focus on town centre regeneration. In some cases, the promotion of key employment sites where viable as part of smaller scale urban extensions.
- Sector Specific Locations - (e.g. Motor sport) – Silverstone; Rockingham; Brixworth. Where significant sector-specific opportunities are apparent, these should be promoted through the identification of good quality viable employment sites that meet specific sector needs in the key locations.
- Road/Rail Transfer Hubs – Promoting strategic logistics hubs in sustainable locations, most notably Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) and Eurohub, Corby. This reflects the unique role of these facilities. In particular, DIRFT, given its unique role in the national B8 market should be distinguished from the wider economic role of Daventry district and Daventry town.
- Passenger Rail Stations – Promoting mixed-use development in sustainable, town centre locations. Critical to this will be the need for strong intervention and co-ordinated action. Key locations may include Northampton, Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough, Long Buckby and Kings Sutton.

Town Centres

All boroughs and districts in the county have a range of town centre redevelopment opportunities and sites emerging for commercial development. In line with the SNEAP and wider policy objectives, prioritising these sites for development will be important in underpinning town centre regeneration and ensuring that attractive and vibrant town centres can support sustainable jobs growth. As such it is recommended that local partners continue to work closely together in bringing forward town centre sites which can accommodate a range of B and non B uses.

B-Use/non B-use Balance

The findings set out in this report indicate that, to date, the county has not met overall annualised MKSM total employment growth targets (particularly in the North). However, on closer examination, performance within the B-use sector has been much stronger compared to non B-use jobs growth. Indeed, growth of B-use jobs in Northamptonshire significantly out-performs the regional and national averages.

Consequently, an important policy consideration will be whether to plan a more prominent role for B-use activities in meeting the preferred growth scenario. Evidence discovered in preparing this report suggests that the county's non B-use sectors, (including but not exclusively retail, hotels, leisure, food and drink, social care, health, education and non residential institutions), are lagging behind regional and national trends. This suggests a significant shift in policy initiatives for Northamptonshire may be needed, including effective policies to drive forward key and wider town centre regeneration proposals in Northampton Central Area and town centres in the County's boroughs and districts.

It is beyond the scope of this report to set out advice on planning for non B-use jobs. Nevertheless, a healthy overall Northamptonshire economy demands a successful Non B-use economy. In this respect it may be appropriate for future policies and site allocations to consider, for example:

- incorporating an appropriate scale and type of non B-use activities in 'traditional' employment (B-use) sites;
- combining in a viable manner, B and non B-uses in town centre master plans and development briefs with a particular focus on how the county's town centre regeneration activities can support jobs growth and
- Complementary initiatives aimed at investing in skills and training in lagging sectors.

To support non B-uses, a county wide working group could be developed to consider the reasons for disparities in performance and propose solutions. It could include planning and economic development officers and private sector representatives tasked with identifying actions to stimulate the demand for employment-generating non B-use sectors.

Supply Response

There is a requirement to provide an immediate employment land supply for different market sectors within each of the County's boroughs and districts. Our analysis of existing allocations indicates there are significant supply problems relating to many market sectors within key towns in the county. It is important these shortages of supply be addressed. The supply offer should be on the basis that sufficient sites are immediately available for development/occupation and there is an appropriate level of choice available to potential occupiers, without flooding the market through an over supply of employment land. Ideally this should relate to sites that provide (1) availability from developers, (on either a speculative or design and build basis), or (2) availability of serviced sites to purchase for potential end-user/occupiers.

In addition to the sites identified in this report, it is recognised that additional sites will come forward through the planning and development processes. Where these are situated in appropriate locations (consistent with relevant policy) and can, through working with statutory bodies demonstrate strong commercial need and viability as well as high sustainability and design standards, such sites should be considered favourably.

Employment Sites of Regional Importance

This study identifies regionally important locations which we consider should be given particular attention when plan making authorities are considering future employment land allocations and it identifies other locations as being worthy of further investigation, albeit these were assessed as not being of strategic or cluster-specific importance. We recommend that policy makers, when deciding on employment land policies for Local Development Documents, give consideration to designating certain locations of regional importance as Strategic Employment Sites and Clusters[1].

Locations with Potential as Strategic Employment Sites and Clusters

- Northampton Town Centre (N5; N17; N18; N20; N21; N23; N34; N35; N36; N38) is a location which should be examined as a regionally important location with good rail connectivity and likely to attract inward investment.
- Land at Northampton South East (N2; N3; N4; N7; N10; N13; N14; N37; S30) is a location which should be examined as a regionally important location with good M1 connectivity and likely to attract inward investment.

[1] The origin of the phrase "regionally important locations" derives from paragraph 2.25 of the ELR Guidance Note. It states: "At the regional level, for example, there will be a far greater focus on economic and employment forecasts and aggregate supply and, apart from regionally important locations, less concern about the attributes of individual sites."

- Land at Wellingborough Stanton Cross (W1) is a location which should be examined as a regionally important location with good rail connectivity and likely to attract inward investment.
- Land at Kettering South (K1 / land around Junction 10) should be examined as a regionally important location with good A14 (Trans European Network Route) connectivity and likely to attract inward investment.
- Land at Corby Stanion Plantation (C6) should be examined as a regionally important strategic distribution location with good inter-modal road/rail transfer at the adjacent Eurohub and likely to attract investment.
- Land at DIRFT expansion (D1) should be examined as a regionally important strategic distribution location with good inter-modal road/rail transfer at DIRFT, (with other siding potential), and likely to attract investment.
- High Performance Engineering and Motor Sport Cluster

  Silverstone (S1); Rockingham (C3); Brixworth (D4); should be examined collectively as a sector cluster.

Call for Sites and Next Stage Evaluation

A "Call for Sites" from (A) public sector partners (B) private sector developers and landowners produced a long list of some 300 actual and potential sites across Northamptonshire. Close to 2/3rds of these were judged to have insufficient promise of meeting the likely requirements which would warrant allocation as part of Local Development Frameworks. The remaining sites were considered to have sufficient merit to be worthy of taking to the next stage where they could be tested in further detail against policy and deliverability criteria by planning authorities. SELA defines a "*next stage evaluation list*" of some 74 locations totalling over 1,500 ha.

The 6 viewed as regionally important and 3 with cluster potential comprise some 500 ha. The balance (65) potentially total some 1,000 ha more.. In assessing sites and locations SELA has considered a range of key criteria including:

- Planning constraints; compatibility with national, regional and sub-regional plans including the Sustainable Communities strategy and adopted and emerging Local Plans.
- Ownership and site assembly issues, potential land contamination and potential flood risk factors.
- Potential delays whilst waiting delivery of other sites or those dependent on delivery of wider schemes.
- Local and strategic infrastructure issues including but not exclusively "highways" issues.

Flowing from the criteria-based assessment, three key summary 'scores' were produced: sustainability; commercial suitability; and a combined quality score. Sites scoring green and amber are generally put forward for next stage evaluation having regard to key policy and deliverability factors.

Locations for Next Stage Evaluation

- Corby 10 ~ 9 next stage locations in addition to Stanion Plantation (C6; C25) and [*part of Rockingham*] (E25).
- East Northants 9 ~ 8 next stage locations in addition to part of Rockingham (E25).
- Kettering 10 ~ 9 next stage locations in addition to Kettering South (K1).
- Wellingborough 6 ~ 5 next stage locations in addition to Stanton Cross (W1).
- South Northants 11 ~ 9 next stage locations in addition to Silverstone (S1); Preston Grange (S30).
- Northampton 15 ~ 13 next stage locations in addition to Town Centre (N5; N17; N18; N20; N21; N23; N34; N35; N36; N38) and South East District (N2; N3; N4; N7; N10; N13; N14; N37);
- Daventry 13 ~ 11 such sites in addition to DIRFT expansion site (D1) and Brixworth, Ilmor Ave (D5).

Analysis of Employment Sites

There are some large scale sites currently being promoted for employment development, which are linked to the provision of key infrastructure. Provision of new and improved infrastructure will be important to achieving the scale of employment growth required in the county. Regionally important locations are identified and need to be

progressed through special intervention measures.. There are also many other sites of local importance which should be considered for allocation where it is feasible and appropriate in planning terms to do so.

Based on comprehensive site assessments, our recommendation is that the sites as set out in Tables 10.4 to 10.10 should be considered and tested through the planning process for primarily employment purposes. The tables provide a summary of the constraints and scheme quality for each site by local authority area. Sites highlighted in green for sustainability and commercial suitability have been assessed as being of the highest quality in terms of suitability for employment. Those highlighted in amber/yellow are considered of fair quality with potential to become high quality employment sites.

Collectively, many of these sites will need to be brought forward in order to achieve a sustainable balance of employment as part of the task of delivering MKSM growth. However, a substantial programme of public sector intervention and enabling activity will be required to bring many of the identified sites forward regardless of their respective formal planning status. The scale, nature and timing of intervention will vary according to the extent of deliverability issues and there will be numerous other barriers to development needing to be resolved for the sites to be brought to market.

Skills and Further & Higher Education Facilities

As already highlighted in SNEAP, there is a need to support creation of a higher level skills base as a key driver in achieving "*high value added*" employment in Northamptonshire, including the need to promote non B-use employment. This will require development of additional Further and Higher Education facilities. These facilities are critical to the promotion of a more knowledge-intensive economy and are often major employers in their own right. Partners in the education sector have a number of existing expansion plans across the county and it will be important to ensure that support is provided to secure the expected increase in student numbers as part of the policy-driven growth agenda.

In doing so, key sites will need to be identified and promoted particularly where educational and research facilities can stimulate the clustering of other business activities in key sectors. Recent examples where clustering effect has taken place include the successful expansion of the Portfolio Innovation Centre located at the University of Northampton which supports, for example, growth of the creative industries sector and the "*iHub*" at Daventry, home to the regionally important university backed "*iCon*", (Innovation in Sustainable Construction), a key sector with clustering opportunities.

Regionally Important Locations/Sites

It is recognised that the preferred employment growth scenario for Northamptonshire represents a significant challenge in terms of delivering the amount of B space employment proposed. Whilst it is important to have a focus on an ability to provide immediate readily available sites to meet the needs of existing companies, a further aim should be to encourage inward investment from regional, national and international sources, requiring a number of strategically sized sites to be offered. In many cases the delivery of relatively large sites will be required in order to support the cost of infrastructure investment and also to provide a critical mass of development appropriate to attracting new large scale investment and occupiers to Northamptonshire. These sites must be of a quality to appeal to the national market and as such need to be specifically targeted to meeting specific market sectors. Such sites will need to be "flagship sites" for the county and beyond with individual site owners being given significant marketing support from the parts of the public sector involved in promotion of Northamptonshire as a whole. In order to deliver these sites in a timely fashion, it will be important for the planning process to operate efficiently and positively in accordance with the emerging PPS4.

In order to ensure that the strategic sites can be made available at the earliest opportunity, significant public sector intervention may be necessary. Amongst others, strategic sites should be prioritised for inevitably limited public sector intervention funds. An initial portfolio of potential strategic sites in the county has been identified in this study. These sites have been proposed on the basis of their: -

- potential to provide a national, regional or sub-regional role in terms of the quantity and/or quality of jobs that can be supported. The sites demonstrate strategic strengths and opportunities in terms of their scope for adding significantly to the growth agenda in Northamptonshire.
- potential to provide a specialist but significant role in terms of sector strengths (as defined by SNEAP or emerging statutory plans).

- potential to delivery high quality development schemes incorporating state-of-the-art technology, physical and electronic connectivity and high environmental standards (e.g. excellent BREEAM status, a low carbon footprint and energy efficiency).

General Strategic Sites

Land at Wellingborough Stanton Cross W1 (46.7ha) forms a smaller part of a SUE to the east of Wellingborough. Concerns exist regarding the deliverability of the full master-plan which may require revision. Similarly, the Section 106 Agreement may also be renegotiated. We consider the office element proposed at Station Island could be a key site for delivery of office accommodation in Northamptonshire. It is strategically located with good rail links to London and potentially good connectivity with Wellingborough town centre. It offers a significant opportunity to attract inward regional and national office occupiers. However, the timeframe for delivering the commercial element may be constrained by the need to fund high up-front infrastructure costs as well as the possibility that competing sites in other locations may be more feasible in the short to medium term.

Land at Kettering South K1 (110 ha) is located on A14 (Trans European Network Route).This site has potential to act as a major site for B2/B8 employment uses that could service national as well as regional and local needs. However, it is recognised that there will be a number of infrastructure constraints, not least in respect of access to the A14. Further work on the deliverability of this site should be undertaken with local partners with a view to its potential importance.

Strategic Distribution Sites

Policy 21 of the RSS establishes the potential for the provision of strategic distribution sites in Northamptonshire during the plan period. It envisages that the preferred locations for these would be located in both North and West Northamptonshire Housing Market Areas. Having evaluated all major existing and potential sites in the county which may potentially serve this function and, given the importance of maximising rail freight opportunities, we consider that the most suitable sites (in terms of both sustainability and viability) to specifically service national B8 requirements would be the planned extensions at Eurohub- Stanion Plantation in Corby and DIRFT in Daventry. In delivering these sites local partners must seek to maximise their economic contribution, through efforts to optimise the provision of ancillary office accommodation and ICT connectivity whilst minimising the environmental impact. For example, limiting damage to adjacent woodlands at Stanion Plantation at Corby and reducing impact on villages and local road systems close to DIRFT in Daventry District.

Land at Corby Stanion Plantation C6 (60 ha) has planning consent for B8 Warehousing and Distribution. Development costs of the scheme are likely to be relatively high which may impact on its deliverability. However as a general location, the site provides an opportunity to provide a large scale, rail-linked warehouse / distribution facility for North Northamptonshire. It may be that viability / deliverability of the scheme could be improved with a larger scale scheme.

Land at DIRFT Expansion Site D1 (54 ha). The site provides an opportunity to extend the substantial existing rail-linked warehouse/distribution facility. Through to 2026 and beyond it may be that there will be additional pressures for development which could extend partially into SELA site D3 and more particularly site D4, which offers the potential for further rail served facilities. Any enlargement of the site should have regard to the potential development of land immediately north of D1 where primarily residential expansion is being promoted adjacent to Rugby and located in Warwickshire (West Midlands Region). Public transport connectivity to the site should be made available , through existing and new transportation infrastructure to maximise the potential jobs growth within the county's labour market.

This study estimates the amount of distribution floor-space needed to meet sustainable growth requirements of the county. With specific regard to DIRFT and Eurohub, these sites are likely to perform an additional and important role contributing to national and international distribution needs. This strategic role should be distinguished from that performed by other B8 sites in the county which are more suited to serving local and sub-regional markets. Indeed, the level of demand likely to be accommodated by DIRFT and Eurohub in serving national markets will be significantly greater than local and sub-regional demand. Consequently, in allocating sites for B8 uses in Northamptonshire, given the national demand potentially to be accommodated at DIRFT and Eurohub, consideration should be given to the level of floorspace required to meet local demand, consistent with planning and wider policy objectives.

Sector Specific Sites

In line with Government Guidance on ELRs, the SELA draws attention to key sectors/clusters in Northamptonshire. In light of the county's internationally recognised strengths in High Performance Engineering and the Motor Sport sector and the emerging Northamptonshire Strategy for the sector, the following sites should be considered as having significant potential in meeting sector/cluster-specific needs:

- Silverstone S1
- Rockingham E25 (part in Corby and part in East Northamptonshire)
- Brixworth; Land at Ilmor Way D5

These sites, in aggregate totalling 84.4 ha, would support a range of B and non B use employment in these locations. The sites are at differing stages of the planning and commercial delivery process. Local partners should continue to work together, as part the Northamptonshire Strategy for High Performance Engineering and Motor sport in bringing forward these sites to specifically support the county's long term growth opportunities. There is considered to be a realistic prospect of suppliers and sub-contractors being attracted to such sector specific locations where some of their major customers already operate. This opens up the opportunity to stimulate the clustering of cutting edge technology supply businesses which can play a major part in generating new, high-value jobs in the County. It is to be noted that site E25 lies across the boundary between Corby and East Northamptonshire. Consequently, in order to maximise the economic potential of the site, it will be necessary for both local authorities to work closely together in planning for its development (e.g. through a joint masterplanning approach).

Northampton Regionally Important Locations

Northampton Central Area

The redevelopment and revitalisation of Northampton town centre is a strategic priority. It is desirable that it includes commercial B-use employment sites as well as non B-use. Potential B-use employment sites, aggregating to some 30 ha, if delivered to maximum effect could support a significant amount of B1 accommodation. In particular, we note sites N5 Waterside Avon; N17 Castle Station; N18 Waterside West; and smaller sites such as N20 St Johns, N21 Angel Street, N23 Bridge Street; N34 Lady's Lane; N35 Newland; N36 Victoria Street and N38 Edgar Mobbs Way. The phasing of these sites will need to be carefully planned to ensure a balance of supply and demand in the town centre, but collectively they have the potential to contribute significantly to the revitalisation of Northampton Central Area.

Northampton South East District

The South East District of Northampton centred on Bedford Road is generally considered as having potential to accommodate some part of the planned growth of Northampton. The extent of growth to be allocated is currently unknown and different views have yet to be reconciled. However, under most scenarios, there is potential for a significant employment land allocation, building on the existing successful Brackmills and Lakes developments. Sites N2; N3; N4; N7 and N10 Brackmills; N13 The Lakes; N14 Land at Martin's Farm; N37 Land at Houghton Gate/Bedford Road; S30 Land around Preston Grange and probably others yet to be identified could be brought forward so as to maximise linkages between them and provide a development zone of over 120ha. This could be designated as a strategic site for the county if policy-makers decide on that course of action. Significant land assembly and infrastructure constraints would need to be addressed. It potentially may provide a satisfactory option for a Technology Realm hub.. Support of the HCA would be of particular importance in delivering this as a strategic location. We consider that site N14, in particular, provides the opportunity for early delivery of some prime employment land within this wider area.

District Overviews

Many urban area extensions, known as Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) are proposed throughout Northamptonshire, some being a long way off implementation. These mixed used schemes incorporate significant levels of residential development alongside economic, social and community facilities. These major schemes will inevitably require significant infrastructure investment for their delivery. It is important these sites are brought forward to achieve a reasonable balance between jobs and housing growth. However, in some cases a lack of commercial attractiveness of such sites may increase the need to consider employment development at other locations. Our recommended list of sites for further investigation (set out in schedules at the end of this Executive Summary and in Tables 10.4 to 10.10), have emerged from an independent site assessment process. We

consider that these sites should all be further tested through the planning process for primarily employment purposes.

Wellingborough

In addition to the potential strategic site at Stanton Cross, it is considered that Appleby Lodge: W14 (65.3ha) provides a deliverable opportunity for high quality mixed employment development. This site would be an extension to Park Farm Industrial Estate. A major step change is required to deliver significant growth in the office sector. High quality sites in the best locations will need to be provided in order to attract regional and national demand.

Wilby Grange, W13 (16.2 ha of commercial floor-space as part of a larger mixed use scheme) has the potential to attract regional demand. Existing highways problems to the A45 at the Wilby roundabout are a major constraint to development in Wellingborough generally. To support the delivery of significant employment growth in the area, it may be necessary to consider collectively a range of sites in order that a sufficient critical mass can be achieved to address the cost of overcoming highways constraints. The problems at the Wilby roundabout on the A45 are widely recognised and a solution to this highways constraint may be of considerable benefit to Wellingborough and North Northamptonshire as a whole.

Kettering

Given its location on the A14, Kettering has the potential to attract significant employment related development across the B-use sector. High quality development has been and continues to be delivered at Kettering Venture Park and Kettering Business Park. However, as a priority, Kettering requires a high quality employment park to be available to the south of the A14 at Junctions 8, 9 or 10, typically K1; K6, K7. Alternatively there is the potential for a major site to be delivered at Junction 7 at the connection with the A14 and A43. Each of these locations has the potential to provide an important “gateway site” into Kettering. This general location is considered to provide the most significant area for employment growth in Kettering, for example through the provision of a new high quality business park within the next five years. Potential also exists for further development to the north of Kettering at K8, although this may be for general B-use as well as non B-use development. It should be highlighted that a major constraint to development in this and the wider area is area between junctions 7 and 10 of the A14. Overcoming capacity constraints in this location will be central to realising the employment potential of Kettering.

Corby

Corby has a good range of employment sites currently available for delivery in the marketplace or well advanced through the planning process. The successful delivery of the remaining part of the Parklands Gateway Scheme: C26 (2.8 ha) is important. However the area linking central Corby with the new railway station is of equal priority. As such there should be a focus on the delivery of the Corby Community College: C10 (4.0 ha).

Stanion Plantation is the strategic B8 site for North Northamptonshire. There are concerns regarding its viability. There is potential for the site to be developed in tandem with Brownfield sites C30, C31 and C32, which should be explored further although they individually were not assessed as being sites for further evaluation Aggregating a number of sites may improve commercial deliverability of Stanion Plantation, whilst stimulating regeneration in the southeast/east sector of the town.

East Northamptonshire

There have been good levels of occupancy and development in East Northamptonshire over recent years with the link of the A45 onto the A14 at Thrapston having significantly improved the employment offer of the District. However, there has been an arguably excessive element of B8 warehouse development on secondary sites which has reduced the overall level of choice available to industrial occupiers looking to expand in the area. Site E7 at Northampton Road, Rushden (6.1ha), provides an immediately deliverable opportunity to extend existing high quality industrial/office development undertaken in Rushden over recent years.

As part of a mixed commercial / residential development to the northeast of Raunds, employment delivery should be regarded as appropriate at Raunds north/north east sector E3. As currently proposed, the employment area will amount to some 26.0 ha. The site provides an opportunity for mixed-use commercial development on a phased basis.

Potential extension to Warth Park E2 (33.5 ha) provides a potential opportunity for larger scale warehouse delivery by adding to the original development. It is important to place this within the context of providing only the most suitable sites for B8 development. It is apparent Warth Park has been able to attract demand from outside Northamptonshire, particularly from the east, (from centres such as Huntingdon, Peterborough and Cambridge).

This is often not just restricted to high bay large scale warehouse development but a wider range of flexible distribution and industrial enquiries which is encouraged by the developers. The strength of the location is further evidenced by recent and proposed future extensions on-site by existing tenants.

Daventry

There is potential to increase the area available for employment land in the south east area of Daventry - Marches/ Burnt Walls; D6; D28 (14 ha). Re-evaluation is subject to the outcome of recent inquiries and further masterplanning work. This area provides an opportunity to deliver high quality employment development and we consider that such potential on land near Burnt Walls could be re-examined. There is further potential on land at Apex Park - D2 (35 ha).

A number of potential high quality employment sites are identified at and adjacent to Crick, serviced by Junction 18 of the M1 motorway. This is a high quality location and continued pressure for occupier-led development in this area is anticipated. Considerable care will be needed to optimise the economic benefits without causing excess damage to the rural character of surrounding villages which is a significant threat in this part of the county.

South Northamptonshire

In Towcester, S12 Land South and West of Towcester (20.6ha) is part of a proposed major SUE which includes employment proposals south of Towcester on the A5 and to the west serviced by the proposed new bypass link. Whilst significant infrastructure is required for delivery, S12 has the opportunity to provide a range of good quality employment. Land at Burcote Wood Farm S17 (24.5ha) is being promoted and has potential for B-uses. More immediately available are sites near the A43/A5 junction to the north of Towcester. Land South of Jacks Hill Cafe S42 (8.5 ha) may be more deliverable in the short term than sites S12; S17 to the south and west of Towcester. In addition, Burcote Road S3 to the southern end of the central area of Towcester close to the A5 provides an opportunity for further good quality employment delivery.

At Brackley, sites S9, S13, S18 and S22 (totalling 28.2 ha) have been identified, all of which would provide high quality employment locations. Brackley has additional potential from the High Performance Engineering and the Motor sport Sector, which is expected to continue to draw sub-contractors and suppliers into Northamptonshire.

Land near Junction 16 (site S16 – 150ha) lies in South Northamptonshire but, if developed, would significantly influence the Daventry and Northampton labour markets. The location has been identified in the emergent West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy as a potential strategic employment site. This includes around 60% for B8 purposes leaving a significant residue of land for offices, light industrial, general industrial, special industrial and non B space uses. Similar to other large potential sites in the SELA, the promotion of the site is at an early stage and concerns expressed by some public sector partners largely relating to sustainability issues will need to be fully addressed during the next-stage evaluation process recommended in this report.

Northampton (and wider Northampton Implementation Area)

We have conducted the study on the premise that the town centre sites be considered together to form a single strategic ‘site’ in view of the importance of upgrading the overall offer of the County town as a major business location.

It is equally important that a number of out of town employment sites are brought forward for development. Continued pressure for development which has the potential for being mainly occupier-led is anticipated around Grange Park (in South Northamptonshire) which has excellent accessibility southbound on the M1 (sites S36 and S37 totalling 18.1ha).

Other sites which will complete the South West District include Swan Valley (sites N8; N25; N26 and N28 (19.1ha), Pineham East (site N24 totalling 14.0ha) and Upton/Upton Lodge/Upton Park (sites N6; N15 and N16 totalling 10.8ha).These will complete the south west district 170ha strategic employment site.

There is the potential for a significant employment land allocation to the east of Northampton, building on the existing successful Brackmills and Lakes developments. Sites N10, N13, N14, N16, N37, S30 and potentially others yet to be identified could be brought forward in such a way to maximise the linkages between them and provide a development zone of over 100ha. This seems to have significant merit to be considered as an additional strategic site for the county, although significant land assembly and infrastructure constraints would need to be addressed. It might also provide a potential option for a Technology Realm hub site. Furthermore, the support of

the HCA would be of particular importance in delivering this option as a strategic location. We consider that site N14 provides the opportunity for early delivery of prime employment within this wider area.

Concerns expressed by Public Sector Partners

During the consultation period, a number of concerns have been raised by public sector partners regarding the deliverability and suitability of some sites in terms of potential planning policy conflicts and significant infrastructure constraints. Given the strategic nature of the study and a lack of sufficiently detailed information, these issues have not been addressed in detail by the SELA. As previously highlighted, the SELA has set out a range of sites with potential for allocation although the need remains that local planning authorities should fully assess the sites as part of the formal planning process. Given the ambitious employment growth objectives established for Northamptonshire, the SELA has taken particular care not to exclude sites which merit further assessment when the commercial viability attributes of sites are strong. Clearly, should many of these sites be considered for allocation, significant sustainability constraints will need to be addressed in accordance with national, regional and local policy requirements. These concerns should be fully examined by local planning authorities, through the full planning system.. As part of this process, promoters of the sites will need to provide local planning authorities with sufficient evidence and robust supporting information to enable a properly informed planning decision to be made.

It is not appropriate for all site-specific concerns raised during the consultation period to be set out as part of this report. However, if requested, responses made as part of the “Call for Sites” process can be made available by NEL.

Public Sector Intervention and Enabling Activity

Targeted but significant public sector interventions and enabling measures will be required to support the delivery of sustainable economic growth in Northamptonshire. These should aim to:

- facilitate the provision of the right sites in the right places where and when the market is likely to fail without public sector intervention;
- accelerate the timescale of bringing forward key sites and premises to market in order to contribute significantly to meeting the county's preferred economic scenario;
- ensure the delivery of high quality jobs that will add significant value to and assist in diversifying the Northamptonshire economy;
- bring forward key sites in town centres or close to major public transport hubs with significant employment generating component;
- enable sustainable economic growth and diversification in market towns and rural villages where market failure is evident: and
- seek innovative solutions to bring forward development, potentially including Accelerated Development Zones.

Intervention and enabling measures

Subject to State Aid rules, local authorities, delivery vehicles and other public sector partners should seek to devise innovative solutions to bring forward high quality developments. Where there is clear economic requirement and impact from developments the public sector should work with private partners to ensure the county has a sufficient level of commercial sites and premises to meet the needs of businesses and achieve sustainable economic growth. Such as: -

- land acquisition by public sector bodies and/or direct development;
- gap funding; up-front / early infrastructure provision;
- redistribution of Section 106 funds and innovative use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- grant support for upgrading and refurbishment and/or for land remediation and site preparation;
- special Joint Venture initiatives, such as the successful Fit For Market scheme, JESSICA initiative and further consideration of the Asset Backed Vehicle model;
- Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) and Tax Increment Financing (TIF);
- Targeted and responsive business support and inward investment services aimed at efficiently meeting investor and occupier needs with the right sites in the right location at the right time;
- facilitating and encouraging greater choice of freehold sites; and
- provision of enterprise units in rural towns and villages.

SELA portfolio of locations/sites with potential for "next stage" evaluation

This portfolio of locations/sites reduces the long list of sites obtained from a "*call for sites*" to a manageable number of some 74 locations which are suggested to be tested through the planning process against policy, sustainability, deliverability criteria. The portfolio draws from tables 10.4 to 10.10, offering a potential land supply of circa 1500 ha.

Corby – Table 10.4 shows 10 locations suggested to be put to the next stage of evaluation.

Corby

• Land at Priors Hall	5.8 ha	C1	
• Land at North Birchington Rd	36.3 ha	C2	
• Land at Cockerell Road	9.3 ha	C4	
• Land at Willowbrook North	25.9 ha	C5	
• Land at Stanion Plantation	60.4 ha	C6; C25	*has potential as a Strategic Distribution Site*
• Land at Community College	4.0 ha	C10	
• Land at Centrix Park	11.3 ha	C11	
• Land at Scot Hill	9.6 ha	C23	
• Land at Parkland Gateway	2.8 ha	C26	
• Land in built-up area	8.1 ha	C9; C12; C14; C27	*aggregation of smaller sites*
• Land at Rockingham	inc	E25	*part of 40.5ha which lies in Corby*

Subtotal 173.5 ha

East Northamptonshire – Table 10.5 shows 9 locations suggested to be put to the next stage of evaluation.

Rushden

• Land at Northampton Road	6.1 ha	E7	
• Land in town centre	5.3 ha	E9; E10; E14; E18; E19	*aggregation of smaller sites*

Raunds

• Land at Warth Park	33.5 ha	E2	
• Land at North/North East site	26.0 ha	E3	

Oundle

• Land at East Rd	1.0 ha	E8	

Thrapston

• Land generally in built-up area	5.7 ha	E11; E12; E13; E15; E23	*aggregation of smaller sites*
• Land at A1/M1 Link Plot 2	2.0 ha	E24	

"Stand-alone" Locations

• Land at Nene Park	20.3 ha	E17	
• Land at Rockingham	40.5 ha	E25	*potentially part of a Motor Sport Cluster*

Subtotal 140.4 ha

Kettering – Table 10.6 shows 10 locations suggested to be put to the next stage of evaluation.

Kettering			
• Land at Kettering South	110.0 ha	K1	*has potential as a Strategic Employment site*
• Land at Cransley Park	13.0 ha	K6	
• Land at Kettering Hub	15.0 ha	K7	
• Land at Kettering Business Pk	15.0 ha	K8	
• Land at Kettering East	20.2 ha	K10	
• Land at Station Quarter	5.0 ha	K34	
• Land at Stanier Close	2.5 ha	K36	
Burton Latimer			
• Land adjoining A6	32.6 ha	K14	
Desborough			
• Land at Magnetic Park	6.0 ha	K31	
• Land at Gladstone St/Old Depot	1.2 ha	K35;K37	
Subtotal 220.5 ha			

Wellingborough – Table 10.7 shows 6 locations suggested to be put to the next stage of evaluation.

Wellingborough			
• Land at Stanton Cross	46.7 ha	W1	
• Land in built-up area	5.8 ha	W3; W4; W5	aggregation of smaller sites
• Land at Upper Redhill	10.5 ha	W6	
• Land at Wilby Grange	16.2 ha	W13	
• Land at Appleby Lodge	65.3 ha	W14	
• Land at Ogee Business Park	9.7 ha	W 15	
Subtotal 154.3 ha			

South Northamptonshire – Table 10.8 shows 11 locations suggested to be put to the next stage of evaluation.

South East District Northampton			
• Land at Preston Grange	50.0 ha	S30	*proposed to be in a "Strategic Site*
South West District Northampton			
• Land at Pineham West	16.0 ha	S34	*part of an existing "Strategic Site"*
• Land at Grange Park	18.1 ha	S14; S36; S37	*part of an existing "Strategic Site"*
Towcester			
• Land generally in built-up area	4.9 ha	S3; S4; S15; S31; S32	*aggregation of smaller sites*
• Land South of Jacks Hill Café	8.5 ha	S42	
• Land at Turweston Road	24.2 ha	S9; S13	
• Land at Radstone Field/Sawmill	4.0 ha	S18: S22	
"Stand-alone" Locations			
• Land at Siverstone Circuit	37.7 ha	S1	*potentially part of a Motor Sport Cluster*
• Land South/West of Towcester	20.6 ha	S12	
• Land at Junction 16 of M1	150.0 ha	S16	*originally submitted as 40.5 ha*
• Land at Burcote Wood Farm	24.5 ha	S17	
Subtotal 358.5 ha			

Northampton – Table 10.9 shows 16 locations suggest to be put to the next stage of evaluation.

Northampton Town Centre			*proposed to be a "Strategic Site"*
• Waterside West & East (Avon)	14.0 ha	N5; N18	
• Land at Castle Station	5.3 ha	N17	
• Land generally in built-up area	10.0 ha	N20; N21; N23; N34; N35; N36; N38.	*aggregated small sites*
South East District		*proposed as part of a "Strategic Site"*	
• Land at The Lakes	3.1 ha	N13	(*existing allocation*)
• Land at Brackmills	19.1 ha	N2, N3, N4, N7, N10	(*existing allocation*)

• Land at Houghton Gate	19.5 ha	N37	
• Land at Martin's Farm	32.4 ha	N14	
South West District			*part of an existing 170 ha "Strategic Site"*
• Land at Pineham West	14.0 ha	N24	*(existing allocation)*
• Land at Swan Valley	19.1 ha	N8; N25; N26; N28	*(existing allocation)*
• Land at Upton/Upton Lodge	10.8 ha	N6; N15: N16	
Northampton Built-up Area			
• Land generally in built-up area	8.4 ha	N4; N9; N19; N30; N33	*aggregation of smaller sites*
• Land at Aspect Business Pk	5.4 ha	N22	
• Land at Kings Heath; Dallington	14.0 ha	N31	
• Land at St James	0.9 ha	N32	
"Stand-alone" Locations			
• Land at Collingtree	2.0 ha	N12	
• Land at Milton Ham	10.0 ha	N29	
Subtotal 168.5 ha			

Daventry – Table 10.10 shows 13 locations suggested to be taken forward to the next stage of evaluation.

DIRFT and related areas			*DIRFT is an existing "Strategic Site"*
• Land at DIRFT expansion site	54.0 ha	D1	*has potential as a Strategic Distribution Site*
• Land at Rugby Radio Station	210.0 ha	D4	
• Land at Midland Meat Packers	38.7 ha	D21	
Daventry			
• Land at Heartlands	1.6 ha	D22	
• Town Centre sites	3.8 ha	D26; D27; D32; D33	
• Land at Marches/Burnt Walls*	10.0 ha	D6	*NB. Danetre application is subject to appeal*
• Land at Lower Marches*	4.0 ha	D28	**Marches/Burnt Walls could be increased post appeal*
• Land at Browns Road	3.2 ha	D10	
• Land at Apex Point	35.0 ha	D2	
• Land at Church Fields	2.0 ha	D12	*NB. Croudace application is subject to appeal*
Northampton Implementation Area			
• Land at Holly Lodge Drive	5.2 ha	D23	
"Stand-alone" Locations			
• Land at Brixworth Ilmor Way	6.2 ha	D5	*potentially part of a Motor Sport Cluster*
• Land at Overston Leys/Rnd Hill	55.0 ha	D19; D30	
Subtotal 397.2 ha			