

March Town Council



March Town Plan Issues & Options Consultation

Summary Comments Schedule

September 2014

HOUSING			
H1 – The scale of housing development projects	H2 – The type and mix of housing coming forward	H3 – Location of future development	
<p>(1) We don't need any more houses. (2)(7)(13) The scale of housing should be kept small. (3) March people should be able to stop the alarming rate of building. (4) A small number of larger sites may be necessary. (5)(6)(9)(10)(17) Option 3. (8) The market dictates the scale of housing development. House builders should be encouraged. (12) The scale of housing growth for March (4,200 homes) is too high and should be reduced. (13) Schemes should be no more than 50 at a time with fewer infrastructure issues. (15)(16)(18)(20) Option 2. (17) Development should be phased, linked to infrastructure and enforced to ensure delivery. (19) A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) can influence phasing, scale and timing of development</p>	<p>(2)(7)(9)(12) More starter homes are needed to keep people in the area. (3)(18) Housing needs more external space. (4)(19) Mix should be market driven. (5) Options 2 and 3 in combination. (6)(10)(15)(16)(17)(20) Option 3, depending on what jobs are created. (7) Housing with community outdoor spaces/gardens is needed. (8) Larger houses should be encouraged and affordable houses designed to allow for extensions in future years. (9) (13) Option 2, social housing (13 and high-density housing) should be located separately from future development. (12) House process are too high. (17) Housing provision should be based on an analysis of housing needs. The town has its share of</p>	<p>(2) Housing should not go beyond the bypass and focus to west and south. (3) No more residential development to the north. (4) Infill on smaller sites and larger development on allocated sites. (5)(6)(9)(10) Option 3. (7) Building beyond the bypass if proper junctions are built with infrastructure and bus service. Avoid building in the south east of the town. (8) Brownfield sites should be encouraged with larger housing sites located on the edge of town in flood free land. (10) Infrastructure should be in place or legally agreed before development commences. (11) The Inspector at the FDC Core Strategy Examination ruled against development to the north due to infrastructure constraints. Development must</p>	

on larger sites by providing additional clarity. They can also do the same for unallocated windfall sites, which is where the main focus of the NP should be.	social housing, and flats should be focused in the town centre. (19) Guidance on what market demand is would be helpful.	be sustainable. (12)(13)(18) No housing to the north of the town. Focus should be where main facilities already exist i.e. to south of river or near the bypass. (15)(17)(20) Option 1. (16) Option 2. (19) The windfall sites will be in areas not identified in the Local Plan, and this is where the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). A specific housing allocation is proposed at Berryfield, March (See Site 1, Appendix 1), which is a location to the North east of March that does not involve any development on Eastover playing field and considered to be of a modest scale.	
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EMPLOYMENT			
E1 – The focus of employment and business coming forward			
<p>(1) More employment is welcomed. (2) We should attract more national companies. (3) Temporary jobs linked to housing growth is not useful. (4) Business in the town centre and industry on the edge of town. (5)(9)(10)(16)(18) Option 3. (6) Option 3, provided a business park is created. (7) Development should be focused in the town centre to stop its decline and reduce car use. (8) Manufacturing and other services should be encouraged. (12) Sites should be located to existing areas with good access to the A141 and designed to keep HGVs out of the town. (13) Focus in established employment areas and link housing need with employment. (15) Option 2. (17)(20) Option 1. Businesses should not be discriminated just because they are not in the town centre. (19)</p>			

<p>The edge of centre locations are better suited due to land assembly and access difficulties in the centre. Demand for office space is low. Large scale retail sites need out of centre locations.</p>			
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TOWN CENTRE & RETAIL			
TC1 – Achieving the right balance of town centre uses			
<p>(1) Uses must cater for everyone's needs. (2)(3)(8) We need enough mix to retain shoppers. (4) The market will dictate demand. (5) Option 2. (7) More individual shops/businesses and avoid chain stores. (8) More parking should be made available. (9)(10)(16)(18) Option 3, with a need for more non-food retail outlets. (12) Town centre supermarket locations cause traffic congestion. (15)(17)(20) Option 1. (17) The nature of town centres is changing with less focus on retail and more on leisure, entertainment and culture. (19) The town centre is not suited to large scale retail. (22) A specific retail park is proposed on land west of Hostmoor Avenue, March (See Site 1, Appendix 2), which is located close to the March Trading Estate. It is argued</p>			

<p>there is demand from large multiple operators to meet both current and future needs. It is argued that there are no viable sites in the town centre and that it will not harm it either. A new roundabout onto the A141 is proposed to improve access, resulting in wider traffic improvements. (23) A town centre regeneration scheme is proposed (See Site 2, Appendix 2). The aim is to open up a larger area of the town centre involving a new bridge crossing, a new link road and improvements to existing junctions. This would create sites more attractive to large retailers, improve traffic problems and revitalise the town centre. Some loss of open space would be required to support the scheme. A strategy for the survival and growth of the town centre is essential.</p>			
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TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT			
T1 – Reducing car dependency			
<p>(1)(8) A better bus service is needed. (2)(12) We need more cycle lanes. (3)(4) How can you reduce car dependency in a town? (5)(9)(18) Option 2. (6)(10)(15)(16)(20) Option 3, but may be difficult with the age profile. (7) More shops with delivery service and improved public transport. (9) Parking needs to be better enforced. (13) Traffic solutions needed now. These will only get worse with new growth. (17) Option 1. Traffic is not a problem in March other than at peaks and when accidents cause diversions through the town, reducing car dependency should not be an objective of MTC. Improved rail services to nearby cities will increase access to leisure. (18) Lots of jobs can only be accessed by car due to poor transport links. (19) Development near the railway</p>			

station and or employment areas is sustainable.			
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ENVIRONMENT			
E1 – Ensuring appropriate levels of open space provision	E2 – Maximising the use of renewable energy	E3 – The protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat	E4 – Reducing the risk from flooding
<p>(1)(3)(7)(10)(12)(13)(17) More open space is required. (2)(10)(11)(12)(13)(18)(19) Estover playing field must be retained for open space. (4) Smaller schemes must provide more space. (5)(9)(18) Option 2. (6)(10)(19) Option 3. (8) More public use should be made of existing recreation grounds. (9)(18) No building should be allowed on recreation land. New development should make provision for open space. (15)(16)(20) Option 1. (17) Option 3.</p>	<p>(1) Welcomes as long as it does not spoil beautiful views. (2)(7) Wind farms are inefficient. (3) It must not be used as an excuse to build more houses. (4) This is not achievable in practice. (5)(6)(10)(18)(19) Option 3. (7)(8)(9)(18) Solar power on newer developments. Wind power causes concerns. (9)(16)(17) Option 2. (12)(13)(17) Wind power are spoiling the skyline. They should be located at sea. (13) Fracking is also inappropriate. (15)(20) Option 1. (17) Large scale solar farms should be avoided. (19) It is the scale of development that is the main concern. (21) All new development should address renewable energy.</p>	<p>(1)(2)(3)(12)(13)(19) Must be protected for future generations. (4) The disused railway line at Wimblington is an opportunity. (5)(6)(9)(10)(15)(16)(20)(21) Option 3. (7) Access to such areas must be increased. (8) Land has been provided at Pidley Hunts. (9) Middle Level Commissioners should be encouraged as major land owners. (17) Option 2, habitat creation is not seen as a big priority. (18) Combination of Options 2 & 3. Wildlife sites can be used for recreation too. (19) Should look to create wildlife corridors. (21) Gaul Road, Rings End and the Prison Area should be promoted.</p>	<p>(1) Preventing flooding is a high priority. (2) Questions if we have a flooding issue. (3) Essential but not used as an excuse to build more houses. (4)(9) Localised flooding can be dealt with by improved infrastructure. (5)(9)(15) Option 2. (6)(10)(16)(21) Option 3. (7) Areas at risk should be identified and avoided in future. (8) March is a clay island surrounded by flood plains. (10)(18) Drains and ditches need to be cleaned regularly. Anglian Water need to upgrade services now. (12) Existing drainage systems cannot cope with existing development. (13) smaller developments will lessen the flooding problem. (17)(18)(19)(20) Option 2, MTC should not support applications in areas of high flood risk. (19)</p>

			<p>The Neighbourhood Plan should not repeat national advice aimed at preventing development in high flood risk areas.</p>
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SPORT & ACTIVE LEISURE			
S1 – Improving leisure facilities through new development			
<p>(1) More leisure facilities required. (2)(3) Developers use this as a tool to get permission, other areas should be looked at. (4) There is a limit to what developers can provide. (5) Options 2 and 3 in combination. (6)(9)(15)(17)(20)(21) Option 3. (7) More safer environments for children are needed. More cycle routes are needed. (8) More use should be made of school leisure facilities. (9) Developers should provide more space and maintain it when in place. (10) Development should meet Sport England guidelines. (12)(13) Extra housing brings other pressures than can offset the recreation benefits. (14) A new swimming pool is needed with attractive open space. (16)(18) Option 2. (17) Existing sports provision is woefully</p>			

<p>inadequate in March and this should be the main priority. (19) MTC should ensure that money from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is used for sports and leisure facilities.</p>			
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INFRASTRUCTURE			
I1 – Ensuring appropriate infrastructure to meet growth			
<p>(1) More doctors surgeries and schools required. (2) Lorries taking waste from the water works is a nuisance. (3) More infrastructure without housing is needed. (4) Better planning between developers and statutory providers is needed. (5) Option 2. (6)(10)(15)(20) Option 3. (7)(12)(13)(18)(21) Adequate infrastructure is needed with future growth. (8) The former Ogdens Market site on Acre Road is a sustainable location for another indoor market. (9) March requires another river crossing and bypass to accommodate extra growth. (11) Clarification is required on infrastructure needs for all new development due to the lack of clarity in the FDC Core Strategy. (13) Development should be kept within the limits of infrastructure capacity.</p>			

<p>(16)(17) option 1. (19) It is not appropriate to introduce a 3rd level of authorities (MTC) with policy input to infrastructure provision.</p>			
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OTHER COMMENTS MADE

(1) The footpaths over rail crossings are dangerous and need measures to slow traffic down. (2) Will the sewage works cope with growth. Roads are heavily congested and increased rail freight will make this worse. (4) More attention should be paid to the quality of life. Site planning is essential in the town centre. More car parking should be provided in all accommodation proposals. (5) Doing nothing is not an option. Schools and medical facilities must be linked to plan for housing. It is not clear what the future intent for the town is. Issues to tackle include an expanding town struggling to re-establish itself after the loss of railway jobs and no new large employer; a retirement town attracting pensioners from outside the district; a dormitory town due to real work opportunities being located outside the District. (8) Mixed light industrial and residential development should be allowed on the land abutting the western bypass. An eastern bypass on the former March/Wimblinton railway line should be considered. (9) Parking in Station Road requires alternatives to be found with restriction in other areas as increased rail use will result in more congestion. Changes to the access arrangements from Sainsbury's car park is needed to alleviate congestion. (10) FDC removed the north east allocation from its core strategy due to accessibility. A new bypass/river crossing will be needed if not. (11) The Inspector at the FDC Core Strategy Examination has ruled out any development on land to the north of the town. (12) MTC is unlikely to be able to control growth. Traffic problems in the town centre is a real issue that needs to be addressed. (13) Planned growth in FDC Core Strategy is too high and it will be difficult to improve infrastructure to meet this growth. The Districts need should be met in other areas like Peterborough under duty to cooperate. (15) A second secondary school is needed in the north of the town. Parking in the town centre should be free. The swimming pool and leisure facilities need to be improved. Developments should be pushed to completion. (18) The Council should be applying for Government funding for infrastructure and facilities to attract more younger people. (20) Development that has started but stalled should be completed.

APPENDIX 1

SUGGESTED HOUSING SITES

Site 1 – Land at Berryfield, March

APPENDIX 2

SUGGESTED RETAIL SCHEMES

Site 1 – Land west of Hostmoor Avenue, March

Site 2 – Land at March Town Centre