NORTH HUNTINGDON & ST IVES
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS GROUP

Whole Plan Viability Assessment
(Regulation 19 Update – June 2026)

The title "Whole Plan Viability Assessment" does naturally lead a lay reader to assume that it assesses whether the Local Plan can be delivered as a functioning whole, whereas its actual scope is much narrower.

Despite its title, it only assesses the financial viability of **individual sites and policies** and does not model the cumulative cost, timing, dependencies and risks associated with delivering all of the strategic allocations and infrastructure together as one integrated programme.

Furthermore it takes the **infrastructure costs, timing and funding assumptions** identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Study (IDS) report to be correct, and then tests whether development of the individual sites remains financially viable on that basis.

What the report does answer

It asks questions such as:

- Is Site A financially viable?
- Is Site B financially viable?
- Can Site C broadly support affordable housing?
- What happens if construction costs rise?
- What level of developer contributions can each site reasonably support?

Those are viability questions.

What it does not answer

It is not an integrated infrastructure model.

Therefore it cannot answer questions like:

- What happens if Wyton Airfield, Lodge Farm and Giffords Park are all under construction at the same time?
- What if all three require major electricity reinforcement simultaneously?
- What if all three depend upon the same water infrastructure upgrades?
- What happens if A141 improvements are delayed by five years or costs double?
- What if wastewater upgrades are deferred by Ofwat?
- What if hospitals and GP provision lag behind housing delivery?
- What if infrastructure costs escalate significantly across several schemes at once?

It does not model the combined cost, timing and interaction of delivering all strategic sites and supporting infrastructure together.

So if someone asks “*Can Huntingdonshire actually deliver 24,000+ houses in this growth corridor?*” they aren't really asking whether each site has a positive residual land value. They're asking: “*Can everything work together?*”

Examples include:

- electricity
- wastewater
- potable water
- highways
- schools
- GP surgeries
- hospitals
- public transport
- construction sequencing
- contractor availability
- inflation
- developer cashflow

None of those interactions are modelled in a **Whole Plan Viability Assessment**.

Specific Examples

This report dated June 2026 is considerably better than the September 2025 version.

It is more comprehensive, reflects the Regulation 18 consultation, updates construction costs, Future Homes Standard costs, Building Safety Levy, updated IDP assumptions and re-runs the modelling.

However, it does not fundamentally change the central arguments that the Cumulative Impacts Group has been making. In fact, in several respects, it actually reinforces them.

1. The assessment considers viability on a **site-by-site basis** and does not present an integrated assessment of the cumulative financial implications of delivering all strategic allocations and associated infrastructure together.

   Paragraph 12.8 states:

   "*The WPVA is based on typologies ... In addition, the Strategic Sites are tested individually*."

   That sentence tells us exactly what the modelling does.

   It does not model:

   - the combined North Huntingdon Growth Cluster;
   - interactions between multiple strategic sites;
   - simultaneous delivery; or
   - cumulative infrastructure demand.

   Instead, it models:

   - representative site types; and
   - each strategic allocation separately.

2. Several strategic sites are described as "**finely balanced**", indicating limited viability headroom under the assumptions used in the Assessment.

3. Infrastructure requirements are identified as a **''substantial cost burden**' that 'materially affect the viability position.''

   For example, the report concludes "*delivery of North Huntingdon 4 (Wyton Airfield) is likely to be challenging when subject to the estimated strategic infrastructure and mitigation costs*".

4. The assessment concludes that policy-compliant affordable housing **cannot** be achieved on every site alongside all other policy requirements and infrastructure contributions.

5. "*Sensitivity testing shows that a 5–10% increase in build costs could render multiple sites unviable, highlighting significant **vulnerability to market conditions***."

   Unfortunately the WPVA does not test scenarios such as:

   - A141 programme doubling in cost;
   - National Grid requiring additional reinforcement;
   - new primary substations;
   - strategic water transfer schemes;
   - wastewater treatment expansion exceeding assumptions;
   - hospital expansion costs; or
   - county-wide education changes.

   Instead it relies upon whatever infrastructure costs have already been fed into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan report (which we look at separately).

   Consequently, the viability model is only as complete as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan underpinning it.

6. The consultants note that **viability constraints** *'may impact delivery trajectories and phasing assumptions*.'

   Paragraph 12.63 says the strategic sites are modelled as though the entire site is acquired at the beginning of the project, but acknowledges that this is **not properly representative** of very large developments, where phased acquisition and cashflow are more realistic.

Conclusion

Overall, the updated viability assessment provides a more detailed evidence base than was available at Preferred Options, but it also highlights continuing delivery risks.

Several major strategic sites have limited viability headroom, assumed infrastructure costs remain a significant constraint, affordable housing objectives cannot be achieved in every case alongside all policy requirements, and sensitivity testing demonstrates that relatively modest changes in market conditions could affect viability.

While the report assesses individual sites in detail, it does not demonstrate how the cumulative viability and infrastructure demands of the plan would be managed across all strategic allocations.